

TABLE ROCK

\$2.50

SENTINEL

MARCH
APRIL 1989



The
Magazine
of the
Southern
Oregon
Historical
Society

Commentary

At the January 31 meeting, the Southern Oregon Historical Society Board of Trustees elected former Jackson County commissioner Isabel Sickels to fill out the term of former board president Carl Shaff who resigned in October 1988. Sickels replaces acting president Don McLaughlin who returns to his position as first vice president.

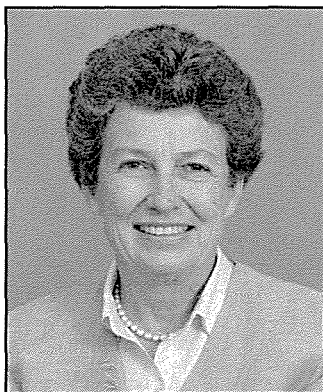
Dear Reader:

A hopeful sign for the preservation of southern Oregon history is the apparent renaissance of interest in local history among the communities of Jackson County. Within the last few years, citizens in Rogue River have formed an organization which now runs the Woodville Museum. Eagle Point citizens not only formed an organization dedicated to historical preservation, but also were largely responsible for saving an historic covered bridge, and furthermore, moving it to a place to serve a worthwhile purpose! A group in Gold Hill recently became affiliated with the Oregon Historic Society. Interest is evident for similar organizations in Shady Cove and the upper Rogue River area as well as in the Applegate.

Many of us in the Southern Oregon Historical Society welcome this help. In order to acquire, preserve and display objects and historical properties and to encourage public attention toward the history of this county, it is necessary to involve as many people as possible.

The role of the Southern Oregon Historical Society is even broader as its perspective encompasses not only Jackson County, but all of southwestern Oregon. With a collection exceeding 80,000 artifacts and approximately 250,000 documents, photographic images and other archival material, the Southern Oregon Historical Society ranks in size with many state historical societies. Jackson County residents look to the Society to maintain valuable records of county government (sheriff, assessor, Board of Commissioners, surveyor, tax roles, etc.). To serve this purpose the County Archives was established in 1977, and from 1985 on has been administered by the Southern Oregon Historical Society. Approximately 22 buildings owned by Jackson County are maintained, repaired, and preserved by the Society with the use of the county historical fund.

The Southern Oregon Historical Society in recent years has displayed the same vitality as have the local communities. A rejuvenated Mission Statement has been stated explicitly, a Long Range Plan adopted, and a professional, experienced staff employed. The realization that the Society's responsibility extends beyond the county's National Historic Landmark Jacksonville is exemplified, not only through working with newly-emerging community groups, but by joint activity with the Southern Oregon State College in Ashland at the Society's cultural resource center in the Chappell-Swedenburg House; and by the history center, the new administrative headquarters for the Society, soon to open in Medford. The Society, in short, has grown from a small, dedicated group of individuals and limited staff, to an organization capable of "the responsibility to represent, support, coordinate and guide the historical interests of Jackson County while acknowledging an interest in the larger Southwestern Oregon Region," as stated in the Long Range Plan.



Isabel H. Sickels

Isabel Sickels
President, Southern Oregon Historical Society
Board of Trustees



Administrative Staff

Executive Director:

Samuel J. Wegner

Deputy Director, Public

Relations Officer:

Joy L. Comstock

Development Director:

Ted E. Lawson

Assistant Director for

Operations and Finance:

Maureen Smith

Assistant Director for History:

Marjorie Edens

Coordinator of Photography

and Publications:

Natalie Brown

Membership Coordinator:

Susan Cox

Board of Trustees

President

Isabel Sickels, Ashland

First Vice President:

Donald McLaughlin, Medford

Second Vice President:

Dan Hull, Jacksonville

Secretary:

Mary Foster, Medford

Treasurer:

William Bagley, Medford

L. Scott Clay, Medford

William A. Faubion, Gold Hill

Jessie McGraw, Eagle Point

Marjorie O'Harra, Ashland

Tom Parks, Jacksonville

Thomas W. Pickering, Jacksonville

James Ragland, Ashland

Jean M. Smith, Central Point

Dr. James Sours, Medford

Kathryn Stancliffe, Phoenix

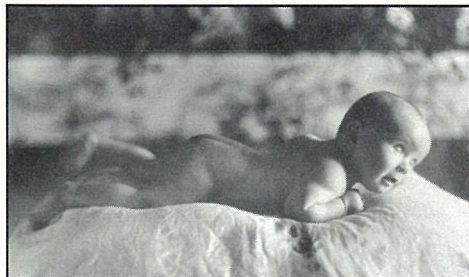
The **Table Rock Sentinel** is published bimonthly by the Southern Oregon Historical Society. Administrative and membership offices are at 206 N. Fifth St., Jacksonville, OR 97530-0480. Subscription is free with membership. Single copies and back issues are available for \$2.50 each.

POSTMASTER: Please send Change of Address (form 3579) to Southern Oregon Historical Society, P.O. Box 480, Jacksonville, OR 97530-0480.

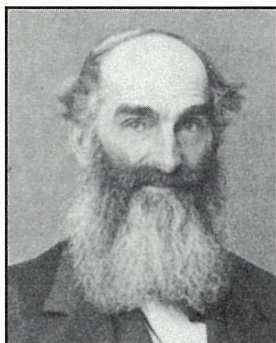
Copyright ©1989 by Southern Oregon Historical Society. ISSN

#0732-0523. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reprinted without written permission from the Society.

CONTRIBUTIONS: Address all editorial communications to **Table Rock Sentinel, P.O. Box 480, Jacksonville, OR 97530-0480**. We are happy to consider queries and contributions. All material must be identified with the sender's name and address, and will be returned if sent with sufficient postage. Care is taken with contributions, but we are not responsible for damage or loss. The Society disclaims responsibility for facts or opinions expressed in signed contributions.



p. 2



p. 15



p. 22

Features

2 Having Babies: Changes in Childbirth

by *Robin Speake*

Owing to a rigorous lifestyle and limited medical knowledge, pioneer women frequently faced demanding pregnancies and births.

10 District Landladies

by *Sue Waldron*

Life in the Railroad District in Ashland at the turn of the century provided some women with an opportunity to become financially independent.

15 Moses Allen Williams: Father of Presbyterianism in Southern Oregon

by *Raymond Lewis*

Known for establishing the Presbyterian church in Jacksonville, Moses Williams was also active throughout southern Oregon as a preacher and teacher.

22 Amazing Grace, Jacksonville's Presbyterian Church

by *Patricia Oxner*

The first Presbyterian church in Jacksonville occupied an inspired place in the heart of the founding community.

Departments

28 From the Collections

28 Letters

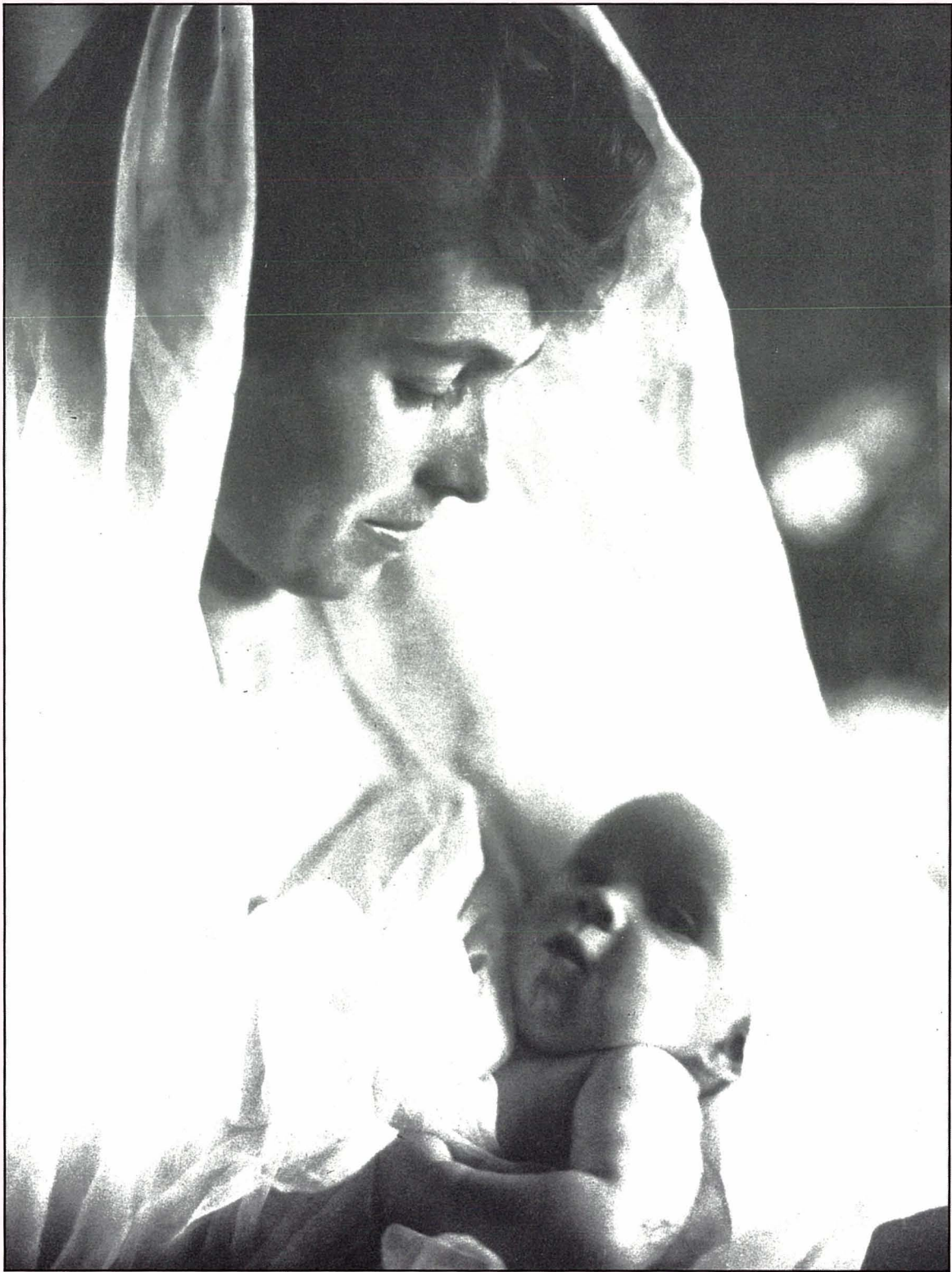
Calendar of Events (inside back cover)



Front cover: This healthy Butte Falls baby beguiles from its carriage in 1939.
SOHS #12264



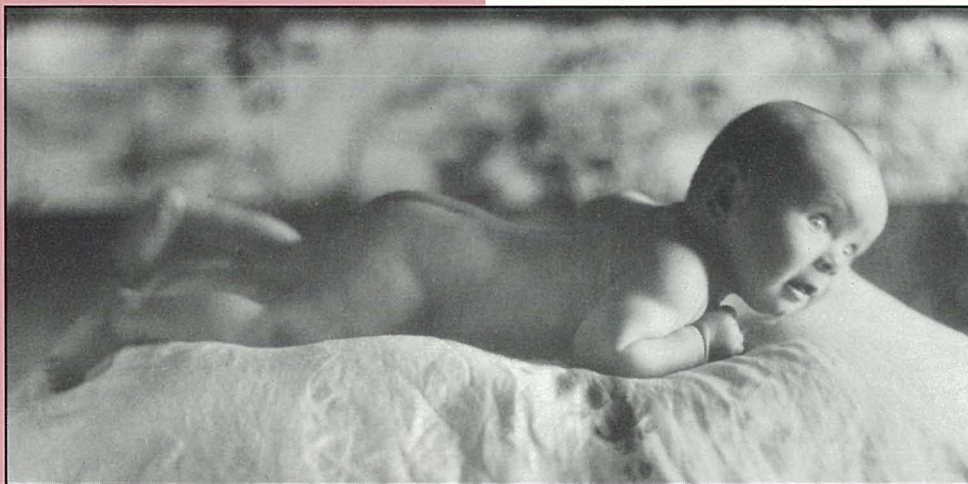
Back cover: Hard work was expected of all ages in rural southern Oregon.
SOHS #12265



Irene DeLash and daughter Joan Maxine (*above and right*) resemble a turn of the century Madonna and child. SOHS #12397, 12398

By Robin Speake

Having Babies:



Changes in Childbirth

At almost nine I became quite sick enough—began to feel discouraged. Felt as if I almost wished I had never been married. But there was no retreating, meet it I must . . . Just as I supposed the worst was at hand, my ears were saluted with the cry of my child. A son was the salutation. Soon I forgot my misery in the joy of possessing a proper child.”¹

“Our daughter Rachel was born at home . . . I delivered her while sitting in her father’s arms, so as her warm body slipped into my hands, she was embraced by both of us at the moment of birth.”

Two women speak of the first moment of their children’s birth; the first is Mary Richardson Walker, who with her husband Elkanah, left her home in 1838 to travel the Overland Trail to Oregon. The second woman is Ashland resident Nan Hannon speaking of the birth of her

first child in 1976.² A hundred and thirty-eight years separate the births, yet both women share the same deep sense of joy and delight.

The process of having babies has changed since Mary Walker delivered her first-born with the help of a woman the family had lodged with during their first winter in the West.

A young pioneer woman living in the Rogue Valley in the 1800s generally would have expressed great happiness after discovering her pregnancy. To practical Protestant settlers, having children was more than a primal human joy. Children represented extra hands to lighten the family's back-breaking work load. Having children also meant fulfilling a spiritual obligation. To those adventurers who crossed America on the Overland Trail to settle the West whose religion was an active part of their everyday lives, the commandment by Jehovah to Noah to "Be ye fruitful and multiply . . ." was a direct order.

Yet a woman's initial delight in motherhood was often accompanied by an undercurrent of fear and dread, for in the America of the 1800s, birth, bodies and sexuality were spoken of only in veiled whispers, if at all. As one woman wrote:

Despite the fact that I had always regarded myself as a very modern young woman, and had known about most of the "facts of life" long before I was married, I actually knew little or nothing about the physical phenomena of human pregnancy and birth.³

Men certainly did not converse on the subject with their wives, and proper Victorian ladies were not supposed to concern themselves with such things, much less speak of them.

Preserving the existing social decorum, however, left many a young woman in the dark about the realities of married life in general and childbirth in particular. What most women were aware of was there would be much pain during childbirth and often, too often, the mother or her child would die, or her health would be destroyed.

