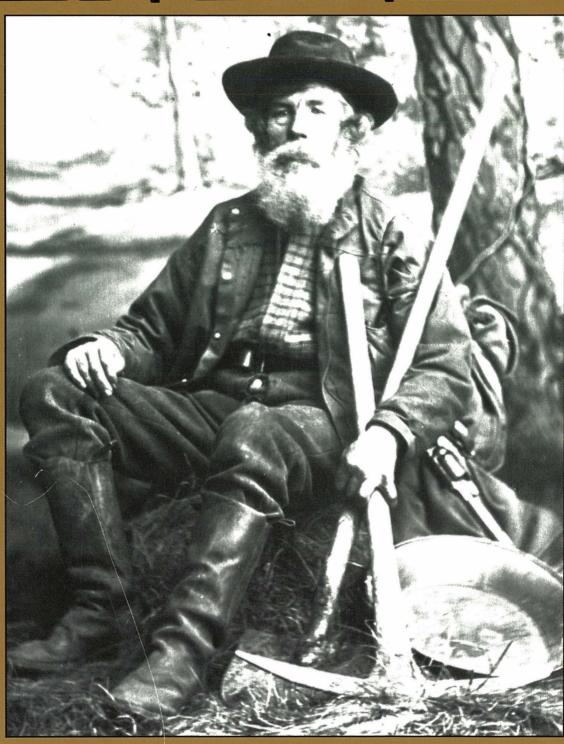
TABLE ROCK S2.50 CONTROL S2.50

SEPTEMBER OCTOBER 1990

The Magazine of the Southern Oregon Historical Society



President's Remarks



In the last few years, the Southern Oregon Historical Society has truly worked toward becoming the regional historical institution serving all of Jackson County and southwestern Oregon. The Society certainly has gone beyond what was originally evisioned by the founders—a voluntary association of individuals with common goals.

As local historical organizations (e.g., Eagle Point, Gold Hill, Lake Creek, Rogue River)

increase, the overall mission of the Southern Oregon Historical Society will continue to expand, providing increased service to the four-county region of Jackson, Josephine, Klamath and Curry counties. As local interest in preservation and interpretation develops and grows, increased pride in local communities will result. Additional historical organizations will provide the needed impetus to develop a sense of what each community has contributed to the overall history of southewestern Oregon.

The role of the Southern Oregon Historical Society will continue to expand as people become more aware of their unique community history. Citizens will look to the Society's resources to meet their needs. The Southern Oregon Historical Society will not be a static institution, but a force in the growing sense of what we once were and what we ultimately can be.

Gary H. Wheeler, O.D.

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The **Table Rock Sentinel** is published bimonthly by the Southern Oregon Historical Society. Administrative and membership offices are at the History Center, 106 N. Central Avenue, Medford, OR 97501-5926. 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, 106 N. Central Avenue, Medford, OR 97501-5926.

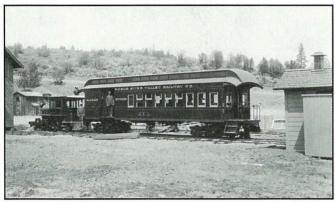
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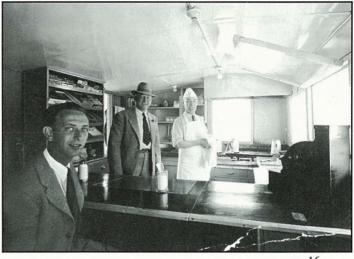
CONTRIBUTIONS: Address all editorial communications to **Table Rock Sentinel**, 106 N. Central Avenue, Medford, OR 97501-5926. We are happy to consider queries and contributions. All material must be identified with the sender's name and address, and will be returned if sent with sufficient postage. 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. Editorial Production and Design: Natalie Brown, Susan Ray; Typography: ProType; Printing: Ram Offset Lithographers.

VOLUME 10, NUMBER 5

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Features

2 The Jacksonville Story by Richard Engeman
First published in 1980, the book The Jacksonville Story will soon be reprinted as a

First published in 1980, the book *The Jacksonville Story* will soon be reprinted as a revised and updated second edition. In this condensed version of the forthcoming volume, Engeman explores the celebration and devastation that surrounds Jacksonville's history, and the rich palette of characters that turned the town from a mining camp to a trade center and finally to a National Historic Landmark city.

16 Having It Dell's Way by James Kelly

Many fast-food chains now offer hamburgers to southern Oregonians, but only Dell's can call Medford home. Proud of having served more than 11,000,000 burgers in sixty years, Dell's is still a place where grandfathers who remember their first Dell's Burger can take young grandchildren for a taste of Medford's history.

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Front cover: Optimistic miner Steve Oester searched for gold on the upper Applegate River. Unpredictable results forced him to supplement his earnings by raising potatoes. SOHS #450 **Back cover:** A bicyclist dressed in turn-of-the-century garb entertains crowds at the 1965 Jacksonville Jubilee Parade.

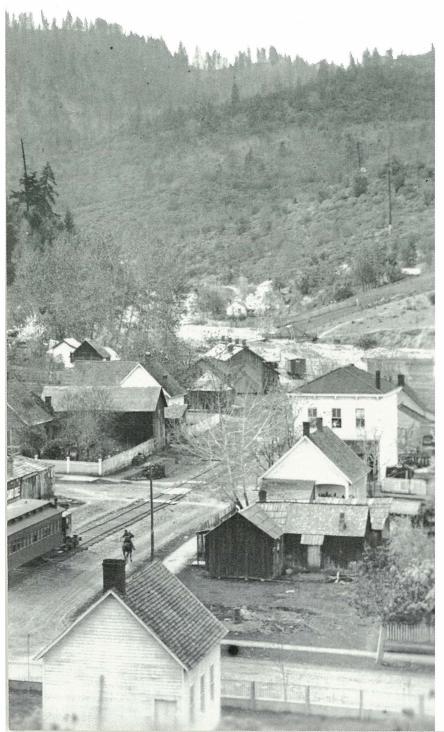


MASONIA



by Richard H. Engeman



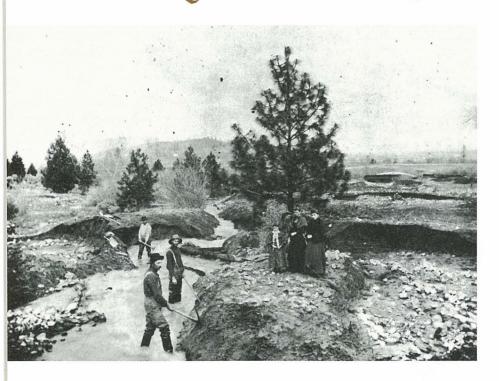


In this condensed version of the forthcoming revised second edition of The Jacksonville Story, author Engeman explores the celebration and devastation that surrounds the history of this National Historic Landmark city.