Much of the information available about bearing children in the 1800s survives through the diaries of women traveling from the East with their husbands and families to make their homes and fortunes in California, Washington and Oregon. Although these women rarely discussed pregnancy, descriptions of their hardships borne on the journey West are detailed: the lack of decent water; susceptibility to diseases such as dysentery, cholera, typhoid; exposure to the elements; lack of food; accidents and the loss of children or spouses. It is amazing that many of

these women not only survived these adversities, but did so while in the advancing stages of pregnancy during the trip.⁴

Pregnancy did not deter a young family out to settle in the land of milk and honey. A three- to four-month trip overland with the promise of a stake of land for farm-



Mrs. Francis Swedenburg gave birth to Marjorie Eleanore in Ashland's hospital in 1910. SOHS #8409

While many medical journals of the day offered treatment for women's diseases, few described pregnancy at all, and the actual delivery and post-partum care of mother and child went unmentioned.

ing at its completion seemed a compelling reason to leave home, no matter what physical circumstances were involved. Of course, the journey often lasted six months or more over treacherous terrain. And, the weary travelers usually arrived in the promised land just as winter struck, their health broken, their pocketbooks empty.

Sometimes it would be a husband's excitement alone which would propel an expectant young woman across the plains, deserts and mountains, despite the fact that being torn away from family, friends and all female companionship was unbearable to her. But to be taken away at the time of her confinement was especially terrifying, as pioneer mother Katherine Strange wrote:

I had no intimate friends at that time from whom to seek advice or sympathy, so that, as time passed and my condition became physically apparent, I began to be very bewildered, and sometimes very frightened, at the prospect of what was going to happen to me. I knew almost breathless moments of happiness and anticipation, but there were also long periods of intense discomfort, boredom and fear.⁵

Though women and men lived together, they were segregated by the conventions of nineteenth-century society. A woman took joy and solace in the company of other women. To be forced to leave this sphere of comfort and travel to a wild country with only her husband, a woman expecting a child may have left her home with great reluctance.⁶

Throughout the frontier period, birth still was attended to mainly by women. Midwives, grandmothers or even experienced neighbor ladies delivered youngsters and gave comfort to mothers. Male midwives and physicians were rarely seen in rural areas and usually only attended births for the very wealthy.⁷ They generally were not trained to deliver children.

While many medical journals of the day offered treatment for women's diseases, few described pregnancy at all, and the actual delivery and post-partum care of mother and child went unmentioned. As late as the 1930s in many places, birth was thought of as strictly a woman's

realm. One medical text in 1850 clearly outlined a physician's responsibilities in the matter of childbirth:

It is not often that medical men are consulted as to the management of pregnant women under ordinary circumstances. A certain amount of inconvenience is anticipated, and so long as this supposed limit is not surpassed, the patient continues, with the advice of her female friends to dispense with medical assistance.⁸

Some medical journals of the time mention a "marked change in personality" of a woman during pregnancy as well as advising her to shun excitement and eschew "disgusting things" such as death, agony or acute convulsions. Rather practical information was offered on such topics as treating stretch marks with oil, encouraging daily fresh air and exercise, maintaining a sensible diet, avoiding exposure to infectious diseases and foregoing bloodletting, if possible.⁹

Today prenatal care is thought of as routine for a pregnant woman and her unborn child, though the concept is only decades old. In the 1800s, however, prenatal care for the woman homesteading in the Rogue Valley meant little more than business as usual.

Business as usual to a woman then was more than simple housekeeping. A woman's work might include such delicate tasks as digging cellars, checking trap lines, plowing fields, planting gardens, chopping wood, tending stock and hauling water, as well as the more traditional work set aside for the "weaker sex" such as sewing, sweeping, churning, ironing, cooking and baking, preserving food, laundering and caring for several children.

A woman on a wagon train or newly settled in southern Oregon was helping tame a wild new land. Hard work and having babies, no matter how physically and emotionally intimidating, were duties, obligations, part of life. A woman gave little consideration to changing her way of life just because she was pregnant; there was too much to be done.

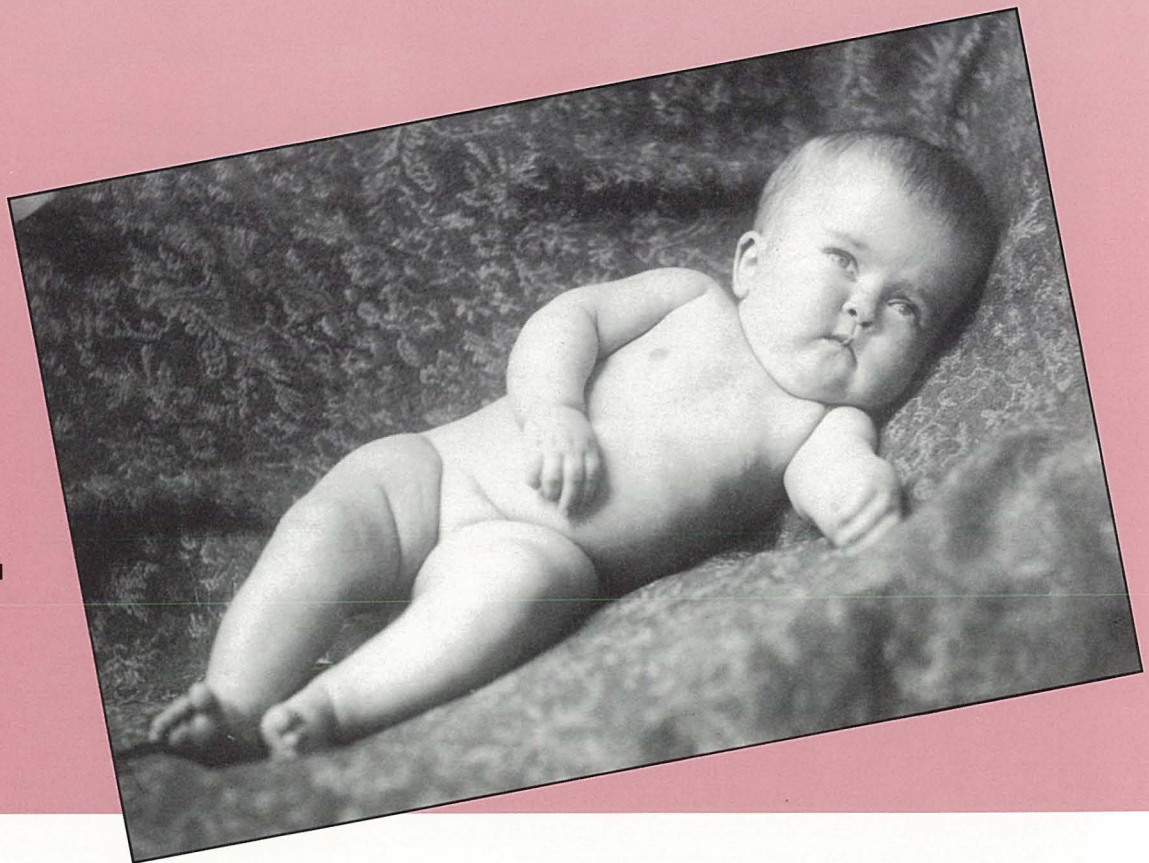
On the trail, a woman was lucky to be attended in childbirth by another woman, much less a midwife. Often a woman attained the title of midwife if she became especially skilled in administering herbs, setting bones, nursing and caring for the dead, as well as assisting with births.¹⁰

In Jackson County during the 1850s and 1860s, babies were born at home with husbands, neighbors and relatives attending the births and midwives assisting whenever possible.¹¹ It was not unheard of for a woman living in a remote area to deliver her child herself.

An experienced midwife would provide for the birth by having warm water on hand to bathe the infant and mother, a thread or string to cut the umbilical cord and plenty of rags to staunch bleeding. At some point during the labor she might massage the mother with warm olive oil to relax the muscles before delivery. Massage also was used to turn an infant appearing as a breech or to deliver the afterbirth.

Midwives routinely looked in on mother and child after the birth, seeing to the health of both and offering whatever herbs or medicines were available and appropriate. New mothers were generally up and about, resuming their

Although birthing techniques have changed considerably in the past one hundred years, parental pride has not. Nearly every family's photo album contains baby pictures. Peter Britt photographed young Julius Schmidt in 1892 (left). Doting parents took numerous snapshots of Neal (center) and Owen Brown (right) in 1961. SOHS #12399, 12400, 12401



chores soon after the birth of their children if there were no complications such as puerperal or "childbed" fever, a notorious infection that was often fatal.

Childbearing was a major part of a woman's life. Historian John Mack Faragher pointed out that throughout a pioneer woman's twenties and thirties, her life would be spent in two-and-a-half year cycles in which "nineteen or twenty months were spent in advanced pregnancy, infant care and nursing. Until her late thirties a woman could expect little respite from the physical and emotional wear and tear of nearly constant pregnancy and suckling . . . given the already burdensome tasks of women's work, the additional responsibilities of the children were next to intolerable."¹²

To be sure, many a pioneer woman reached the end of her rope before her childbearing years ended. The prospect of more hungry mouths to feed, shattered health or certain death from another difficult pregnancy led many women to search for contraceptive devices.

Besides prolonged nursing and abstinence, birth control methods in the 1800s ranged from the bizarre to the dangerous to the hopeful, similar to the options available to women today. Folk remedies, such as eating the dried lining of a chicken's gizzard or taking gun powder three mornings in a row while concentrating on the desired results to induce abortion, and preventatives, such as a sponge soaked in soap suds or a homemade cocoa butter and tannic acid square used internally, were shared by women seeking relief from the rigors of childbirth.¹³ Mail-order contraceptives were commonly advertised in newspapers from 1820 to 1873. Pamphlets and health books also offered women information on controlling conceptions.

Abortion increased in the 1800s as a method of limiting family size.¹⁴ Whether performed by a midwife, a rare sympathetic doctor or by the woman herself, it was a dangerous alternative as one Oregon midwife related:

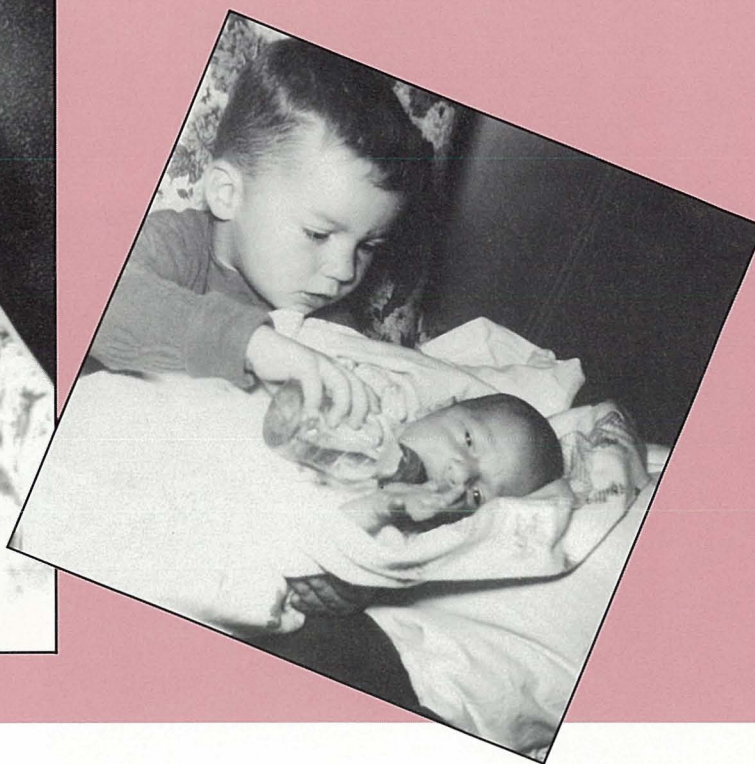
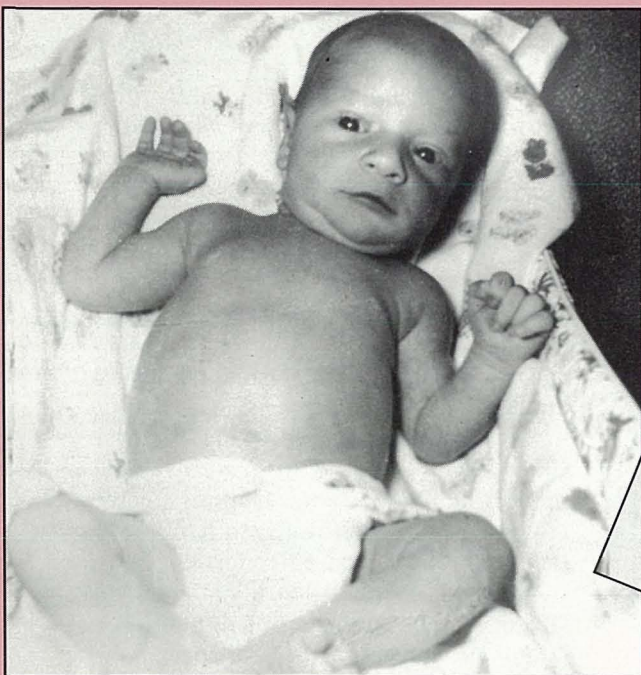
I went to the woman's place several times. She had staged several sham battles. You see they didn't do what was right, and had tried too soon to have the baby and get rid of it. When it was far enough along it was a killing job. Hot salt water was what they used, and it sometimes passed. After the woman herself was about to die as well as the baby, they'd call for help.¹⁵

In desperation many took chances with these contraceptives and emmenagogues rather than risk the more threatening alternative of bearing another child.

Around the turn of the century, the circumstances of childbirth began to change drastically. Toward the late 1800s male midwives and physicians were allowed into the birthing rooms alongside the female midwives. In a move focused on gaining less interference by midwives, doctors began to publicly denigrate and question the skills and qualifications of the female midwives. As one frustrated physician in the mid-nineteenth century observed:

The officiousness of nurses and friends very often thwarts the best-directed measure of the physician, by an overweening desire to make the patient comfortable . . . all this should be strictly forbidden. Conversation should be prohibited the patient . . . Nothing is more common than for the patient's friends to object to bloodletting, urging as a reason, that she has lost blood enough. Of this they are in no respect suitable judges.¹⁶

As medicine became standardized, the science of obstetrics followed. And, when the use of sedative drugs such as scopollamine and Nembutal, and the use of forceps and surgeries such as the Caesarean section and



episiotomy became routine in the assistance of childbirth, more women began to have their children in hospitals.¹⁷ While the new specialists promised safer births with minimal pain, a majority of women still had their children at home as late as the 1930s, attended by physicians and midwives. The late Gertrude E. Rosencrans of Gold Hill recalled one of her considerations in giving birth at home:

Couldn't get me in a hospital. I just couldn't stand a hospital. The year my son was born—the next to youngest one—we was up there on the hill and my husband wanted to take me downtown so I could go to the hospital, and I said, "I'm not a-goin." Just around that time there was six women died in childbirth in that hospital. You couldn't get me in it for love or money."¹⁸

Having babies at a hospital became the norm by the 1950s. By 1958, ninety-five percent of all births in the United States took place in a hospital.