ucked away at the edge of the foothills of southern Oregon's Siskiyou Mountains is the small town of Jacksonville. Created in the early 1850s, it was first called Table Rock City after the prominent mesa visible from the town. Gold mining was the cause of its founding and the basis of its first prosperity: although it is in Oregon, it was really the northernmost camp of California's northern mining district. Later, after the easy gold had been gleaned from its gulches, Jacksonville became a prosperous center of local government, agriculture, and commerce.

The story of Jacksonville is a fascinating one. The town looks much as though it were still in the Victorian age. Its heritage includes the gold fever of the 1850s, Indian uprisings, the romance of the stagecoach and Wells Fargo & Company's express. Jacksonville's story also includes a quiet

Cluggage was claiming that he had taken out an average of seventy ounces of gold a day for ten weeks from his claim.



Placer miners work the earth on the N.C. Dean donation land claim at Willow Springs, north of Jacksonville, ca. 1895. SOHS #3260

heritage of agriculture, banking, and shopkeeping. Behind many of the names you will see on buildings throughout the town are the stories of the people who built them. The buildings and the tree-lined streets, together with the legends, the letters, the diaries, and the photographs, contribute to a full history of this colorful western town.

The Bear Creek Valley near present-day Jacksonville was originally the province of a small band of Indians, the Upland Takelmas or Latgawas. Takelman social life was based on families and small villages, and the band provided for itself with such abundant natural foods as acorns (which were pounded to produce flour), camas root, pine nuts, manzanita berries, trout, salmon, and deer. Our understanding of the early inhabitants of the area is unfortunately sketchy, for the invasion of the valley by white men intent on finding gold led to the rapid and almost complete annihilation of the Takelman bands even before

any competent observers studied their culture.

Previous to 1850, white contact with the area was very slight. Hudson's Bay trappers were here in the 1820s, but they found few of the beaver they sought for their valuable furs. The trapper and explorer Jedediah Smith passed through in 1828, and in 1837 Ewing Young's Willamette Cattle Company brought cattle through the valley from California to northern Oregon. The South Emigrant Road expedition of Levi Scott and Jesse and Lindsay Applegate blazed a trail through the valley in 1846 for overland travelers as an alternate route of the Oregon Trail to the Willamette Valley. But the Bear Creek Valley, so many miles from any established community, did not attract any settlers from these early explorations.

Members of nearly all these expeditions reported some trouble with the resident Takelmas. Their experiences, and those of later southern Oregon travelers, resulted in the term Rogue Indians being applied to a diverse collection of native tribes and bands, including the Takelmas. The Rogue River itself was reputedly so named because the Indians living on and near it were decidedly aggressive toward the intruders.

Nearly every year after the opening of the South Emigrant Road, or Applegate Trail, in 1846, caravans of emigrants made their way through the Bear Creek Valley each fall. Permanent settlement, however, had to wait until after 1849, when thousands of Oregonians headed south for the new California gold fields. Within two years, these fields extended north as far as Yreka, just across the Siskiyou Mountains from the Bear Creek Valley. In 1851, a few men who operated ferries across the Rogue River and a half dozen settlers were the only vanguards of the white invasion that came to the valley with the discovery of gold on Jackson Creek during the winter of 1851-52.

Contemporary accounts suggest that some gold was being mined, very quietly, on Jackson Creek toward the end of 1851. Sometime in the first weeks of 1852, James Cluggage and James Poole, two pack-train operators who were supplying goods to the northern California mines, found gold in Rich Gulch, a tributary of Jackson Creek. Although they were probably not the first to find gold, they are credited with being the first to spread the word that there were rich diggings in southern Oregon. According to the San Francisco Alta California, May 18, 1852, Cluggage was claiming that he had taken out an average of seventy ounces of gold a day for ten weeks from his claim. While this was very likely an exaggeration, certainly the claims were rich enough to cause a hundred or more miners to be working on Jackson Creek that spring. By summer, there was a new camp on the creek, called Table Rock City.

At the same time, some settlers, immune to the lure of yellow metal or already disappointed in trying to find it, were taking out donation land claims in the Bear Creek Valley. Despite the distance of the valley from other settlements, there was a ready market for agricultural produce: the miners. The Donation Land Act of 1850 provided a free claim of up to 320 acres for settlers who established in Oregon Territory, and many were to find that farming was a surer way to prosperity than scrambling about the hills for gold.

Another factor that was to add to the town's stability was the establishment, on January 12, 1852, of Jackson County, named for Andrew Jackson. Encompassing much of the southwestern corner of Oregon Territory, Jackson County as first formed had few settlers and no towns. No county seat was named at the time, but by 1853 Table Rock City, now renamed Jacksonville, was well enough established that it was designated the seat of government.