The social upheavals of the 1960s and the rise of the feminist movement brought a new awareness to women and men of birth as a natural process. Young parents increasingly felt need for more control over the birth and a desire for less intervention by hospital physicians. As a result new mothers and fathers now have a choice of birthing methods.

At Rogue Valley Medical Center in Medford, many births now are attended by nurse-midwives working closely with obstetricians. An effort is being made to recognize childbirth as positive and natural. The hospital tries to provide a comfortable environment and the mother usually gives birth in the same room in which she labors. Fathers are encouraged to attend births and children are also allowed in the birth room in some cases.¹⁹

A growing number of families are opting to have their children at home. Although present malpractice insurance

problems prohibit most physicians from attending home births, both nurse-midwives and lay midwives still assist with home deliveries.

Many couples choose home birth feeling it is a more humane and natural way to have children. Some cite a disturbingly high infant mortality rate in the United States as compared with other industrialized nations²⁰ and the possible overuse of the Caesarean section procedure.²¹

One of the major changes in the birth process in recent years has been the active participation of fathers. Instead of going out for pickles and ice cream, pacing waiting rooms and handing out cigars, expectant fathers today attend birthing classes. They share in the selection of one of the new birth methods such as Bradley breathing techniques, the popular Lamaze method or the Leboyer approach. More and more fathers are present during labor and actual childbirth in hospital as well as home births.

“... my husband wanted to take me downtown so I could go to the hospital, and I said, “I’m not a-goin.”

One Rogue Valley father present at the birth of his three children—all born at home—termed the experience profound. “It was an incredible thing to be there when my children were born,” he said. “I think men who aren’t there miss out . . . I feel a very strong bond with my kids.”²²

Another new father mentioned the awe-inspiring aspect of attending the birth of his daughter. "I knew I would only be doing this once," he said. "And it hit me that this was a part of me that would live on after me, and her children or her children's children would have something to contribute to the world. It was something that hadn't been as clear as when she was born."²³

Family planning is another major change in the pattern of birth in this century. Many couples in southern Oregon and the United States are having fewer children and are having them later. According to Charloyne Clark, head of nursing for maternal/child services at Rogue Valley Medical Center, more and more first-time mothers are in their late thirties and early forties.

While a high quality of life in southern Oregon today offers women and their infants better chances of healthy, happier births, obstacles and dangers in childbirth remain. While expectant pioneer mothers a century ago faced fear, physically exhausting daily work and a lack of proper care or education, mothers today face dangers their forebears could not have known existed.

Alcohol and substance abuse is one of the hazards confronting mothers today. Secondary complications such as sexually transmitted diseases also place mother and child in jeopardy. And a growing problem in southern Oregon, as in the rest of the country, is Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). The number of babies born with AIDS is doubling every year. The age-old ills of abused mothers, teenage pregnancy and abusive parents also erode the well-being of mothers and infants and are still very much in evidence in the Rogue Valley today.²⁴

Science and technology are anxious to plunge into childbirth and become both mother and father to future generations. Ten years ago the first child conceived outside the womb and implanted in her mother was born in Great Britain amidst a flurry of controversy. Today the birth of "test tube babies" rarely makes the eleven o'clock news except in passing. Fertility drugs, genetic engineering, surrogate mothers, sperm banks and the possibilities of artificial

uteruses carrying fetuses to term offer complex emotional and moral dilemmas for the parents of the future.

Though the modes, technologies, attitudes and fears surrounding childbirth have changed drastically in the past hundred years, parents today still share the same profoundly human joy as they hold their babies for the first



Margaret Schumpf and grandson George SOHS #1246

**To be sure, many a pioneer
woman reached the
end of her rope
before her childbearing
years ended.**

time, as did early settlers Mary and Elkanah Walker:
"Husband returned in the evening with a thankful heart,
I trust, and plenty of kisses for me and my boy."



ENDNOTES

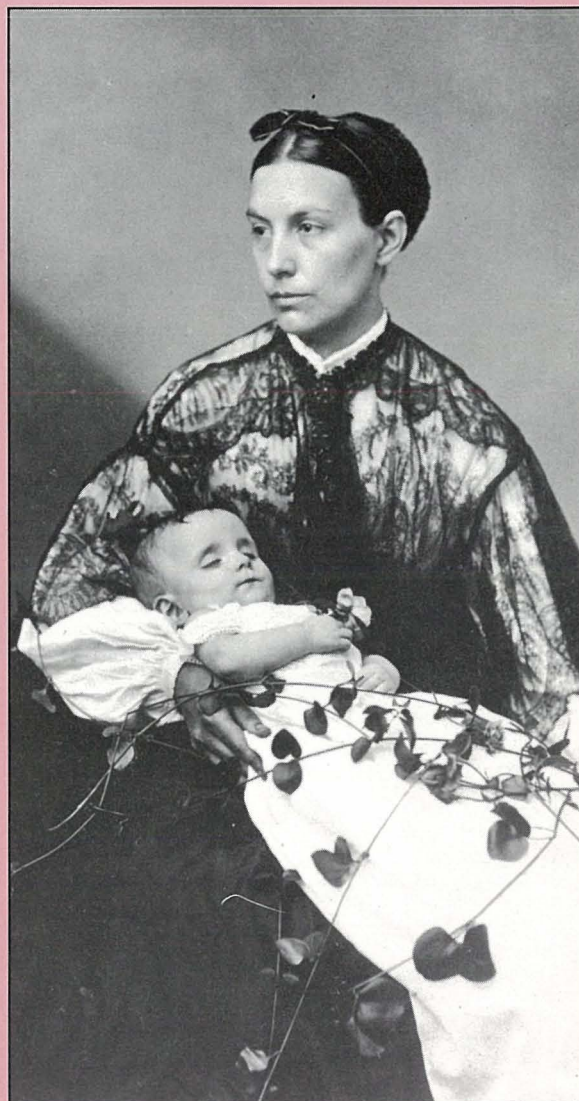
1. Carol Luchetti, Carol Olwell, *Women of the West* (Antelope Island Press, 1982), p. 67.
2. Personal interview with Nan Hannon, Ashland resident/mother, Jan. 1989.
3. Rasmussen, Rasmussen, Savage, Wheeler, *A Harvest Yet To Reap, A History of Prairie Women*, (Toronto, Canada: The Women's Press) p. 74.
4. Luchetti, Olwell, *Women of the West*, p. 25.
5. Rasmussen, Rasmussen, Savage, Wheeler, *A Harvest Yet To Reap*, p. 74.
6. John Mack Faragher, *Women and Men on the Overland Trail* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1979) p. 138.
7. Judith Walzer Leavitt, *Brought To Bed, Childbearing In America 1750 to 1950* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 64.
8. Fleetwood Churchill M.D., *On the Diseases of Women* Philadelphia: Blanchard and Lea, 1852), p. 405.
9. Churchill, *On the Diseases of Women*, p. 406.
10. Luchetti, Olwell, *Women of the West*, p. 27.
11. Kay Atwood, *An Honorable History* (Medford: Jackson County Medical Society, 1985), p. 12.
12. Faragher, *Women and Men on the Overland Trail*, p. 58.
13. Faragher, *Women and Men on the Overland Trail*, p. 123.
14. Julie Joy Jeffrey, *Frontier Women, The Trans-Mississippi West 1840-1880* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1979) p. 58.
15. Jeffrey, *Frontier Women*, p. 58.
16. Leavitt, *Brought To Bed*, pp. 104-110.
17. Leavitt, *Brought To Bed*, p. 168.
18. Oral history interview with Gertrude Rosencrans, Southern Oregon Historical Society #OH17, p. 32.
19. Personal interview with Charloyne Clark, director of nursing for maternal/child services, Rogue Valley Medical Center, Jan. 10, 1989.
20. *Ashland Daily Tidings*, Jan. 14, 1989 (UPI article outlined that in 1987 ten out of every 1,000 babies born in the United States died before their first birthdays. In Oregon that rate is slightly higher at 10.4 babies out of 1,000.)
21. *Ashland Daily Tidings*, Jan. 26, 1989 (UPI article reported that the Public Citizen Health Research Group recently charged that nearly half of the Caesarean section surgeries performed by physicians in the United States in 1987 were unnecessary and endangered the lives of 475,000 women and their children.)

22. Personal interview with Gerald Champagne, Ashland resident/father, Jan. 1989.

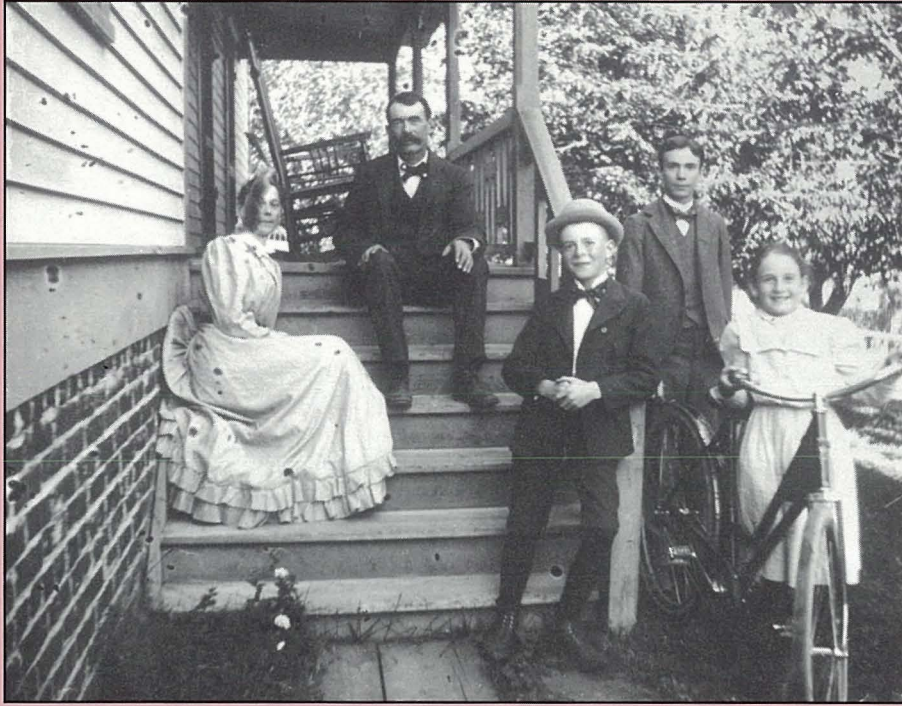
23. Personal interview with Dan DePaola, Rogue Valley resident/father, Jan. 1989.

24. Personal interview with Charloyne Clark.

Besides working for the Southern Oregon Historical Society as a publications/photography specialist, Robin Speake is also a free-lance writer and artist.



**A century ago, disease, accidents
and post-partum complications
caused many infant deaths.
Photographs of the deceased child
might be the loving parents' only
record of their offspring. SOHS
#12267**



Margaret and Horace Hicks and their three children pose on the porch of their home in Ashland. After her husband's death, Margaret operated several rental properties in the Railroad District. SOHS #12402

District Landladies

By Sue Waldron

A woman's role in the late nineteenth century was well defined. The Victorian Age dictated that woman's place was in the home, producing children and caring for her husband and family. There were even "scientific" reports that could prove educated working women had fewer children and were negligent in caring for their families.¹ Women like Sarah Hale, editor of *Godey's Lady's Magazine*, or Alice Freeman Palmer, the president of Wellesley College, were extremely rare.

The years after the Civil War changed the definition of woman's role and gave women in the East new opportunities to become a part of the working world. The lack of marriageable men after the war forced many

young women who might have preferred marriage to become wage-earners.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, women's earning opportunities typically involved domestic labor—cooking, sewing, keeping boarders, waitressing, and doing laundry. The shortage of males and the fact that some colleges had opened their doors to females allowed women to move beyond traditional domestic service vocations and into more public occupations: teaching, clerking in stores and doing office work. But in the Rogue Valley, women still worked at low-paying domestic jobs in the post-Civil War years. Valley towns simply lacked the employment opportunities found in more urban environments.

The completion of the railroad to California in 1887 brought increased wage-earning opportunities for Rogue Valley women, however. The Depot Hotel and the other hotels that opened in Ashland soon after the railroad's arrival needed chambermaids and waitresses. As the railroad's influence in Ashland grew, the number of boarding houses and homes that took in roomers increased. Single women, particularly widows with children, found it easier to take in boarders than to leave home to earn a wage. Being mostly single men, the railroad workers employed women to do their laundry. As a result, traditional domestic jobs for women who needed to work abounded in Ashland at the turn of the century.

The low pay that went along with these jobs, though, was what motivated some working women to purchase property, build rental houses and become landladies. The Railroad District in Ashland provided such an opportunity. The area near the tracks was undeveloped before the railroad's arrival and inexpensive lots still were available. Between 1895 and 1910 nineteen single women owned property in the Railroad District. These women were single for a variety of reasons. Some were single by choice; some were widows; and some were divorced. They all found that earning income from rental property was a way to become self-sufficient.

Anna and Ida Hargrove operated a millinery store on East Main Street in Ashland around the turn of the century. SOHS #2300



Anna and Ida Hargrove chose a more creative outlet in their bid for self-sufficiency. They opened a millinery store at 50 East Main Street. The success of their shop allowed them to build an eight-room home on the corner of Spring and First Streets in June 1909. They chose the district for their home because inexpensive, undeveloped land was available only blocks from their shop. Architect Frank C. Clark drew up the plans for their building on Main Street and he probably designed their new home as well. When completed, the house was described as "... one of the handsomest bungalows in town."² It still stands at 185 Pioneer Street. In 1911 Ida married Robert Neil, but Anna continued to live in the house for many years.

The Victorian Age dictated that woman's place was in the home.

Like the Hargrove sisters, Eli K. Anderson found property in the district an inexpensive investment also. In 1908 he deeded the property at 142 B Street to his daughter Belle. Belle chose to remain single and worked for many years at the Ashland *Tidings*. Belle didn't live in the district but rented the house to the railroad families who preferred to live near the depot. The rent Belle collected augmented her salary and her inheritance from her father.

Belle rented her house to supplement her income from another job, but that income was not essential to her lifestyle. Mattie Brown, on the other hand, needed the rent from the little house next to her home to keep a roof over her family's head.

Mattie Irene Perkins was born August 27, 1873, in Wisconsin and came to Ashland in 1892, where she met Charles H. Brown. Charles was a miner but found the pickings rather slim in Jackson County. He decided to try his luck in Alaska, hoping to make a quick fortune so he could ask the red-haired Mattie to become his wife. Luck wasn't with Charles in Alaska either; he and his partner found they had purchased a "salted" mine. While trying to figure what to do with the worthless hole, Charles became severely ill. During his long convalescence in Alaska he

wrote Mattie many letters asking her to wait for his return and painting a rosy picture of their future. Mattie waited. When Charles returned they were married. Charles went to work in the Ashland Mine and the future looked bright. Soon their family grew to include a son and a daughter. In 1897 Charles bought property and constructed a house at 725 B Street. Afterward he built a small house next door as a rental.