Although agriculture and local government were to be increasingly important to the town, gold mining was the first activity in Jacksonville, and mining has left us a colorful legacy of true tales and suspect



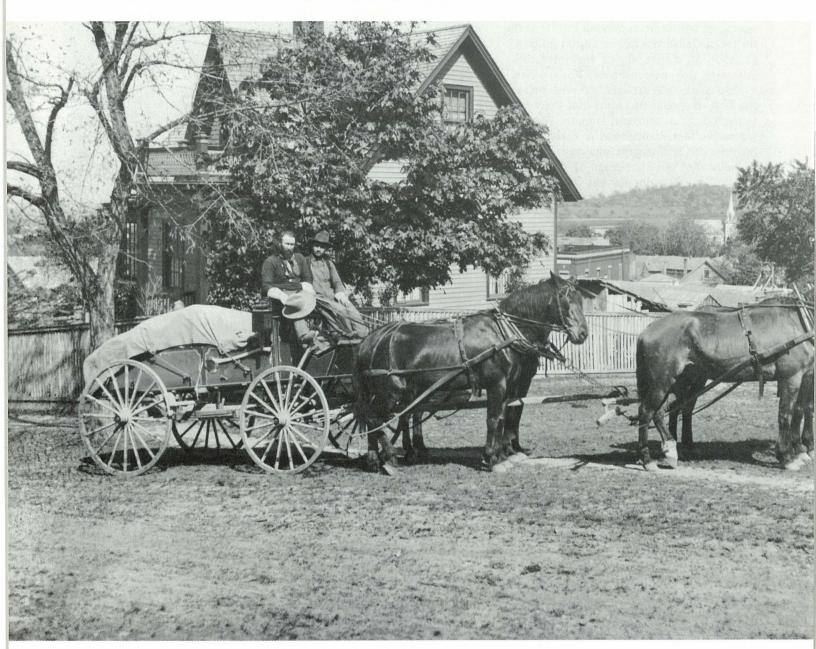
legends. It is well documented that Jack-sonville's first years were of much the same cast as those of many another mining camp of the time: rowdy and inebriated. The reminiscences of Orange Jacobs relate that in the Jacksonville of 1853 "there were but few women, and most of them not angelic. The mines were rich, money was abundant, and gambling rampant."

. . . at times the rabble would be ready to overwhelm us with . . . vindictive abuses for our noisy meetings, which we always kept up, as they said, to their great annoyance—for our house was near gambling saloons where they were, though noisy themselves, often disturbed by our singing and praying. One poor sick gambler declared we kept up a Camp Meeting at our house all the time . . . We must have reminded the wretch so often of his fallen condition that he hardly found a resting spell

Little is known about the desirable Miss Doty; perhaps she is one of the occasional actresses whose turn-ofthe-century tour included Jacksonville. SOHS #4811

There were but few women, and most of them not angelic.

With the natives disposed of in what was consucame to take out land claims.



between times. We could often smell the cigars and whisky about the window and hear the rowdies run and yell out curses as they stood around listening or as they fled mocking.

The first mercantile establishment in the fledgling town was a tent store opened in February 1852 by Apple & Kenny of Yreka. More substantial buildings began to appear that summer, when whipsawed local lumber became available. The fact that all supplies had to be brought into the valley by mule pack trains from the ports of Crescent City, California, or Scottsburg, Ore-

gon, made hardware, glass, and other building supplies very scarce and very expensive. Packers spent two weeks getting to Crescent City and back. The infrequent shipments from San Francisco, and a shallow and dangerous bay at Crescent City, contributed to the time and expense of acquiring city goods. S. H. Taylor reported in 1853 that most of Jacksonville's buildings were still built "without a board or [a] pane of glass . . . and are generally lighted by the crevices or windows of cotton cloth."

Some settlers never recovered from gold fever. Ed Schieffelin, photographed at the left, prospected in the Applegate Valley and throughout the West. He is credited with the 1877 silver strike at Tombstone, Arizona. Twenty-two years later, he died alone in a cabin on Days Creek in Douglas County, Ore-

red the best fashion of the times, more settlers



gon, after scrawling a mysterious note which hinted that he had found a rich gold strike. The gold deposit was never located, and is today identified in mining legend as the Lost Red Blanket Mine. SOHS #518

he gold placers of Jacksonville were shallow and quickly worked out and mining activities soon shifted up Jackson Creek and other nearby gulches. This left the already-worked land at the edge of the valley open and cleared for building sites. James Cluggage sensed the value of the townsite, took up a donation land claim in the area, and had the town surveyed in 1852.

The following spring saw a revival of mining operations and a new influx of settlers who were intent on farming. The appearance of a large number of whites not just passing through, now, but staying - again brought on conflicts with the Takelmas. The so-called Rogue River Indian Wars of 1851 through 1856 were actually a long series of incidents, raids and battles throughout southwest Oregon. Although a peace agreement had once been made in 1851, it was repeatedly violated by both natives and whites. In 1853 Indians attacked isolated miners, and volunteer forces of miners and settlers made raids on Indian camps. Both groups retaliated with little consideration whether or not their victims were actually responsible for the acts they were avenging. Although the town itself was never attacked by the Takelmas, the panic took a toll on Indians who happened to come to town trading, and several of them were summarily lynched. In August 1853, former Oregon Territorial Governor Joseph Lane arrived, took command of two battalions of volunteers, and by September 5 succeeded in temporarily ending the wars with the Treaty of Table Rock.

The year 1856 saw the end of the battles with the Takelmas, and the remaining members of the band were removed to a reservation at Siletz on the northcentral Oregon coast. With the natives disposed of in what was considered the best fashion of the times, more settlers came to take out land claims, and Jacksonville prospered as a trading center. The hastily built structures of the early 1850s were replaced by more substantial and imposing ones, both

wood frame and brick. Among those still standing are McCully's Hall, St. Joseph's Catholic Church, and numerous residences. A two-story wooden courthouse was built in 1858.

In 1860, the town of Jacksonville was formally incorporated. That same year, direct stagecoach service was begun between Oregon and California through Jacksonville, and the town's isolation was substantially lessened. The gold that was once sent to the mint in San Francisco by a messenger on horseback now traveled the stages under the auspices of Wells Fargo & Company's famous express. Local banker Cornelius C. Beekman, who had himself once carried the sacks of gold dust across the Siskiyous in the dead of night as a messenger, became the local agent of Wells Fargo. Although the importance of gold to the local economy was declining, much of it that was mined for miles around passed through Jacksonville on its way to the mint, for Beekman's Bank was the only one in southern Oregon.