Charles was a miner hoping to make a quick fortune so he could ask the red-haired Mattie to become his wife.

Charles died in November 1902 leaving Mattie with four small children, two houses and less than rosy prospects. The rent from 733 B Street provided some income for Mattie which she added to by taking in laundry, earning fifty cents for every twelve pieces laundered. The children helped when they could by taking fruit to the railroad station to sell to train passengers. Mattie made her daughter Queritta a red-hooded cape to wear to the depot. The red cape attracted the passengers' attention—she did look cute and it also made it easier for her older brother and sister to keep track of her.

As the children grew, so did Mattie's financial needs and she decided to move from the small house on B Street to a two-story house on Oak Street. Now she had the income from two rental houses. In later years Mattie was able to buy a third house on Fourth Street which she also rented. But Mattie needed more income and began doing laundry for the Oregon Hotel. Several years later she went to work for a regular salary at the Ashland Laundry Company on Water Street.

In 1910 Mattie's oldest daughter Marguerite, married a renter, John H. McMichael, a hostler with Southern Pacific. Later the couple moved to Weed, California, and had two children. Mattie's second daughter married Melvin Kaegi, whose family owned and operated the White House Grocery on Main Street in Ashland. They had two sons. Clyde Brown worked for the railroad, married and lived in Ashland. Mat-



Mattie Brown Photo courtesy Dale Kaegi

tie's youngest son was killed in an automobile accident on Winburn Way in 1920 on his twentieth birthday. With her children gone, the demands on her income decreased and Mattie was able to return to her home at 725 B Street where she died of a heart attack in 1942.

Just as Mattie used her rental income to support her family, so did Julia Evans, although she probably started off with more capital than Mattie had. In 1899, Julia, a widow with an eleven-year-old son, bought property on Third Street. In mid-September that year she awarded a contract to E. G. Perham to build two houses on the property for \$1,100 each. Julia lived for several years in the house at 74 Third Street and rented the house next door at 70 Third Street. In 1903 she sold the next-door property for \$1,400 and was able to buy the property at 526 East Main Street. Julia moved to East Main in 1909, renting out the house on Third Street. But money became more of a problem, so in 1911 she sold the Third Street house and began renting furnished rooms at her East Main Street address. Julia's rental property supported her for a number of years, but without the supplement of wages she was unable to keep her property.

When Horace J. Hicks died in the summer of 1900 he left his wife well provided for. He owned several pieces of property around Ashland including the family house on Bush Street. His wife, Margaret, bought several pieces of property in the Railroad District early in 1900 and over the next two years had rental houses built at: 64 Third Street in the spring of 1900; 120 Second Street in April 1901; and 350 B Street in October 1901. With rents averaging \$10 a month for each of her houses, Margaret had a steady income for her three children. Clifford was able to attend the University of Oregon. LeRoy and Vera attended the Normal School in Ashland. When Margaret's health began to fail in 1908 she even was able to afford a trip to southern California. Warmer weather did not improve her health,

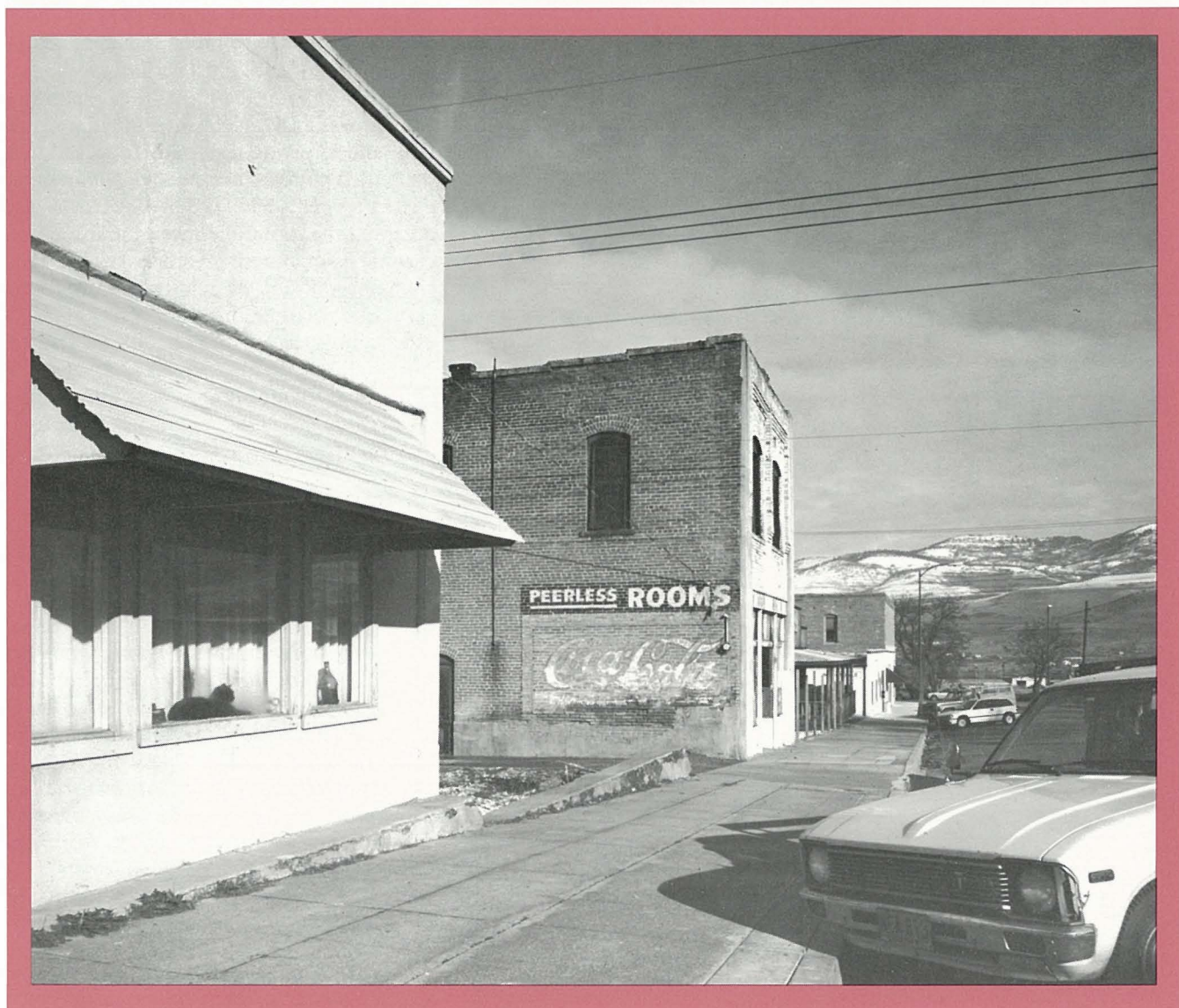
however. On April 28, she died there in Pomono. Each of her children inherited one of the houses in the district. Clifford sold his house on Third Street in 1910. Vera sold her house on Second Street in 1914. LeRoy held on to the B Street house until October 1920.

Margaret had been able to give her children extras such as a good education with the help of the income from her rental properties. She also was able to leave each of her children a home or a source of income if they wanted to keep their inheritance.

One of the most affluent women to own property in the Railroad District was Lucinda Ganiard. Lucinda was the wife of Oscar Ganiard. They had been very successful with their ranch in Sams Valley and moved to Ashland in 1884, building a home on First Street. Oscar died in 1895 after building the Opera House on Main Street. Lucinda kept

When Lucinda Ganiard built the "Commercial Building" on Fourth Street in 1899, it contained boarding rooms on the second floor and stores on ground level.

Photo by Natalie Brown



tight control over money matters. For example, she knew the price of a bar of Crystal Soap and just how long it should last.

Lucinda began building in the district in 1899 with the Ganiard Building on Fourth Street. The two-story building had boarding rooms on the second floor and stores on the ground floor. Merchandise in the stores was damaged during the district's devastating fire in May 1903 and Lucinda sold the building that winter. She wanted to get the maximum

income from her property and liked to build two houses on each plot of land. The houses at 438 and 450 A Street were built in March 1899. In June 1901 she had houses built at 333 and 343 B Street. By 1903 Lucinda was managing six rental houses in the district.

When Lucinda died in April 1907 she left her daughter Lottie, thirty-seven pieces of property worth almost \$12,000. The property included the family ranch in Sams Valley where Lottie was born and where she met and married John E. Pelton in December 1884. But most of the property Lottie inherited was in Ashland, including the six rental houses and Lucinda's home on First Street. Lottie retained the house at 228 B and the small rental house behind it when she divorced John in 1902. For several years she managed seven rental houses. Then in 1909 she began selling pieces of property to meet her financial obligations. Much of her inheritance had been sold by 1926 when her always-fragile health failed during a visit to her daughter Mable in Portland.

The stigma of being a single working woman was easier to bear in the more transient and forgiving Railroad District than in the settled portions of Ashland. Many of the district residents had lived in other towns and accepted the more unconventional income-earning woman with greater ease. The ever-changing railroad population did not concern itself with a neighbor's occupation, especially if they were not railroad-related. The railroaders also created a constant demand for rental homes that allowed the district's single landladies a dependable route to self-sufficiency.



ENDNOTES

1. Catherine Clinton, *The Other Civil War* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1984), p. 152.
2. *Ashland Tidings*, December 1, 1909.

Local Historians Sue Waldron and Kay Atwood put together a portion of the Ashland Landmarks Heritage List. Funded by grants from the State Historic Preservation Office and the City of Ashland, the list identifies over 300 buildings of historic significance in Ashland's Railroad District. While compiling the research, Waldron and Atwood noticed that the names of several single ladies repeatedly appeared as owners of houses. Additional research led to this article.

Sue Waldron is also a researcher for the Southern Oregon Historical Society.

Activities Celebrate Women's History Month

March is National Women's History Month, and local artists and scholars join with the Rogue Valley Women's History Month Project to offer Jackson County residents a variety of educational and entertaining events. Selected activities include:

- *Heritage: The Women of Jackson County*. Oral history dramatization by Carolyn Myers offers one hundred years of humorous and intimate monologues by Rogue Valley women.
 - Fri., March 3, SOSC Science Lecture Hall, Ashland, 7:30 p.m.
 - Mon., March 6, Upper Rogue Community Center, Shady Cove, 2 p.m.
 - Wed., March 8, Crater High School, Central Point, 3:30 p.m.
 - Tues., March 14, Ruch Library, Ruch, 7:30 p.m.
 - Wed., March 15, Eagle Point High School, Eagle Point, 7 p.m.
 - Thurs., March 16, Rogue River Presbyterian Church, Rogue River, 3 p.m.
 - Sat., March 18, Gold Hill Methodist Church, Gold Hill, 7:30 p.m.
 - Sat., March 25, Carpenter Hall, Ashland, 8 p.m.
 - Tues., March 28, Prospect School multi-purpose room, Prospect, 2:30 p.m.
- *Women's History Quilt*. Linda Thirwall offers hands-on quilting to adults and children.
 - February 28–March 4, Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum, Ashland, 1–5 p.m.; and
 - March 6–18, Hands-All-Around, 150 N. Pioneer, Ashland, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.
- *Annapurna: Great Himalayan Adventure*. Arlene Blum presents a slide lecture of her epic journey across the Himalayas.
 - Tues., March 7, Ashland Hills Inn, Ashland, 7:30 p.m. Admission \$4–\$6.
- *Women Honoring Women*. A reception honoring community women at Crater High School library, Central Point.
 - Wed., March 8, 3 p.m. Free admission.
- *What I Haven't Told You Yet*. Dori Appel and Dashka Slater present a mixed-media performance of poetry and music expressing the lives of girls and women.
 - Sat., March 11, SOSC Stevenson Union, Ashland, 8 p.m. Admission \$2–\$3.
- *Women in the Environmental Movement*. One-hour lecture by the Rogue Group Sierra Club.
 - Tues., March 21, City Hall, Medford, 7:30 p.m. Free admission.

For more information on these or other Women's History Month activities, contact Lou Lyman at (503) 482-2026 or Mary Perry at (503) 488-2159.

By Raymond Lewis

Moses Allen Williams



Father of Presbyterianism in Southern Oregon



Neither a biological father nor a father in the strictest sense of religious denominational usage, the Rev. Moses Allen Williams nonetheless earned the title “Father Williams” from citizens of all faiths in the early years of the Rogue Valley’s settlement. In one sense he was a father, having established the first successful Presbyterian congregation in Jackson County in 1857.

But the Father Williams most southern Oregonians of the last century knew was the tireless preacher and teacher who found time to marry and bury, counsel and console all who were in need, regardless of their religious affiliations or the lack of them.

Moses was born September 26, 1811, in Washington County, Pennsylvania. He received his early education from his parents, according to a local biographer.

From his father [he] learned to use tools, operate the grist mill, repair the farm wagon and construct simple mechanical devices. He built fences, plowed, cultivated and harvested, cared for the animals and milked the cows. He learned to ride, hunt and fish. In short [his] . . . home training developed the practical versatility that was manifest through his life.¹

Having graduated from Jefferson College in 1839—at the age of twenty-seven—Moses left to teach in the South. In 1843 he became a candidate for the ministry in the Presbytery of Georgia. A year later he was ordained and received his license to preach. In that same year he entered the theological seminary at Columbia, South Carolina, and studied there for a year. After another year of teaching he enrolled in Princeton Theological Seminary, graduating in 1849.

He then became a pastor in Uniontown, Pennsylvania, a post he held for three years at an annual salary of \$500. Strangely enough, at Uniontown Williams was described

as “only a moderate preacher,” and some dissatisfaction was expressed with his sermons. Membership declined and in April 1852 he resigned. In his diary he wrote, “I do not wish to see any difficulty spring up in the church on my account. O God, forgive the imperfect manner in which my labors have been performed.”²²

While in Uniontown he corresponded with the American and Christian Union, learning that there had been a request for a teacher to found an English school in Chile. For years Protestants in Latin America had been rigidly prohibited from practicing their religion, but during the 1830s authorities relaxed the restrictions. European immigrants organized Protestant churches, and the Methodist-Episcopal church opened missions in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Eager to make a change in his life, Williams applied and was appointed as a missionary in Chile. Along with his other duties, he was expected to establish a Presbyterian church school there.

He spent several months in New York preparing for his new assignment, studying Spanish while he boarded with a helpful Spanish family. During this period he met the Jacks family at Elizabethtown, New Jersey, and established a warm friendship with Amelia Jacks, a relationship he later renewed in California.