The Jacksonville of the 1860s retained a colorful assortment of ethnic groups, a heritage of its gold rush beginnings. There were many Chinese, most of them living in a small Chinatown along Main Street. They mined, took in laundry, and worked as cooks and housekeepers in homes and hotels. Kanaka Flat on Jackson Creek is named for the Kanakas, who had been brought to the Pacific Northwest from their native Hawaii to work for the Hudson's Bay Company. There were some Indians, often Klamaths from east of the Cascade Mountains. Despite the provisions of the Oregon constitution, there were also a few blacks. Many German and Austrian Jews had come to California after the 1848 revolution in their homelands, and Jewish merchants such as the Sachs brothers, Morris Mensor, and others were a prominent part of the population. There were also other Germans, and German-speaking Swiss, such as pioneer photographer Peter Britt. In years to come, much of this fron-

Jacksonville in the 1860s retained a colorful assortment of ethnic groups—a heritage of its gold rush beginnings.

tier diversity was to disappear as mining gave way to the pursuit of agriculture. Most of the Chinese, for instance, retreated to the protective San Francisco Chinatown community in the face of a bitter West Coast outbreak of anti-Chinese feelings in the 1880s.

Delegates from the Improved Order of Redmen gathered in May 1880 to celebrate St. Tammany's Day. Minutes after this photograph was taken, the balcony of the eight-year-old Orth Building collapsed. SOHS #700

everal major buildings from the 1860's survive today, among them the Dowell, McCully, Love, Plymale, and Obenchain houses, the Table Rock Saloon, and the Haines Brothers store. The decade had been prosperous for the town, but it was a rather quiet prosperity. The 1870s were perhaps even quieter, and the town's population was sta-

ble and sedate. Possibly the greatest excitement came from several major fires. In 1873, and again in 1874, fire swept along California Street, destroying rows of commercial buildings. This resulted in a good deal of talk—but little action—about improving the equipment and training of the volunteer fire-fighting forces. It also resulted in an ordinance that required brick buildings in the commercial area. The Masonic Hall, built in 1875 after fire destroyed the El Dorado Saloon previously on the site, was the first major building constructed after this ordinance was adopted.

Construction of the Oregon & California Railroad between Portland and Sacramento began in 1868, but track-laying south of





Roseburg stopped in 1873. Although the company's surveys showed that Jacksonville would not be served by the line—geography dictated a route along the valley floor—many residents and businessmen seemed unable to accept the fact. It seemed incomprehensible to them that the chief town in the southern part of the state would not be on the railroad. As a result, many townspeople made major investments in building new homes and commercial establishments, investments that were doomed to be unprofitable.

Among them was the brick United States Hotel, begun in 1879 and completed in 1881. Built on the site of an earlier hotel of the same name (which burned in 1873), it was operated by Mme. Jeanne DeRoboam, longtime proprietor of the Franco-American Hotel in Jacksonville. Legend has it that she married brick-maker George Holt in 1873 with this project in mind. Before the hotel was quite completed, President Rutherford B. Hayes spent the night there. Hayes and his party of five, which included Gen. William T. Sherman, were traveling by stage from San

Francisco to Portland during September 1880. The reception given the Republican Hayes by Democratic Jacksonville was probably less than gracious, and the unfinished accommodations were less than luxurious. Apparently the party was charged a stiff rate for its one-night stay in an unfinished hotel with borrowed furniture. The Yreka (Calif.) *Journal* remarked on the affair as follows:

The most aristocratic hotel on this coast is Madame Holt's, at Jacksonville, the charges to the presidential party being only about \$15 a day to each person. The highest price at the Palace (Hotel) in San Francisco, for the bridal chambers of the greatest magnificence, is only \$6 a day. The high-toned cods, who boast of paying high prices, will certainly all go to Jacksonville to board, in preference to stopping at such cheap houses as the Palace in San Francisco.

The town's rival Democratic and Republican newspapers exchanged insults with one another over whether the president's reception was or was not a disgrace. The *Democratic Times* thought that a shabby reception was all that was justifiable for a lame-duck Republican president, anyway.

Gin Lin (insert), a prominent Chinese labor boss, successfully contracted a Chinese work force in the late 1800s. Jacksonville's Chinatown stands largely deserted by 1900. SOHS #1142, 2465

Many townspeople made major investments in building new homes and commercial establishments, investments that were doomed to be unprofitable.

The RogueRiver Valley Railway hadn't the decline that had set in.

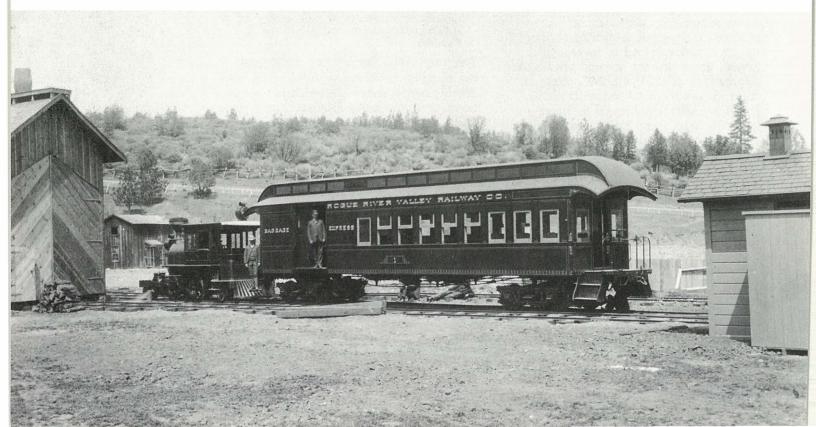
s railroad construction resumed and the line approached the Bear Creek Valley in 1883, Jacksonville did try to rouse itself a bit from its complacency. Upstart towns such as Ashland and Phoenix agitated for a transfer of the county seat, since they would be located along the new railway and would thus be more accessible to the county's populace. Jacksonville found such ideas distasteful, and responded in 1883-84 by replacing the old wooden courthouse building with a handsome and spacious Italianate brick courthouse. Obviously, after making an investment like that, county officials would now think twice before moving their offices and building another courthouse elsewhere.