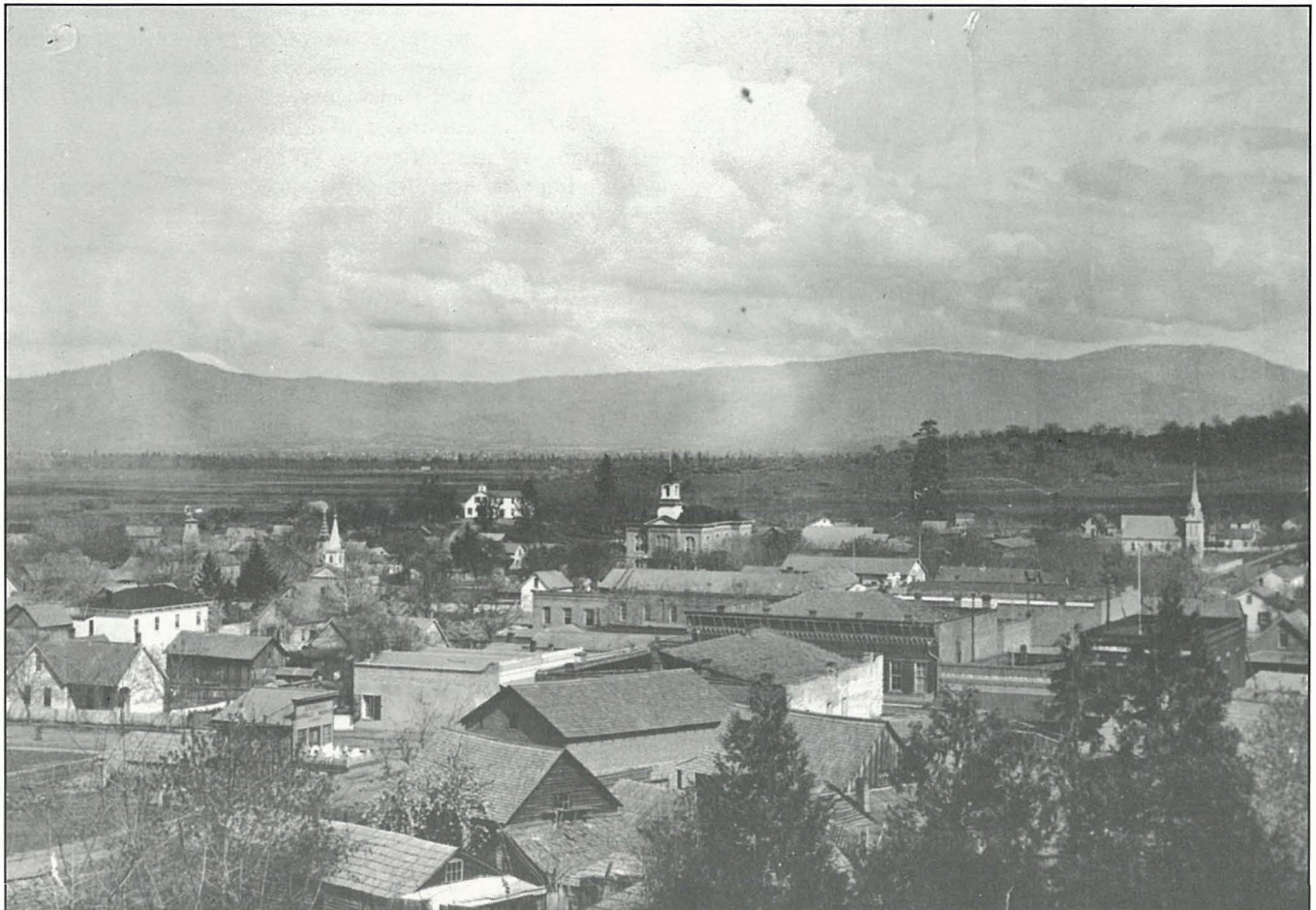
In March 1853, he set sail for Valparaiso, Chile, on the *John Marshall*. After a rugged four-month trip around Cape Horn, the little ship's crew and fifteen passengers docked at their Chilean seaport destination. Once estab-

*It was obvious that Jacksonville
was relaxed in its spiritual
discipline and could use some
godly direction.*



lished, Williams threw himself into his work, although he continued to suffer from sickness that he attributed to the rough passage and the deprivations of shipboard life.

Only months later, Williams hired instructors and opened a school in a large house on the port plaza with an enrollment of about forty boys who paid seventy-five dollars for tuition and board for a three-month term. Williams gave private instruction in English to young



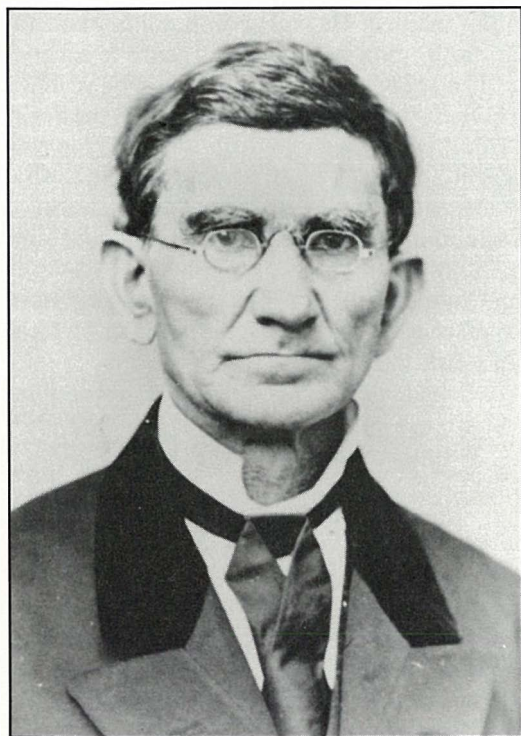
Father Williams' efforts can be seen in an 1885 photograph of Jacksonville; the Presbyterian church's steeple spires at the far right. SOHS #7623

Chilleans, using the Bible as his text and drilling his students on religious practices and memorization of Scripture.³

From the first, however, he complained about the burden of operating his school, finding it difficult to keep up with administrative duties and responsibilities as well as day-to-day tasks. Writing in the *American and Foreign Christian Union Monthly* in October 1855, he declared:

"Thus have I labored with all diligence to carry out the plans of the Christian Union, with a great sacrifice of comfort, and wear and tear of body and mind. I have before said that this school is wearing me out. Were I not as tough as rawhide, it would have broken me down long since. My labor has been that of at least two persons—one man and one woman—for all the domestic affairs of the concern fall upon me also. In fact it would keep one man busy merely to superintend and have everything in the order it should be, to say nothing of the labor of teaching."⁴

After devoting three years to the school, during which time his health continued to deteriorate, he concluded that a further stay would prove fatal to him. At the end of 1855 he asked to be relieved of the assignment, and in January 1856, he was given an appointment in California.



Squire William Hoffman SOHS #1725

Arriving in San Francisco in the summer of 1856, Williams was delighted with the change. For his entire stay in Latin America, he had been deeply concerned that his duties as teacher and administrator were too secular. But his appointment in California would once again give him the opportunity to reach out and preach.

His California assignment gave Williams no definite itinerary; as a missionary, he appeared to have been on his own. His objectives were to save souls, to give comfort to those who yearned for it, to advise those who sought spiritual guidance, and to establish churches where they were needed and where they would prevail.

Late in 1856, after preaching in several churches in the Bay Area, Williams took an exploratory tour of Puget Sound and the lower Columbia River. At Port Gamble he preached, on Whidbey Island he hunted ducks and deer and at Olympia he attended Bible class. On Christmas Day, Williams took a steamer to Portland and he also visited Vancouver, Oregon City and other neighboring communities. Bad weather prevented his traveling into the Willamette Valley, so he took a steamer back to Astoria where he presented sermons at the customs house and visited the oldest Presbyterian church on the Pacific Coast at Clatsop Plains. After preaching there, he returned to San Francisco.

The following year, Williams visited Benecia, Santa Rosa, Napa and Vallejo, preaching as he went. Ministerial friends also suggested he explore northern California, an area he soon concluded was ripe for the gospel. Populated with miners, Indians and frontiersmen, northern California and southern Oregon had been overlooked by most other denominations and Williams expected to find a throng of receptive listeners. He spent several months visiting rowdy mining camps in Shasta City, Etna, Yreka and other towns in northern California, preaching in schoolhouses, tents, courthouses and once in a hotel barroom where the men continued gambling during the service. He made some effort to establish a church in Yreka, but was diverted from the endeavor by the possibilities to be explored in southern Oregon.

On October 31, 1857, he arrived in the Rogue River Valley. According to Miller:

[He] was first entertained at the home of Isaac Hill. The next day he preached at the Dunn schoolhouse . . . There were about a dozen present in the morning and 35 or 40 at the evening service. He visited Claiborne Neil, Patrick Dunn and other families at the head of Bear Creek. A few days later he was welcomed at Gassburg by the Colvers.⁵

Visiting Jacksonville, he found a dedicated little group of Presbyterians who had been called together by Squire William Hoffman and his family.

At that time, Jacksonville was a thriving frontier metropolis bustling with activity; but it also was obvious that the city was relaxed in its spiritual discipline and could use some Godly direction. The Methodists had so far managed to erect a meeting house, but a home for Presbyterians was lacking.

Encouraged by Hoffman's enthusiasm, Williams took the initial steps toward organizing a church, announcing the plans following the sermon he delivered November 15 at the Methodist meeting house. The following Sunday in a meeting at the Hoffman home, Williams formally established the congregation. Hoffman was elected a ruling elder, as was Samuel E. Van Dyke. Other charter members included William Wright, William Hoffman, Ashman J. Butler, E. P. Rand, Jane Wright, Keziah Van Dyke, Caroline B. Hoffman, Mary Gore and Elizabeth Hoffman.

As was often the case with itinerant missionary ministers, Williams soon left behind his newly established church to grow on its own, faithful that it would endure

and prosper. He returned again to the Bay Area to preach and visit other congregations and old friends.

Among those friends was Mrs. Amelia Jacks, now a widow with two children, William and Carolita, and a one-hundred-acre farm near Napa. Mrs. Jacks was a dedicated Presbyterian and Williams soon found himself listing her charms in his diary, describing her as "a fine Christian lady" whose virtues at times intruded on his mind even during devotionals. Finally, Williams admitted that the church alone could not fulfill all his needs; at forty-six, the well-traveled minister was in love.

Impressed with Williams' godliness and kindness, Mrs. Jacks accepted his proposal of marriage and the couple wedded in the Napa Presbyterian Church on July 14, 1858.

Back in Jacksonville, however, Elder Hoffman was doing his best to keep members interested in maintaining their new church, leading prayer meetings and arranging occasional sermons by traveling preachers. Believing that a full-time minister was crucial to the survival of the Jacksonville congregation, Hoffman wrote repeatedly to Williams, begging him to return to the Rogue Valley.

Now married, Williams decided the challenge of maintaining a regular ministry in a church of his own appealed to him. Following a honeymoon in San Francisco, he and his bride prepared to leave California behind and arrived in Jacksonville in September 1858, less than a year after Williams had first established the Jacksonville church.⁶

Other denominations were ahead of Williams. The Baptists, led by Myron Stearns, were meeting in private homes. The Methodists already had a church and the Catholics had begun construction of their church on Fourth Street

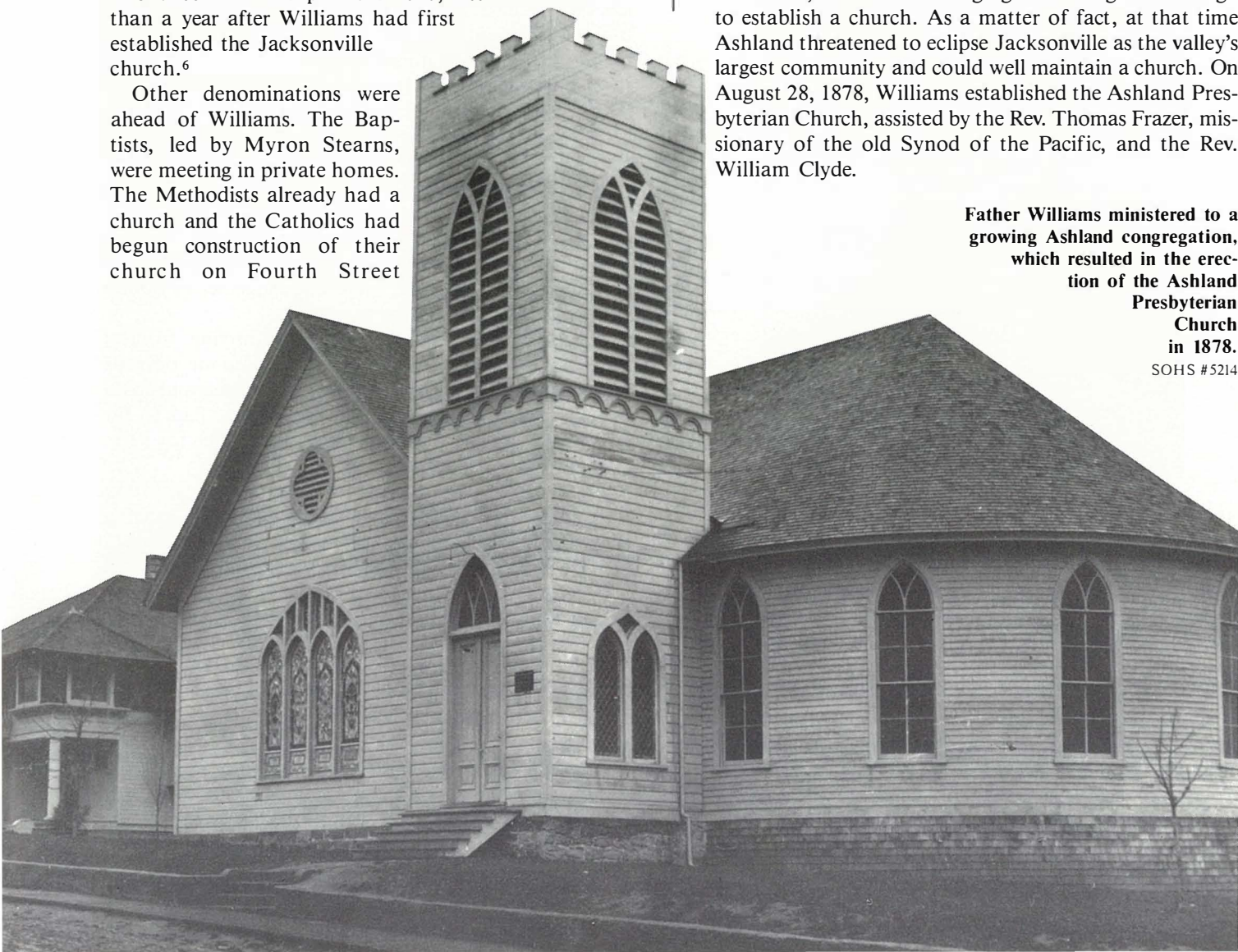
in Jacksonville. But aside from Stearns and Thomas Fletcher Royal, the Methodist preacher, Williams was the only permanent minister in the valley. One of his first moves upon arriving was to buy 150 acres on Bear Creek, which is today the property occupied by the National Guard Armory and the Jackson County ball park, and to begin plans to build a home. Toiling above and beyond their duties, church members soon raised a house and out-buildings. In time, the preacher had fruit trees, gardens, a barn and livestock.