The impact of the railroad on local business was something that Jacksonville merchants, with a heavy investment in buildings, stock, and customers, tried desperately to overcome. The *Democratic Times* reported that in December 1883— when the railroad had been completed to nearby Phoenix—"a feeling of security is apparent on every hand in Jacksonville, and the place will prosper in spite of those who hope for its decadence." As if to dash

even these feeble hopes, another conflagration hit the town on New Year's Day, 1884. The *Times* bravely stated on January 4 that "the croakers are very much mistaken if they think that the late fire will permanently injure Jacksonville. . . . There is plenty of vitality and faith left in town." There was, at least, enough to inspire the construction of three new brick buildings to replace those that burned: the Redmen's, Kubli, and Ryan buildings of 1884 were virtually the last commercial buildings erected in Jacksonville during the nineteenth century.

Since the Oregon & California
Railroad—by this time part of the Southern Pacific system—was not in the least
disposed to construct even a branch line to
Jacksonville, the townspeople themselves
tried to build one. But by the time the
Rogue River Valley Railway was completed
between Jacksonville and Medford in 1891,
it hadn't the slightest chance of reversing
the economic decline that had set in. This
rambling, wheezy short line was a quaint
period piece almost from the day of its
first run. Its principal business seemed to
be carrying couples to the courthouse for a
marriage license and supplying goods to a

Williams Barnum outfitted the Rogue River Valley Railway (below) with a new locomotive and passenger car in 1891. At age fourteen, Barnum's son John (opposite) was one of the nation's youngest railway conductors. SOHS #1559, 262



slightest chance of reversing the economic

decreasing number of town merchants.

For a time the nationwide economic depression of the 1890s helped Jacksonville merchants, since many new railroad towns like Medford lacked money for building construction. But no new commercial buildings went up in Jacksonville at all, although some longtime merchants such as Dr. J. W. Robinson, Jeremiah Nunan, and John Miller did construct elaborate new residences. These imposing houses, however, were to prove to be the capstones of their owners' careers rather than to Jacksonville's economic ascendancy. That ascendancy had clearly ended in 1884.

During the early 1900s, fruit growing, particularly apples and then pears, became a major agricultural activity in the valley. Medford experienced an orchard-promotion boom which peaked about 1911, and Jacksonville tried to share in the prosperity by issuing enticing brochures that extolled the town's climate, schools, and nearby orchard lands. But Jacksonville's brochures were amateurish compared with those employed by the well-heeled Medford Commercial Club, and they were correspondingly ineffective. Small orchard and suburban tracts did, however, spring up between the two towns and the operators of the short-line railroad electrified it and established an hourly interurban service.

Nonetheless, there were ominous indications that Jacksonville was not merely stagnant, but dying. The local Catholic academy, St. Mary's, of which the town was very proud, moved to Medford in 1908, and the Catholic church became a mission of Medford; agitation was renewed to move the courthouse to a more convenient and prosperous community; the United States Hotel closed; the interurban ceased running in the early 1920s, and the



This rambling, wheezy short line was a quaint period piece almost from the day of its first run.

The annual Gold Rush Jubilee seemed to be an excuse for several days of public insobriety and rowdiness.

Nineteenth-century Jacksonville's Silver Cornet Band could not afford uniforms; members often borrowed those of the volunteer fire department. SOHS #1631 tracks were torn up in 1925. A vote to remove the courthouse was narrowly defeated in 1920, but in 1926, another referendum was held. This time the voters approved moving the county seat from Jacksonville to Medford in the following year. It was the lowest blow of all.

There was still one last taste of glory for the old mining town, however, and it came about because of an unsuccessful train robbery. The three young DeAutremont brothers, Roy, Ray and Hugh, on October 11, 1923, held up and dynamited the mail car of Southern Pacific train no. 13 at tunnel no. 13 in the Siskiyou Mountains south of Ashland. Although they killed four trainmen, the brothers were forced to flee the scene without a penny in loot and set

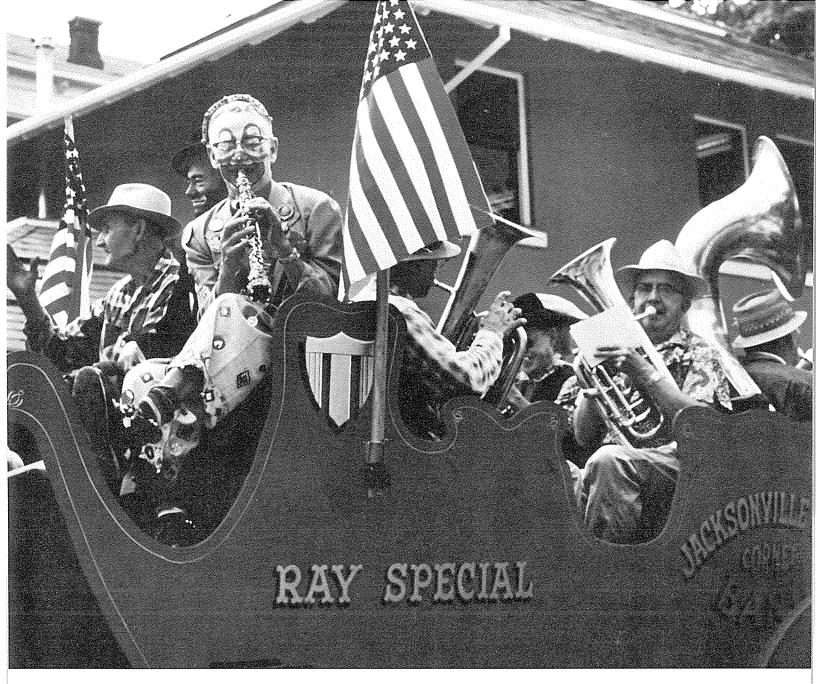
off a nationwide manhunt which lasted nearly four years. When they were finally captured and returned to Jackson County for trial, the venerable Jacksonville courthouse was host to its last and perhaps most sensational trial. In 1927 the "boy killers" were sentenced to life in prison.

any Jacksonville residents turned to their back yards and replayed scenes from the 1850s to make ends meet: they mined for gold. Although prohibited by local ordinance, backyard shafts were sunk all over town. Hand-dug tunnels, some of them burrowing under city streets and neighbors' sheds, still cause streets and yards to sink in wet weather. The gold that miners had once rejected—it wasn't worth the effort when there were easier pickings up the gulch—came to the surface in bucket loads of gold-bearing gravel.