Williams' congregations were not limited to the faithful in Jacksonville. He preached his first sermon in Ashland on October 10, 1858, and for years maintained a regular Presbyterian ministry there, traveling the long distance to and from Ashland on horseback. He conducted his pastoral work around his Sunday schedule. Leaving home on Friday or Saturday, he visited families along the way, preaching twice on Sunday. He visited from house to house during the day and worked his way home Monday in a similar manner. He called on families of all faiths — or of no faith — and presented his cause in a very direct manner. If no congregation awaited him he visited neighboring homes, singing hymns and quoting the Scriptures.

In 1875, the Ashland congregation had grown enough to establish a church. As a matter of fact, at that time Ashland threatened to eclipse Jacksonville as the valley's largest community and could well maintain a church. On August 28, 1878, Williams established the Ashland Presbyterian Church, assisted by the Rev. Thomas Frazer, missionary of the old Synod of the Pacific, and the Rev. William Clyde.

Father Williams ministered to a growing Ashland congregation, which resulted in the erection of the Ashland Presbyterian Church in 1878.

SOHS #5214



Charter members included: Martha L. Gillette, Ellen Giddings, Mayheta Jacobs, W. W. Kentnor, Laura I. Woodson, Harriet Ewing, Janetta Buick, Ann H. Russell, Mary M. Dunn, Betsy I. Taylor, Claiborne Neil, Louisa Neil, Martha Wells, Samuel Grubb, Elizabeth Grubb, Charles Goodchild, Mrs. E. Goodchild, Helen Ralph, Jane Marshall and Nancy E. Applegate.

For the first three years services were held in a schoolhouse on East Main Street. Williams preached a sermon once a month until the Rev. J. B. Donaldson assumed the pastorate. A church building was erected in 1878 on the corner of Main and Helman Streets. Costing \$3,141.86, the building was dedicated free of debt three years later.

Williams maintained a schedule similar to his Ashland ministry in Gassburg, preaching at the Colver house. About 1862 a community church building was begun there in association with the Methodists. Owing to delays and shortages of funds, the Presbyterians gained ownership of the unfinished building and moved it to lots donated by Samuel Colver and James B. Thurber. The building was dedicated on June 4, 1871. This was the first Presbyterian church building in southern Oregon. It was free of debt and Williams proudly declared that "we owe no man anything but the debt of gratitude."⁷

Williams stayed on as minister at Phoenix until 1882, when Rev. Clyde came to the church. A procession of ministers followed until the Rev. Robert Ennis took charge in 1886. He remained until 1890. The little church acquired a belfry and a bell in 1910. It was abandoned for a newer, larger structure in 1928. During the Depression years the building stood idle. Subject to the wear and tear of time and vandals, it was eventually sold and torn down for lumber.

During his first five or six years preaching in Jacksonville, Phoenix and Ashland, Williams also held services at the Kahler schoolhouse near Willow Springs, the Wrisley schoolhouse near Table Rock, and the Rice schoolhouse. He often appeared at Little Butte Creek and Gall's Creek, where he held afternoon sermons, and at Swingle's schoolhouse where he performed on Sunday evenings.

In addition to his religious responsibilities, Williams was elected Jackson County School Superintendent in 1862. He had previously assumed leadership in a campaign to improve the schools, and expressed concern about inefficiency in the system. He received a salary of \$300 a year for this political position for which he interviewed teachers, issued teaching certificates, and allocated and spent school money for the county. In 1864 he was unopposed and was re-elected for a second term.

In 1866 his second term as superintendent expired, but after leaving public office, he continued working with the schools, visiting classes and instructing teachers. He also kept up his interest in civic affairs. When President and Mrs. Rutherford B. Hayes visited Jacksonville in 1880, Williams attended the reception in Holt Hall and was present the next morning to cheer the President on his way. He was among the crowd when the cornerstone was laid at the courthouse in Jacksonville in 1883. On occa-

sion he read the Declaration of Independence at Fourth of July celebrations, acted as chaplain for the Southern Oregon Pioneer Society, and attended musical programs, memorial services and church affairs. While he fitted these appearances into his busy schedule, his farm chores kept him busy too. In his leisure hours he wrote wills and letters and completed mortgages. "He taught music, appraised property, lent tools, donated clothes, signed petitions, made loans, doctored wounds, removed warts and helped to repair mowers, to shock wheat and to raise barns," his biographer wrote.⁸ He also assisted his wife, building for her a grape squeezer, a clothes press and a quilting frame. Sometimes he helped her clean house, dry

*He called on families of all
faiths — or of no faith — and
presented his cause in a very
direct manner.*



corn, make soap and preserve fruit. On wash day he carried water from Bear Creek. While she washed, he put the clothes through the wringer.

Eager to give his stepchildren an education, Williams sent Will to City College in San Francisco and Carolita to Mills Seminary at Benecia. In 1870 finances were tight and his wife sold twenty-nine acres of her Napa farm for \$2,604, a sale which considerably eased the demands for money.

Three years later, Amelia Williams fell victim to typhoid fever. Moses was at her side constantly but his prayers and the prayers of his flock were in vain. She was buried in the Jacksonville Cemetery.

For many years the members of the Jacksonville Presbyterian Church had been unable to afford to erect a church building. They held Sunday services in the Methodist Church for more than twenty years, longing all the while for a church home of their own. At last in 1879 they purchased a pair of lots from James Cluggage, who had given them a choice of several locations. The site was directly across from St. Mary's Academy on California Street.

The fund drive for the building was well underway by June, and once rolling, it picked up speed and became a community project. The ladies held a strawberry festival and donated \$158.50 to the fund. Musical programs, plays, dramatic readings, food sales and parties were held, with proceeds given to the building fund, which had a goal of \$4,000. Madame Holt, owner of the new U. S. Hotel — and a Catholic — presented an ice cream festival in Holt Hall and served homemade ice cream, lemonade and fresh strawberries while the Silver Cornet Band played. Jane McCully and the pupils of her private school gave several fundraising benefits.

On the first Sunday in December 1881, the church was dedicated. Myrtle P. Lee, the first curator of the Jacksonville Museum, wrote in her brief "History of the Jacksonville Presbyterian Church:"

At last dedication day arrived. December 4, 1881, will long be remembered. Hearts swelled with pride, tears of joy filled the eyes of all those who had labored long to make this dream come true. The text of the sermon delivered by Reverend Hill was "The Building of Solomon's Temple." Father Williams gave the history of the church from its beginning.⁹

In March a Sunday school was organized and classes met in the church basement. Squire Hoffman was superintendent and fifty young people were enrolled.

At the death of his wife in 1873, Father Williams was sixty-two-years-old. Desperately lonely, he made an effort to ease his grief with work, but it was not easy. As a widower with his step-children grown, he found little pleasure in life. To pass the time, he scrubbed floors, darned clothes and baked bread. And he dedicated more time to ministering throughout the area. Preaching in remote areas of the valley, he often appeared at Rock Point, Antelope and Brownsboro. At the same time he held services in Jacksonville and Eagle Point.

In 1884 he remarried. His second wife was Sarah Livingstone Van Dyke, the widow of Samuel D. Van Dyke, who had been a close friend. They married at Linkville. She was sixty-three and he nearly seventy-three. On their honeymoon trip they visited the presbytery in Portland, the synod in Seattle and made a side trip to Victoria, traveling in a new buggy Williams had bought for the occasion.

The marriage apparently relieved his intense loneliness and gave him renewed enthusiasm for preaching. Williams acquired new responsibilities at Grants Pass and Medford and continued preaching at Eagle Point. His second bride was a loving companion; she accompanied him when he made his pastoral calls and preached in other towns. They were often seen walking together down the railroad tracks to pay visits in Medford. When she did not accompany him, he arranged for someone to stay with her until he returned.

Shortly after the marriage, he began making plans for a new house. Construction was held up for some time, however, because Williams continued to lend money to needy petitioners. Eventually, in 1892, after he floated a \$500 loan at ten percent interest from the Beekman and Reames banking firm, he completed the \$1,500 house.

The year of his second marriage, Williams resigned from the Jacksonville church. Augustus R. Bickenbach became the pastor in his place. But in spite of the gala opening three years earlier, the unforgettable dedication ceremony and the enthusiasm, both Jacksonville and the church had begun their decline. By 1884, there were only twelve church members, the number remaining after many of the faithful had transferred their memberships to churches in Ashland and Phoenix. Further losses followed in 1885 when the new Medford church drained off more people.

The same year, Father Williams began preaching once a month in the Grants Pass schoolhouse. People there regarded him warmly but his advanced age and his precarious health prevented him from organizing another new congregation so far from home, and he left that task to another minister, Robert McLean.

Nearer Jacksonville, however, the new city of Medford commanded his attention. Medford was the center of great activity. A schoolhouse was built and Walter Gore, Father Williams' son-in-law, became the first principal. Storeowners from nearby towns moved their establishments to the community, brand new enterprises sprang up and the population increased rapidly. Father Williams preached on Sunday afternoons in one of the store buildings. Interest and attendance continued to develop and on March 29, 1885, he organized the Medford Presbyterian Church. Augustus Rickenbach and J. V. Milligan served as his assistants. While plans were made for a new church building, Father Williams conducted services in the schoolhouse on South Central.

C. C. Beekman donated two lots on Main and Holly for a building site and the members launched a campaign to establish a building fund. Williams walked all over town soliciting subscriptions, even renting a cart to ride from door to door after his ankle gave out. In the fall of 1886 he donated the foundation stones he had been saving for his new home and he and his wife paid generous pledges. The foundation was laid in November 1886, and the church was dedicated on September 4, 1887. The frame

"He taught music, appraised property, lent tools, donated clothes, signed petitions, made loans, doctored wounds, removed warts and helped to repair mowers."



building could seat 175, and on dedication day it was declared free of debt.¹⁰

Ill health prevented him from serving regularly during the winter of 1887. Eneas McLean assumed the Medford pastorate, and Williams gave up his ministry there. In 1889, however, he began to hold regular services in Central Point, Gold Hill, Gall's Creek and Griffin Creek and continued his preaching at Eagle Point. During the forty years he spent in southern Oregon, he undoubtedly performed more marriages than any other local preacher. In his later years he sometimes read the ceremony for the children of those he had earlier united in marriage.

Finally, because of the illness of his wife, he was forced to give up the ministry in 1890. He stayed home to take care of her, but at the same time managed to hold serv-

ices at Griffin Creek. As the years passed, his own ailments became more frequent. At first his wife nursed him faithfully, but before he became seriously ill, her health gave way. Forced to tend to her needs, he spend much of his time at her bedside, reading from the Bible or from novels such as *Ben Hur* and *Pilgrim's Progress*.

In October 1897, in honor of his eighty-sixth birthday and to recognize the fortieth anniversary of his arrival in southern Oregon, his friends gave him a surprise party.

*"Thus have I labored . . . with a
great sacrifice of comfort,
and 'wear and tear' of
body and mind."*



They found him alert but very ill and weak, and the party was of short duration to prevent over-tiring him or his wife.

Father Williams lingered on until December 1897. His funeral was held in the Jacksonville church, and he was buried in the Jacksonville Cemetery alongside his first wife Amelia. His second wife survived until August 1902.

When Moses Williams first made the Rogue River Valley his permanent home, he already was middle-aged. But this in no way diminished his accomplishments. His principal work was still ahead of him. He was a preacher and farmer, and maintained a lifelong interest in education. He loved the rough out-of-doors and rode horseback, hunted and fished. Yet despite the pressure of his duties he found time to write, maintaining a diary for forty-six years and corresponding regularly with members of his family.¹¹

Williams, although never a real father, for much of his life looked and spoke like a Biblical prophet. His dedication and service, his sympathy and affection won him the respect of everyone and so he became "Father Williams."

When Williams arrived only one denomination had a church building and resident minister in southern Oregon, but he lived to see Presbyterians well established in the region. For nearly twenty years he was the only permanent resident Presbyterian minister . . . The churches in Medford and those at Jacksonville, Phoenix, Ashland and Grants Pass are the visible long-term fruit of his husbandry . . . He never wrote a book, nor held a pastorate in any large church, nor sought honor in some important office in the denomination, yet his faithfulness and his humility made him great . . . As a venerable spiritual leader, it was natural that he was "Father" to many people and he richly deserves the title, "Father of Presbyterianism in southern Oregon."¹²

ENDNOTES



1. Clifford R. Miller, *Shining Light* (Ashland: Presbytery of Southwest Oregon, 1972), pp. 23, 24.

2. Miller, *Shining Light*, p. 24.

3. Miller, *Shining Light*, p. 45.

4. Miller, *Shining Light*, p. 55.

5. Miller, *Shining Light*, p.55.

6. Although he appeared in Jacksonville at an early date, Moses Williams was not the first Presbyterian to preach there. Thomas S. Kendall spent several weeks in the area in 1854 and announced that he had founded a church, but after he left for other assignments his church soon disappeared.

7. Quoted by Mary Ann Campbell, *Medford Mail Tribune*, Aug. 31, 1975.

8. Miller, *Shining Light*, p. 127.

9. Myrtle P. Lee, *History of the Jacksonville Presbyterian Church* (Jacksonville: Southern Oregon Historical Society).

10. In October 1895 this church was destroyed by fire. The congregation almost immediately began a new building. It was larger than the original church, was constructed of brick, and cost \$1,800. The new church was dedicated in May 1896. Father Williams participated in the service.

11. The originals of the diaries are located in the archives of the University of Oregon at Eugene.

12. Miller, *Shining Light*, p. 12.

*For seven years, Raymond Lewis edited the Southern Oregon Historical Society's **Table Rock Sentinel**. He is now retired in Jacksonville.*



Phoenix Presbyterian Church, shortly after its dedication

SOHS #986

The First Presbyterian Church graces
the east end of Jacksonville in this
photograph by Peter Britt, ca. 1882.
SOHS #675



Amazing Grace

Jacksonville's Presbyterian Church



By Patricia Oxner

Come discover an often-overlooked historic treasure in Jacksonville: the First Presbyterian Church! Acclaimed in 1884 by A. G. Walling in his *History of Southern Oregon*, Walling described the church as: "The most ornate and handsome in southern Oregon, with stained-glass windows, and a seating capacity of two-hundred-and-fifty—a credit to those who so generously gave toward its erection."¹ Today, this church still looks as if it belongs on a greeting card. Its tall spires pierce the sky, and a fresh coat of paint has restored, as near as possible, its original colors.

This charming historic gem often eludes the casual visitor to Jacksonville because it is off the main highway and is surrounded by large trees. More serious visitors may shy away because it remains an active church. Since its founding more than one hundred years ago, it has been blessed with a fully supportive congregation, which makes it unique among the early Jacksonville churches. This blessing may, in part, be due to the dedication of the early founders who were determined to give their best effort in building a suitable "House of God."

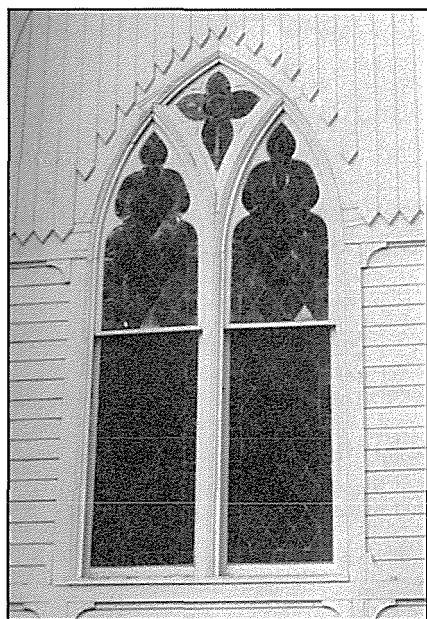
The story of the founders begins right in the small front yard of the church, where a granite boulder stands as a memorial to those early faithful. A brass plaque bears the inscription: "Dedicated to the mem-

ory of Rev. M. A. Williams and the following noble pioneers who organized this church—November 22, 1857." The list of names includes: William Hoffman, Caroline Hoffman, Elizabeth Hoffman, S. D. Van Dyke, Keziah Van Dyke, William Wright, Jane Wright, A. J. Butler, E. P. Rand, and Mary Gore. Led by the Rev. Moses "Father" Williams, these early settlers established the first Presbyterian congregation in Jackson County.

Moses Williams was born in 1811 in Pennsylvania. After graduating in 1839 from that state's Jefferson College, he preached in Georgia and Ohio, taught for a short time in Chile and preached in California before coming to the Oregon Territory in 1857. On November 22, he organized the First Presbyterian Church of Jackson County after a meeting in the Methodist Church (now Saint Andrews Episcopal Church) in Jacksonville. The following year, at age 46 he brought his new bride, the former Amelia Jacks, and her two young children to live in the Rogue Valley. With help from neighbors, he established a farm in the vicinity of the present Medford Armory. Once settled in the Valley, he ministered for another forty years.²

Father Williams kept an extensive diary totaling nearly sixteen volumes. The original manuscripts are housed at the University of Oregon archives in Eugene. Excerpts from his April 1860 entries give us a picture of the life and times of this unusual man:

"Sabbath 8th, Did not sleep much on account of fleas and bedbugs. This lack unfits me much for the sacred duties of the Sabbath. Felt better after being up a while. The day began to be stormy about 9 to 10 A.M. Thought over my sermon by the fire in the midst of the children. When it is not too cold I can walk out to study. A very common inconvenience which I recognize in this valley, when I wish to read my Bible is, there is no light scarcely in the houses, from the want of windows. When it is not too cold the doors are set open for light. At Mr. L's, and indeed at other places, I find a chink or hole about the jamb stones and hold the Bible close to it, and thus make out to read sometimes. Preached at 11 A.M. to some ten men, the snowstorm prevented the women from coming. I spoke about the Sabbath, its blessings, specially the injurious effect of Sabbath desecration, as



Window detail SOHS #12403

being the opening door to all other vices, having a tendency to abrogate all moral distinctions, leading to infidelity, intemperance, violence, the prison and the grave. Had much freedom of speech and felt solemn. Bless this sermon, O God of the Sabbath, bless all my labors in this valley for the sake of Thy dear Son. Ret. home by night.³

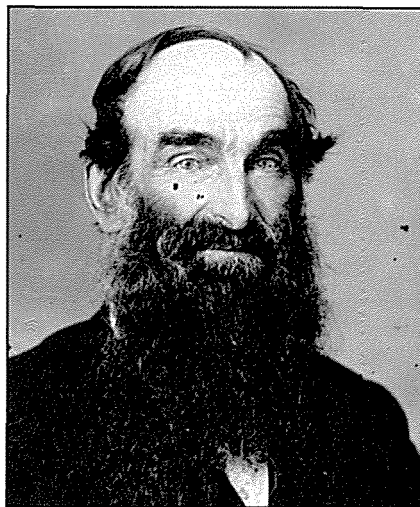
Father Williams died in 1897 at age eighty-six. His funeral was conducted by fellow Presbyterian ministers at Jacksonville Cemetery.

Although Father Williams organized the faithful, the church owed its existence to many pioneer families. William Hoffman and Samuel D. Van Dyke were among the first elected elders. Hoffman and his wife Caroline, helped establish the first "Sunday School," and he served as clerk of the session for twenty-eight years. (Hoffman's daughter Julia became the wife of Cornelius Beekman, and Father Williams married Van Dyke's widow Sarah after his first wife died of typhoid.) All of these early families were great benefactors to both Williams and the church.

The early congregation met in the Methodist-Episcopal Church, in homes of the faithful, and in the local school for nearly twenty-five years. In 1878, church trustees William Hoffman and C. C. Beekman purchased a parcel 100 by 200 feet near the old St. Mary's Academy. These donation

land claim lots were originally owned by James Cluggage. He sold them for \$250, and Beekman paid off the note plus ten percent interest within a year.⁴ A small shack was cleared off the lot and fundraising became the order of business. With great enthusiasm the ladies of the church held strawberry, lemonade, and ice cream "sociables." A benefit held in Madame Holt's new hall in the United States Hotel employed a brass band to help raise both funds and spirits. The Presbyterian Board of Home Missions donated \$500.⁵

In 1879 George Holt, a brick and stone mason, built the foundation, primarily of cut rubble sandstone and brick. Holt also had built the United States Hotel and the Jackson County Courthouse in Jacksonville. Carpenter David Linn completed the



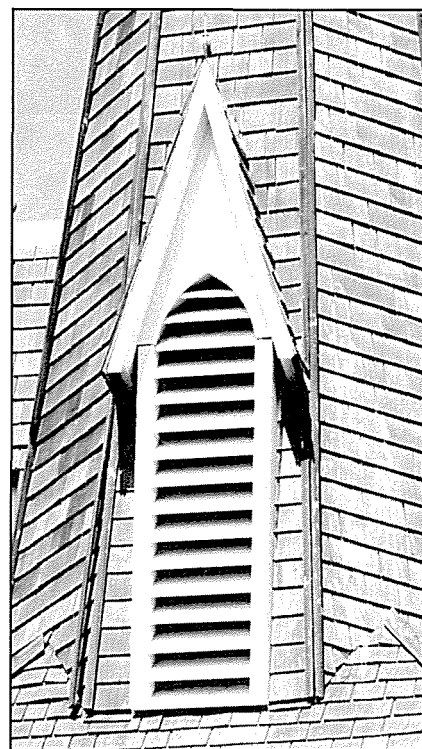
Moses Williams SOHS #11414

frame, church roof, and belfry. By the end of July, the steeple was complete and J. L. Carter and Son were busy painting the exterior.

C. C. Beekman bought a 1,000-pound bell in San Francisco, cast in 1880 by the firm of W. T. Garratt. According to an article in the *Oregon Sentinel*, "The bell is of fine manufacture with a splendid tone—on a clear morning we think the ringing of the bell can be heard six or seven miles."⁶ The steeple, which is eighty to eighty-five feet high, rises approximately twenty feet above the bell. The original shingles on this tower were

replaced in 1963 by contractor Milton Wallace. Church members recall that the actual work on the steeple was done by an inmate from the local jail as he was the only "steeplejack" who could be found. "We felt very lucky to have him," said Renie Edens, "As not many men have the constitution to do that kind of work."⁷

C. C. Beekman, the town banker, and his family contributed greatly to this church. Although there is no official record of his church membership, Beekman paid a large percentage of the costs, which totaled a little over \$6,000.00 He purchased a stove and heater from Kaspar Kubli for \$110.00 and assumed the last \$1,694.89 of debt so there would be no claim against the church. He also ordered shade trees planted around the grounds. Several lovely old maples still grow around the church and one can't help wondering if Beekman planted them. He also provided fire insurance for a time.⁸ His daughter, Carrie Beekman, enthusiastically purchased a new organ, ordering it from Vermont in January 1880, at least a year before the church was ready for it.⁹



Church detail SOHS #12404

With a little history of the building behind us, let's take a look at the present-day interior of the sanctuary—a tough climb up seventeen steep, narrow stairs. For many of the older members of the congregation, this in itself is almost a pilgrimage! The brass hard-

double-hung sash windows (four along each side of the church), have buff and cream center sections with brilliant scarlet and royal blue borders that form pointed arches. The windows came from Italy, were shipped around Cape Horn, and were carried to Jacksonville on the backs of mules. The most decorative windows are dif-

vived," he said, "Especially when you consider how far they had to travel."¹⁰

As you look up from the windows, eight light fixtures dominate the ceiling area. They are flat metallic filigree, painted in gold and copper tones. The holders for today's light bulbs used to hold glass kerosene lamps. A case at the back of the



In the late nineteenth century, the First Presbyterian Church sported a railing that divided the pews; presumably men sat on one side, women on the other. SOHS #12405

ware on the outer double doors catches the eye as one side has a keyhole, but the other side only has the impression of a keyhole shape. The handles on the inner doors are made of brass and porcelain and are mounted against leather protective backing plates on the doors. The little alcove-like entry comes into the church right under the bell tower and the heavy, knotted bell cord always hangs there inviting all who enter or leave to give a hefty pull and wake the Sunday sleepers. A large portrait of Father Williams, with his great, gray beard, greets you and beckons you into the sanctuary where you immediately notice the geometrically patterned stained-glass. These eight large

difficult for any of the congregation to see as they are opposite the altar, but they are beautiful to contemplate from the altar and surely serve as an inspiration for those giving the service.

Tim Yockey, a glass specialist from Ashland, knows these windows better than anyone. The church hired him in 1986 to repair and restore this beautiful old glass, hand painted and stenciled. Yockey said the sealant used between the glass and lead was unusually hard, which made repairs difficult at best. Trying to match colors used in Europe more than one hundred years ago also presented quite a challenge. "I am amazed at how well these windows have sur-

church displays one of the original lamps along with part of the original silver communion service, old hymnals, pictures, and an early handwritten sermon.

There is no center aisle as the pews form one large block of seating, but they are divided with a wooden panel through the center, thought by many to have originally separated the men and women. A wainscoting of alternating strips of light and dark stained wood surrounds the lower walls. The upper walls originally may have been plaster or wood and wallpaper, but today they are covered with firtext installed in the early 1950s. The firtext was fashioned to form a cross at the front of the church by installers

Roy V. Martin and Otto Niedermeyer. Years later, Otto's daughter Joyce, contacted Jim Rautson, a Portland architect, to design a cross of wood and hammered antique copper to fit the firtex cross. Joyce hammered the copper strips into a pattern adapted from the windows, and local cabinet-maker Gary Smith, completed the wooden part of the cross. Dedicated June 20, 1971, the cross dominates the front of the sanctuary.¹¹ Sitting below the cross are three very old, ornate

ministers' chairs thought to be contemporary with the building. Downstairs, the first floor of the church contains a meeting hall with the original sugar pine floors.

In the late forties and early fifties church members built an addition to the rear of the church that provided a kitchen, restrooms, and classrooms.

Sadly, no ancestors of the founders remain as church members today. Nellie Niedermeyer has held the longest church membership, joining in

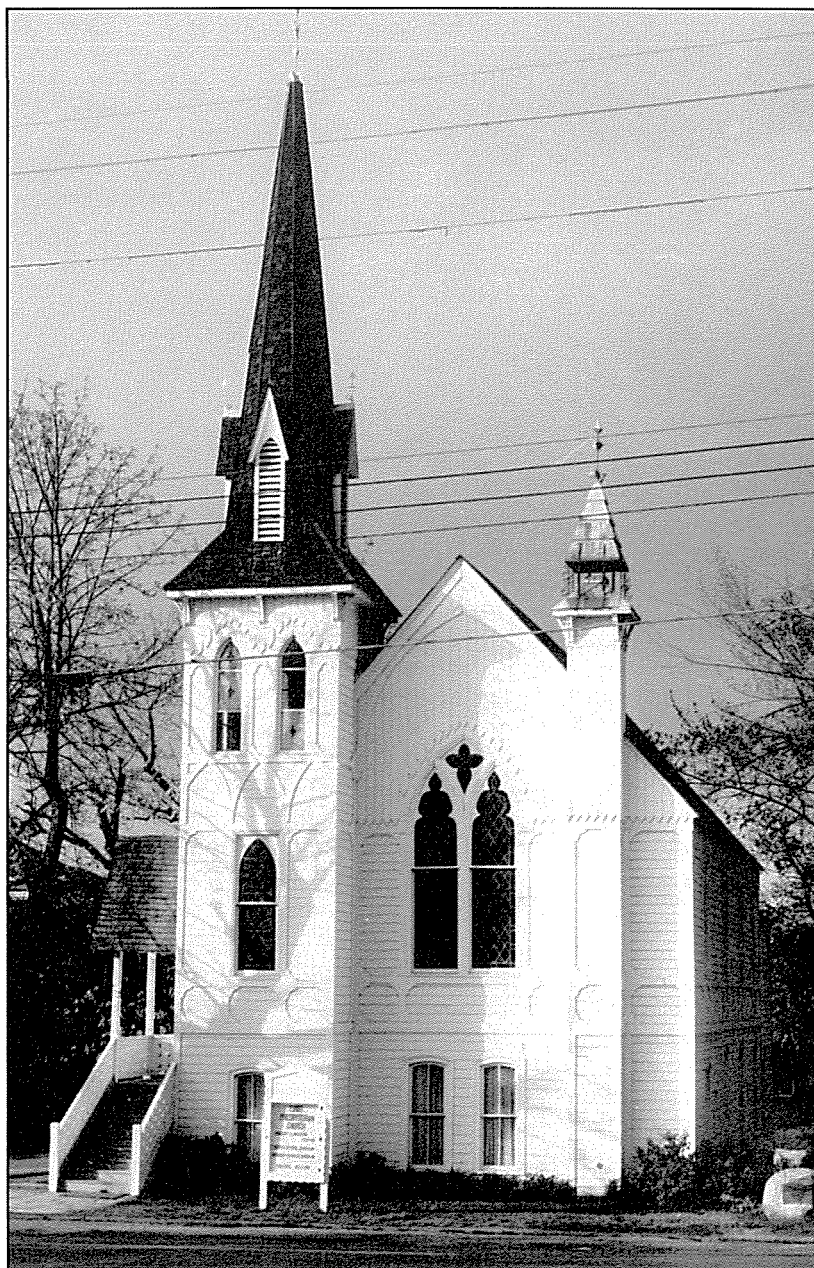
1921. Renie Edens came to the church in 1946, but remembers many stories of church life told by her mother-in-law, Sarah Edens, who attended from 1926. Both recall times of church out-houses and wood furnaces. Renie remembers church custodian Mattie Boosey, "a tiny woman who carried kindling to the church from her house on North Oregon Street."¹² When she died, years later, her coffin was carried into the church. This was the only time anyone can recall a coffin in the church, probably because of the steep stairs and difficult access.