In the 1930s and 1940s, some efforts were made to capitalize on Jacksonville's gold rush heritage. One event was the annual Gold Rush Jubilee, which during the 1930s was so popular that it seemed to local residents merely to be an excuse for several days of public insobriety and rowdiness. The Jubilee was canceled, although it reappeared again in 1948 and survives today as Pioneer Day. The town also boasted two historical museums, one operated by the Native Daughters of Oregon and one by the city. Interestingly, the city museum was a direct descendant of the old curiosity cabinet of the Table Rock Saloon. Such cabinets, displaying mineral specimens, two-headed chickens preserved in alcohol, Civil War relics, and other curiosities, were a common saloon sideline in the nineteenth century.

Interest in the heritage of Jacksonville and Jackson County had become well established in 1946, when the Southern Oregon Historical Society was organized. In 1948, county voters approved a continuing tax levy for historical purposes. Plans were made to renovate the long-abandoned





courthouse building as a county museum. On July 10, 1950, the Society opened the Jacksonville Museum with exhibits from the former town museums and from hundreds of new donations.

Not until the middle 1950s was much recognition given to the fact that the town itself—its tree-lined streets and paths, small frame cottages and brick commercial buildings—were almost a living example of a frontier western community. In 1953, architectural historian Marion Ross described the town in the Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians. This was the first national recognition accorded to the historic qualities of the entire town.

Efforts were made in the early 1960s to renovate the downtown core of Jackson-ville with federal urban renewal funds.

Questions over federal controls and project design caused the project to founder. Individual local efforts at preservation were more successful. The restoration of the United States Hotel was promoted by the Sites Foundation and the Lions Club; the advance payment of a ten-year lease for office space by the United States National Bank of Oregon helped forward the project. The hotel restoration, completed in 1965, had great significance: it marked the beginning of the town's effort to rely on its own resources to accomplish a renaissance.

Gradually, these self-help efforts, and events such as a successful fight to prevent a new highway from slashing through the town's old residential district, have brought the town together to a recognition of its Grand Marshall Pinto Colvig and the reorganized Silver Cornet Band entertain the crowd during the 1959 Jacksonville Jubilee Parade. SOHS #7013

TABLE ROCK SENTINEL September/October 1990 13



George and Jeanne DeRoboam Holt began building the United States Hotel as an investment in 1879, never dreaming that the railroad bypassing Jacksonville would doom many business prospects. SOHS #5879

unique values. In 1967, much of Jacksonville, including over a hundred pre-1900 buildings, was designated a National Historic Landmark and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Jacksonville is now a comfortable small town of some 2,000 people still, a population more than double what it could claim in its heyday. Still, most of the town's residents consider its small size to be one of its greatest charms. Among its other charms are lots of trees and paths, well-maintained old homes, and a complete absence of motels and franchised hamburger stands. Yet another of its charms is going to the post office every morning at 10:30 and greeting half the populace along the way. These qualities, at least, are probably much the same now as they were in Jacksonville a century ago.

Richard H. Engeman was the librarian for the Southern Oregon Historical Society from 1976–1983. Since 1983 he has been with the Special Collections and Preservation Division of the University of Washington Libraries. The revised second edition of his book The Jacksonville Story will be available soon, in conjunction with the October 6 opening of the Society's new exhibit, Jacksonville: Boom Town to Home Town.

From the Collections

By Janette Meek

"There's gold in them thar hills!" The precious metal appeared not just in the hills but in the pockets and on the lapels of many pioneer southern Oregonians. Emma Bee Mundy donated this brooch set in Jacksonville gold to the Southern Oregon Historical Society in 1975. The piece of jewelry once belonged to her grandmother, Sarah Overbeck. (Previously from Missouri, the Overbeck family moved inland from the Oregon Coast "upon learning the exciting news of a gold strike in Jacksonville," says Munday.) Sarah's husband Dr. Andrew B. Overbeck may have received the gold or brooch in exchange for his services as a physician. Although records indicate that the gold metal was mined near Jacksonville, the setting could have been manufactured elsewhere.

Goldstone is a gemstone made with particles of gold-colored minerals. The oval stone is one-half inch wide and mounted in a setting without hallmark. Surrounded by an intricate gold rope, the stone is accentuated with curlicue designs on either side of the setting.

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 in each issue of the *Table Rock Sentinel* will provide an



enjoyable and educational view of the scope of its collection.

Then and Now





Around 1893, Peter Britt photographed Gertrude Biede and her sister Helene (left) with a doll their father had made. At age 101, Gertrude Biede Easterling poses with the same doll today. The doll has been lovingly treasured over the years, intact except for its hair that was chewed by a playful family dog. SOHS #8921

Gertrude Biede Easterling is a rare witness to a century of change in southern Oregon. Born May 8, 1889, in Phoenix, Oregon, Gertrude and her family soon moved to Jackson-ville where her father Otto Biede established a tin shop and hardware store. The Biedes and Jacksonville's celebrated Peter Britt family were quite friendly; the two German families occasionally suppered together, and Gertrude's mother Marie and Peter Britt's daughter Mollie frequently played piano duets.

Gertrude remembers Peter Britt photographing her and her older sister Helene with a homemade doll around 1893. Otto Biede had carved the doll for his daughter following the accidental breakage of a favorite porcelain doll. Being a skilled tinsmith, Otto manufactured tin eyes for the wooden figure. Marie fashioned doll's

hair from lambswool, and sewed a dress from calico purchased for five cents a yard from Ryan's Dry Goods store. Gertrude treasured the handmade doll; she kept it for nearly a century until donating the plaything to the Southern Oregon Historical Society this year.