In 1976, about \$14,000.00 was spent restoring the foundation, recovering the roof, and painting. The final report states that, "All projects ran over their original estimates because of unknown problems associated with a building of this age." It goes on to mention the hours, building supplies, and monetary contributions donated by the congregation and community.¹³

In the fall of 1985 a Church Properties and Maintenance Committee recommended an extensive preservation project. The exterior of the building was showing areas of peeling paint, cracking and dry rot. The stained-glass was warping and major exterior renovation seemed very necessary to those shouldering the responsibility for preserving the past.

Between 1985 and 1987, \$45,000.00 was raised, in part by reviving the old-fashioned "sociables." to complete this project. Some of the badly decayed pine and fir siding was replaced with cedar; loose boards were renailed and caulked; and old layers of loose paint were removed.

Much of the work was done by Greg Olson, a Salem carpenter specializing in historic building restoration. Olson observed that the church was not expensively built, and probably constructed quickly. "There is an efficiency in design which allows it to appear very impressive—where a comparatively small amount of money went a long way in design."¹⁴ From the layers of paint, Olson could see that the church had at times been white. But, he reports, congregations over the years seemed to prefer the



The Jacksonville church in 1970 appears little changed from its construction nearly a century earlier. SOHS #12406



A 1902 Sunday school class “minus a lot of boys who should have attended” mugs for the camera outside the Presbyterian church. SOHS #3532

more original colors. Local painter Chuck Smith restored the exterior using colors matched with the oldest layers of paint and with old brush marks discovered in the tower. Yockey completed the restoration by resoldering and resealing the windows.

As you leave this unique old building, you can't help being thankful for the countless congregation and community members who have used their energy, money, and talents to preserve this charming example of Victorian Gothic architecture. On your next visit to Jacksonville, take a few extra

moments to reflect and enjoy the beauty of this old church, called by some “the historic gem of southern Oregon.”



ENDNOTES

1. A. G. Walling, *History of Southern Oregon* (Portland, Oregon: Publishing House of A. G. Walling, 1884), p. 373.
2. Clifford R. Miller, *Shining Light* (Ashland: Presbytery of Southwest Oregon, 1972), pp. 15-79.
3. Diary of Moses Allen Williams, April 7, 8, and 9, 1860, (Typed copy, Jackson county Library, Jacksonville Branch).

4. Ross and Owens, *Historic American Building Survey* (Records at First Presbyterian Church, Jacksonville, 1975).

5. Miller, *Shining Light*, p. 82.

6. Gail E. H. Evans, *State of Oregon Inventory of Historic Properties* (Salem: State Historic Preservation Office, 1979).

7. Personal interview with Renie Edens, January 16, 1989.

8. Ross and Owen, *Historic American Building Survey*.

9. Myrtle P. Lee, *History of the Jacksonville Presbyterian Church* (Jacksonville: Southern Oregon Historical Society).

10. Personal interview with Tim Yockey, January 12, 1989.

11. Nellie Niedermeyer, *Story of Our Cross* (Jacksonville: First Presbyterian Church Files).

12. Personal interview with Renie Edens, January 16, 1989.

13. Melvin Hall, *Church Treasurer's Final Report on Church Restoration Project* (Jacksonville: First Presbyterian Church, 1976).

14. Personal interview with Greg Olson, historic restoration specialist, Salem, Oregon, January 21, 1989.

Special thanks to Marlene Worden, church secretary, and Reverend Lawrence E. Jung, pastor, First Presbyterian Church, Jacksonville, Oregon.

Patricia Oxner is a teacher and former member of Jacksonville's First Presbyterian Church. She recently produced a slide show on this historic building.

Letters

Camp White Days

First of all, I want to tell you how much I enjoy what you are doing with the *Sentinel*. I was particularly charmed with your stories of Camp White because I was almost there too; my father, Charles W. Davis, was an employee of the hospital, as cashier, accountant and instructor of hospital management. He loved working there.

The two enclosed snapshots were taken outside the hospital while they took a cigarette break. There were a number of girls working there—

nurses, clerical jobs. One, in particular had been run over, well almost, by a truck and was a very nervous clerical worker. Dad used to try to see that she had a quiet room.

I am sending this letter—a Xerox of a page from an old scrapbook which includes the write-up of my father by the Medford paper. I just figure that by and by this scrapbook, now in tatters, will be in some ash can about as soon as I'm gone. Perhaps you might be able to use it—you might want to do a story on early archery in Oregon and also in Medford.

Many wonderful wishes for all of you, whom I hope to see soon.

To My Father— Who Loved His Garden

Sleep on. Take your eternal rest;
For you, the dark-skinned cherries
Swell proudly with rich, red wine;
Wild canaries and robins are back to nest
In the glossy, green trees. Along
The fence pyramiding ruby berries
Crowd emerald leaves from the vine.
Your mockingbird sings his song
Above fat plums purpling in the sun;
In the path a dog listens, tarries,
Though dust gathers on your well-loved gun.
Flowers bloom, and birds sing without fear,
Because you once lived and loved here.

Eunice Davis

From the Collections

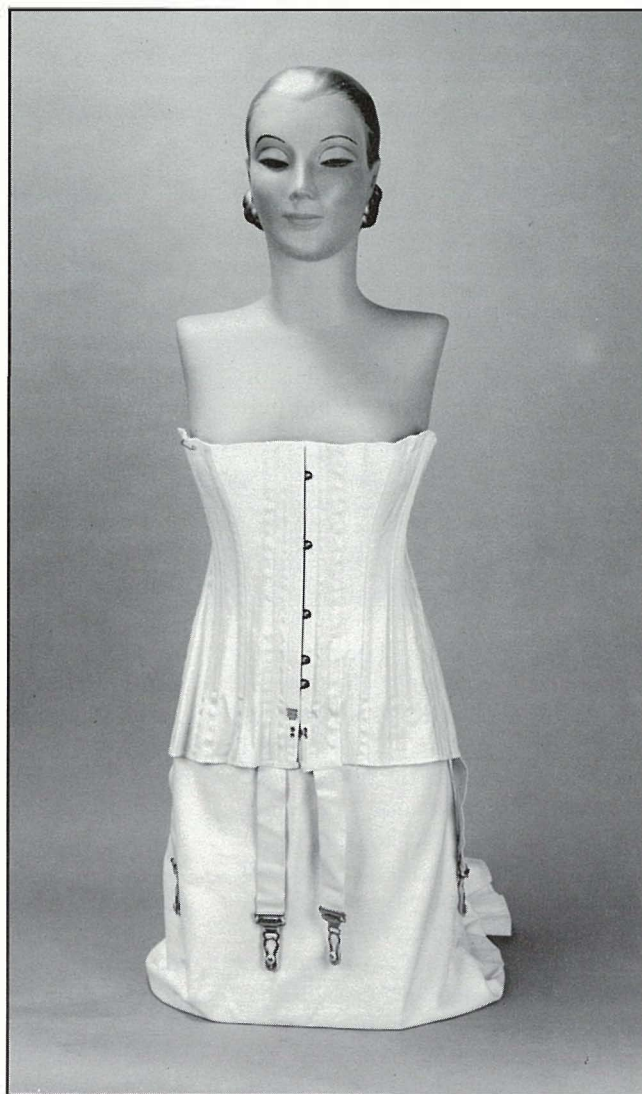
In recent years, the trend in American fashion has emphasized comfort. This has not always been the case, as the popularity of the corset in the mid to late nineteenth century suggests.

The proper Victorian lady hid her body under layers upon layers of clothing: two to three individual petticoats of silk or muslin, a thin silk camisole, drawers or knickers, and a corset. Almost in direct contradiction, however, to society's demand that she "cover up" was the accepted standard that the fashionable silhouette emphasized women's curves.

The corset, linen-wrapped and shaped with whalebone or steel, provided the wearer with her desired hour-glass figure. It also gave her an abnormally narrow waistline and pushed her body into an unnatural S-shape with a sharp bend in the lower back. While the whalebone ribbing was somewhat flexible (unlike the steel), the corset so contorted the Victorian woman's figure that over time it could dislocate internal organs and disfigure the rib cage. Most doctors detested corsets. There was even a movement underway in some counties to legislate against their use for young girls whose bodies were still growing.

Fortunately, by the 1910s, women had grown tired of being the pawns of the fashion industry at the sacrifice of their health. (Although today, one must wonder about the popularity of the three-inch high heeled shoe.) The corset was out, and looser, more natural fitting garments were in style. Today, corsets find their way into museum and private historic clothing collections and serve as reminders of how obsessed with fashion we can be at times.

The Southern Oregon Historical Society houses numerous objects that, owing to limited exhibit space, are not often seen by visitors. We hope that featuring an item bimonthly in this column will provide an enjoyable and educational view of the scope of its collections.



Calendar of Events

Through 1990

Making Tracks: The Impact of Railroad in the Rogue Valley The Society's major exhibit at the Jacksonville Museum of Southern Oregon History traces the coming and going of the railroad, how it changed people's lives and the Rogue Valley economy, its local role in the nation's battles overseas, and the introduction of the railroad worker as an important member of the valley's communities.

HANNAH: Pioneer Potters on the Rogue This exhibit features the wares and pottery-making techniques of the 19th-century Hannah pottery works (once located near present-day Shady Cove) and focuses on pioneer methods of food preservation and preparation. Jacksonville Museum of Southern Oregon History.

Through September 1989

Home Entertainment: 1852-1988 An exhibit that looks at the variety of pastime activities families and individuals have pursued during their leisure hours at home. Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum.

February 28-March 4

In conjunction with Women's History Month (March), the Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum in Ashland will sponsor a **Quilting Bee** for all interested individuals wanting to learn how to quilt on a large frame in the tradition of the American pioneers. During the museum's open hours from 1 to 5 p.m., women, men, and boys and girls (over the age of 12) are invited to stop by for a little instruction and practice. Call (503) 488-1341 for details.

March 11

All About Me is a workshop for children to introduce them to the basics of tracing their family roots and how they can preserve their present history for the future. Time: 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Children's Museum. Call (503) 899-1847, Ext. 227, by 5 p.m. March 10 to register. Admission: \$3.50 for Jr. Historians, \$4.50 for non-members.

All offices and departments of the **Southern Oregon Historical Society**, except the Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum, may be reached by calling (503) 899-1847. The telephone number for the Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum is (503) 488-1341. **Jacksonville Museum of Southern Oregon History**, P.O. Box 480, 206 North Fifth St., Jacksonville, OR 97530. Open Tues. ¼ Sun. 10 a.m. ¾ 5 p.m.

Research Library in the Jacksonville Museum, P.O. Box 480, 206 North Fifth St., Jacksonville, OR 97530. Open Tues. ¼ Fri., 2 ½ 5 p.m., Sat. 10 a.m. ¾ 5 p.m.

Children's Museum, P.O. Box 480, 206 North Fifth St., Jacksonville, OR 97530. Open Tues. ¼ Sun. 10 a.m. ¾ 5 p.m.

Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum, 990 Siskiyou Blvd., Ashland, OR 97520. Open Tues. ¼ Sat. 1 ¾ 5 p.m.

Administrative Offices, Armstrong House, 375 East California St., Jacksonville, OR 97530. Open Mon. ¼ Fri. 8 a.m. ¾ 5 p.m.

Other Jackson County organizations affiliated with the Southern Oregon Historical Society are:

Woodville Museum, First and Oak Streets, P.O. Box 1288, Rogue River, OR 97537. Phone: (503) 582-3088. Open Tues. ¼ Sun. 10 a.m. ¾ 4 p.m.

Eagle Point Historical Society Museum, North Royal Ave. (near the Antelope Creek Covered Bridge), P.O. Box 201, Eagle Point, OR 97524. Open Sat. 10 a.m. ¾ 4 p.m.

March 22

At Easter Egg-Citement, preschoolers, ages three to five, are invited to discover the traditions of the Easter holiday. Time: 1 p.m. Call (503) 899-1847, Ext. 227 by 5 p.m. March 21 to register. Admission: \$1.00 for Jr. Historians, \$1.50 for non-members.

March 28

The Southern Oregon Historical Society Board of Trustees will hold its monthly March meeting at 7:30 p.m. in the conference room of the Jackson Education Service District building, 101 N. Grape, Medford, at 7:30 p.m. Members and the general public are invited.

April 6

The Gold Diggers, an auxiliary organization of the Historical Society, is planning a **Spring FUNdraising Affair** at the Rogue Valley Country Club to benefit the Society's History Center Building and Equipment Fund. Beginning at 11:30 a.m., the luncheon will be followed by a presentation of historic kimonos with

comments by Ann Clouse. Tickets are \$12.50, and may be obtained by calling Mary Foster at 773-7711 or Duane Clay at 773-1042. Seating is limited to 200.

April 19, 21, 26 and 28

Children's Heritage Fair offers area fourth graders a unique opportunity to experience southern Oregon's past. Students enjoy re-creating traditional skills such as gold panning, and churning butter. New activities this year will include visiting the Beekman Bank, exploring pioneer methods of preparing and preserving food, and discovering early fire-fighting techniques during a "bucket brigade" relay race! Area schools will receive details soon.

April 25

The Southern Oregon Historical Society Board of Trustees will hold its monthly April meeting at 7:30 p.m. in the conference room of the Jackson Education Service District building, 101 N. Grape St., Medford. Members and the general public are invited.

ATTENTION!

The Southern Oregon Historical Society is accepting applications for its 1989 Living History Program at the Beekman House and Bank. A few paid positions are available, but volunteers are needed, too. Job descriptions and applications for both paid and volunteer positions may be picked up at the Jacksonville Museum of Southern Oregon History or Ashland's Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum. The season runs May 27 through September 4, 1989, with training beginning in April. Interested persons should contact Lead Interpreter Carolyn Sharrock or Coordinator of Volunteers Marge Herman at (503) 899-1847 for details. Deadline for applications is March 31.



P.O. Box 480, Jacksonville, Oregon 97530-0480

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 13
Jacksonville, OR

The
Magazine
of the
Southern
Oregon
Historical
Society