Although undoubtedly the sole living person to personally know photographer Peter Britt (who died in 1905), Gertrude is remarkable for numerous other reasons. Following graduation from Ashland Normal School in 1905, she was appointed to the post of Ashland city recorder to fill the unexpired term of John Wimer. She later campaigned and was elected to that position from 1918–1933, no small feat for a single woman in those days. Later employed by the State Bank of Ashland, she was appointed city treasurer in 1937

to complete the term of G. G. Eubanks. Again, she campaigned and was elected to the position of treasurer from 1937 until her retirement in 1954.

She married Ollie S. Easterling in 1940. He died in 1962.

Active and entertaining at the age of 101, Gertrude has many reminiscences from life in Jacksonville during the previous century. She recalls wild red lilies growing in the woods surrounding town and the excellent fruits and flowers cultivated by the Britts. She remembers Sister Casilia at the Catholic school in Jacksonville. (Although from a Lutheran family, Gertrude was sent to the Catholic school because there the students were taught to read and write German.) And she still delights in the memories of Christmas parties and the tree decorated with real candles.

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TABLE ROCK SENTINEL September/October 1990

by James Kelly

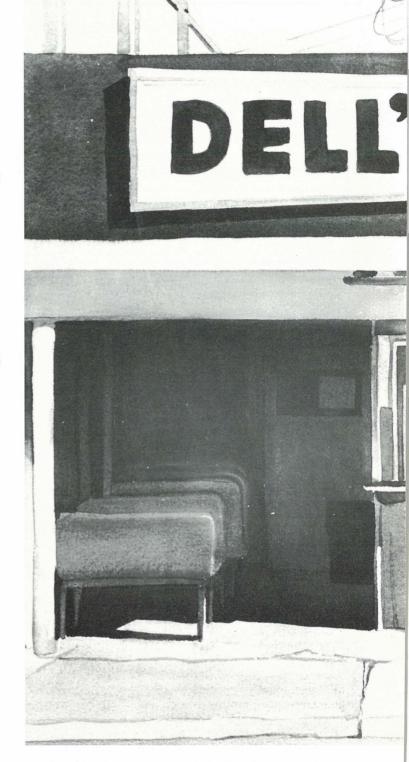
Having It Dell's Way

They beat McDonald's by a long shot.

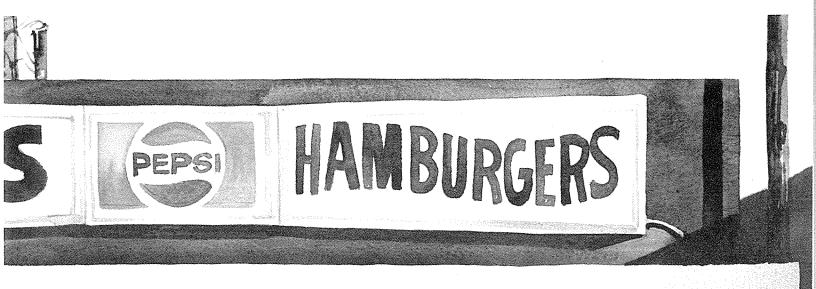
– Ivey Axhelm, TalentDell's customer for 20 years

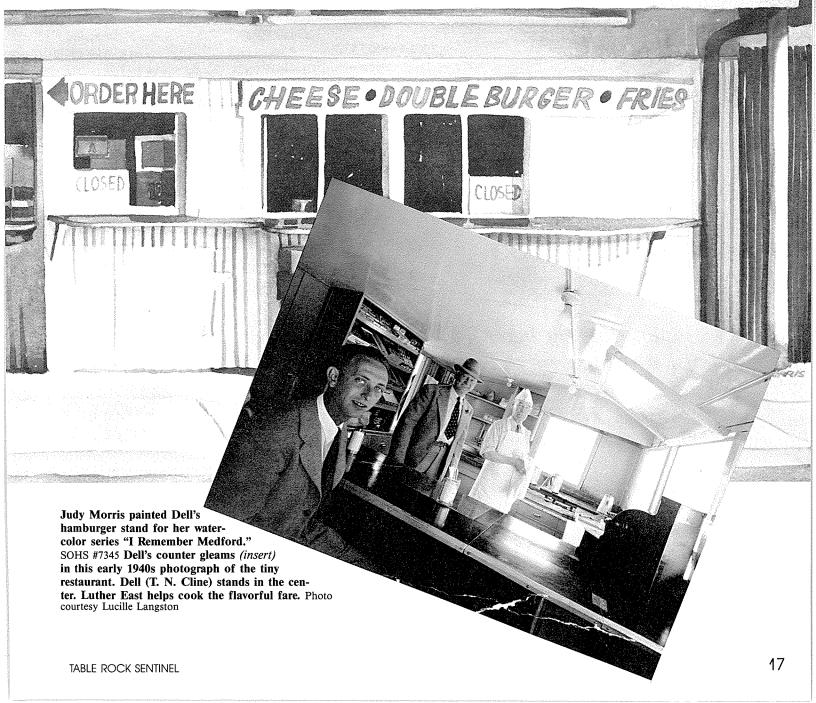
ell's Hamburgers has been a part of Medford's landscape for more than sixty years. While the city has grown and changed, Dell's is basically the same small eating establishment, and its product hasn't changed at all. That tasty combination of hamburger bun, a meat patty, chopped lettuce, tomato, pickles, mustard and onions (if you want them), is exactly what the little hamburger stand has been serving over its stainless steel counter since 1927. Sustenance plays an important role in defining the identity of any city. "Those ten-cent hamburgers kept a lot of us alive during the depression," recalled a Medford policeman on the beat in 1958, when the price of a Dell's hamburger had gone up to a whopping twenty-five cents.

By now, Dell's has served more than 11,000,000 burgers² to loggers, millworkers, soldiers heading off to war,



CCC workers in the depths of the depression era, cannery workers, pear packers and pear pickers, high school students, junior high students, merchants, farmers and plethora of tourists when Highway 99 through Medford was the major north-south thoroughfare before Interstate-5 was built. In fact just about every hungry soul for the past sixty-three years who has happened to walk past the aromatic grill of the non-descript little white building







I come to Dell's once a week.
The hamburgers are cheap
and quick and filling. I
wouldn't eat them
if I didn't like them.

-John Ewen, Shady Cove Dell's customer for one year

I used to come here after Sunday school. The only problem I have with Dell's is the tomatoes—they didn't use to put tomatoes on.

Now I take them off.

-Doug McGeary, Medford Dell's customer for 30 years

I like the pickles.

– Monica SmurzynskaCentral Point, age 7

I usually pass by here, but today I was hungry and got a couple of burgers. This is my first time. They're good.

-Paul Courtois, Medford

I used to walk over to Dell's from McLoughlin Jr. High for lunch. That was fifty years ago.

-Louis Powell, Medford

between Bartlett and Riverside on Sixth Street has succumbed to the urge to buy—and gobble—at least one Dell's hamburger.

T. N. "Dell" Cline (1884-1972) came to Medford in 1927 a little more than down on his luck and almost broke, having lost his wife, a small fortune, and a good farm in Montana the previous year.3 Cline rambled through much of the Northwest the year before he settled in Medford, working in logging camps, carpentering, and doing most any job that came his way. Landing in Medford with \$35, Cline managed somehow to lease the tiny hamburger stand that consisted of a trailer built on an old automobile chassis. After two months of hard work and frugality, Cline managed to save enough to buy the small eating establishment outright for \$250.4 Medford in the late Twenties was a thriving town despite the uncertain national economy. And the small fast-food outlet was ideally situated near the center of activity in Medford for the next two decades.

Cline kept the hamburgers coming off his grill until 2:00 a.m. Saturday nights were a boon to Cline's business and the location and social activity of the weekend evenings gave a life of its own to the little hamburger stand called Dell's. World War II, however, was the high point for Dell's. Nearby Camp White (now White City) was a training center hosting at times up to 50,000 men. And the USO opened virtually across the street from Dell's. Lines of GI's more than two blocks long would be backed up waiting for a ten-cent burger and a respite from Army chow. By this time, Cline had put nine people to work in the tiny trailer and had an organization that would rival any fast-food chain of today, producing up to twelve hamburgers a minute.

hough the location of Dell's contributed greatly to his success, Cline's affable personality had perhaps as much to do with it as anything else. Cline lived and breathed his business, for twenty years keeping it open every day of the year. During slow business hours, Cline often picked a banjo and passersby would at times take up the tune; more than one old-fashioned sing-a-long resulted.⁵

After World War II Cline leased Dell's to a former Medford High School student who had worked for him in the early days. John W. Langston took a lease on Dell's in 1947 after having served in the Seabees and survived the invasions of Saipan and Tinian. The business continued much as usual with Cline showing up most every day of his retired years, greeting customers and often buying them coffee and remaining the affable character he'd always been. Even in retirement, he wore his trademark tie and an ever-present hat.

Langston operated Dell's until Cline's death in 1972, then began a business of his own. Ernest and Harvey Huener were the next owners of Dell's and kept burgers coming off the grill until the present owners Richard and Sandy Elbert bought the restaurant in February 1982.

The menu is much more varied than in the old days

when Dell sold only hamburgers, soda, coffee, candy, gum, and cigarettes. Although there are no lines two blocks long waiting for burgers that now cost ninety-nine cents, Sandy Elbert is dedicated to preserving Dell's as a landmark and a bit of nostalgia for long-time Medford residents.

Talent resident Marc Teeters, an actor and chef, says of Dell's: "I see Dell's hamburgers as a standard and have compared burgers all over the world to the one I hold foremost. Each time I come back to the Rogue Valley, it's the first place I go."6

Nostalgia apparently pays off on its own as many have memories of past decades in Medford, "When me and Alan Trikel used to go downtown as kids in the early sixties, I always made sure I had a dollar in my pocket," said James W. "Bill" Hale while waiting for his burgers recently. "On my junior prom night I took my date to the Mon Desir, went to the prom and afterward had burgers at Dell's – me in my tuxedo and her in her evening gown."

"When we were kids," said Willard Walch, Jr., "My dad took us here lots of times. He'd park me and my two brothers here with twenty-five cent burgers and then he'd go around the corner for a twenty-five cent beer."8

Customers have compared visiting Dell's to "walking into a piano crate." On the inside it has just over a sixfoot ceiling, but the hamburgers do seem to bring a past era into focus. The smells are the same and the same wooden stools spin for customers as they did when Dell Cline was serving them up hot so many years ago.

ENDNOTES



- 1. Medford Mail Tribune, February 6, 1958.
- 2. Interview with Sandy Elbert, July 30, 1990.
- 3. Medford Mail Tribune, February 6, 1958.
- 4. Country Cousin, December 1983.
- 5. Medford Mail Tribune, February 6, 1958.
- 6. Interview with Marc Teeters, August 9, 1990.
- 7. Interview with James W. "Bill" Hale, August 9, 1990.
- 8. Interview with Willard Walch, Jr., August 9, 1990.

A free-lance writer and poet, James Kelly makes his home in White City. He makes a point to eat a burger or two at Dell's on most of his trips to Medford.



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*Indicates upgraded membership category or monetary contribution in addition to membership dues to further Society programs.

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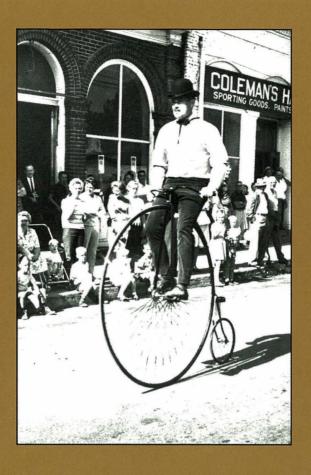
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