

TABLE ROCK

\$2.50

SENTINEL

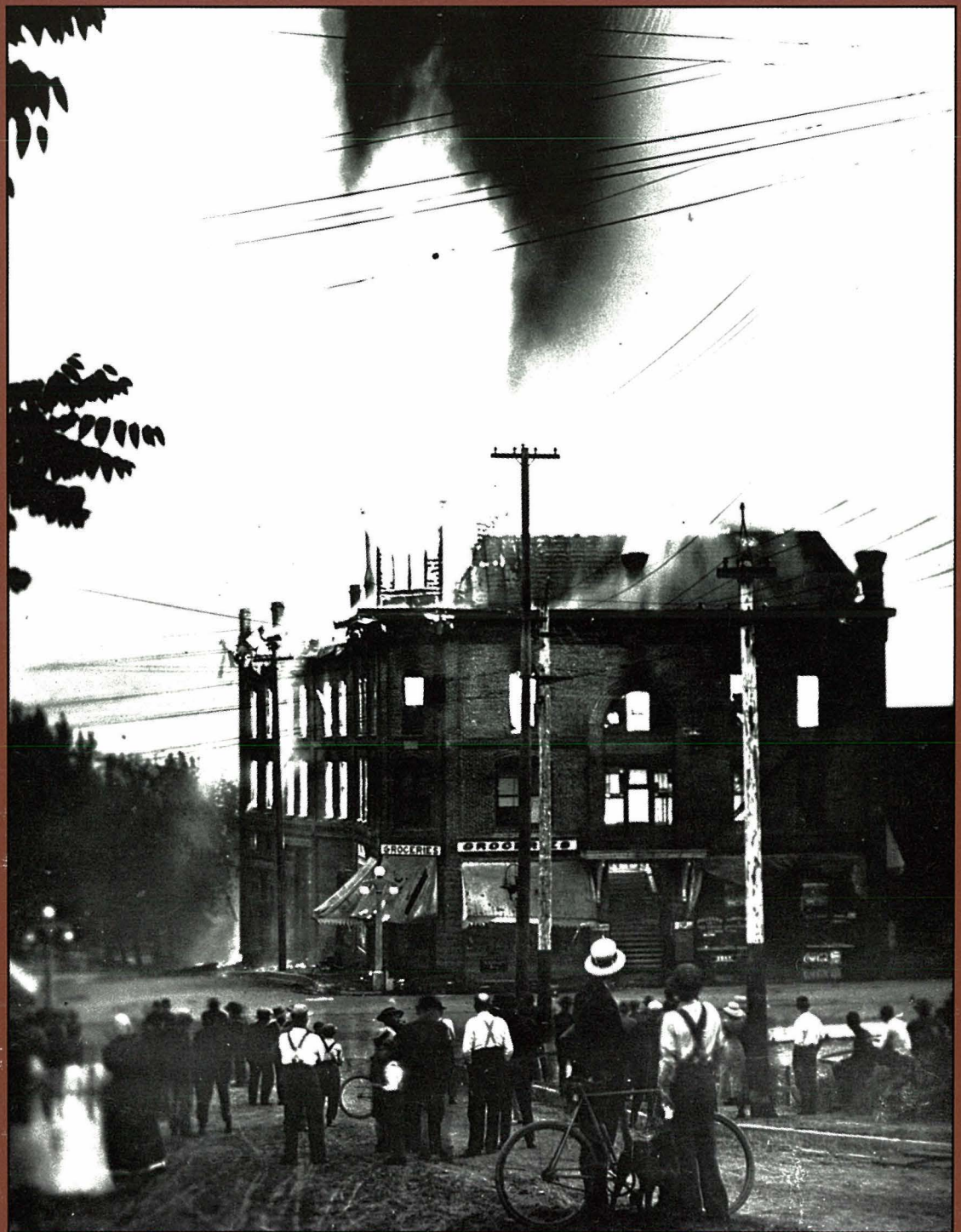
MAY/JUNE
1991

I-5's **DRIVE**
H **ALONG**
HISTORY
STORIES FROM
STATEHOOD

TREASURES,
TRINKETS & TIDBITS
FROM THE
COLLECTION

MYTHS
N **OF THE**
NATIONAL
REGISTER

The
Magazine
of the
Southern
Oregon
Historical
Society



Seventy-nine Years Ago



Only the skeleton of the Ganiard Opera House remained following one of Ashland's most devastating downtown fires in 1912. SOHS #5720

The landmark 1889 Ganiard Opera House, one of Ashland's early brick buildings, was gutted by flames of unknown origin early in the morning of August 6, 1912.

A handful of adventuresome campers leaving town at 4:15 a.m. discovered smoke and flames pouring out of the upper windows and sounded an alarm. By the time the fire department arrived, the fire was already out of control. Heat from the blaze drove back the small crowd gathered on Main Street to witness the demise of several of the town's commercial and cultural attractions, which were housed in the building. The upstairs hall, which had hosted countless concerts, theatrical performances, graduation ceremonies and basketball games, was completely destroyed, as was Harrison Brothers' motion picture equipment and Dr. Songer's medical offices. On the ground floor, Ideal Cash Grocery lost nearly all its stock, as did J. P. Sayle & Son's cigar and confectionery. The Oregon Hotel's sample rooms in the rear of the Ganiard building also were destroyed.

G. W. Stephenson, owner of the building, estimated \$15,000 damage to the structure, which was insured for only \$4,000. He promptly put the property up for sale.

What looked like a dismal future for the Ganiard block turned brighter, however. The former three-story building on the corner of Pioneer and East Main was rebuilt as a single-story structure. Today, the light stucco building houses the Bank of America, a coffee house and numerous specialty stores.



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Features

2 Drive-along History *by Marjorie O'Harra*

Most southern Oregonians traverse the state quickly, if wearily, along Interstate 5, the modern freeway constructed during the past quarter-century paralleling routes of previous single-lane roads and older immigrant trails. In fact, driving north from the Oregon-California border along I-5 is like following the footsteps of pioneers as they explored and settled the Oregon Territory. These stories from the statehood era will give voyagers a new vision of a land frequently passed through.

21 Myths of the National Register *by George Kramer*

Contrary to popular thought, the National Register of Historic Places is not a listing of ornate Victorian residences or immaculately restored roadhouses. Can you name some National Register places? A quick review of local listed properties reveals some surprises—and some absences.

Departments

Seventy-nine Years Ago (inside front cover)

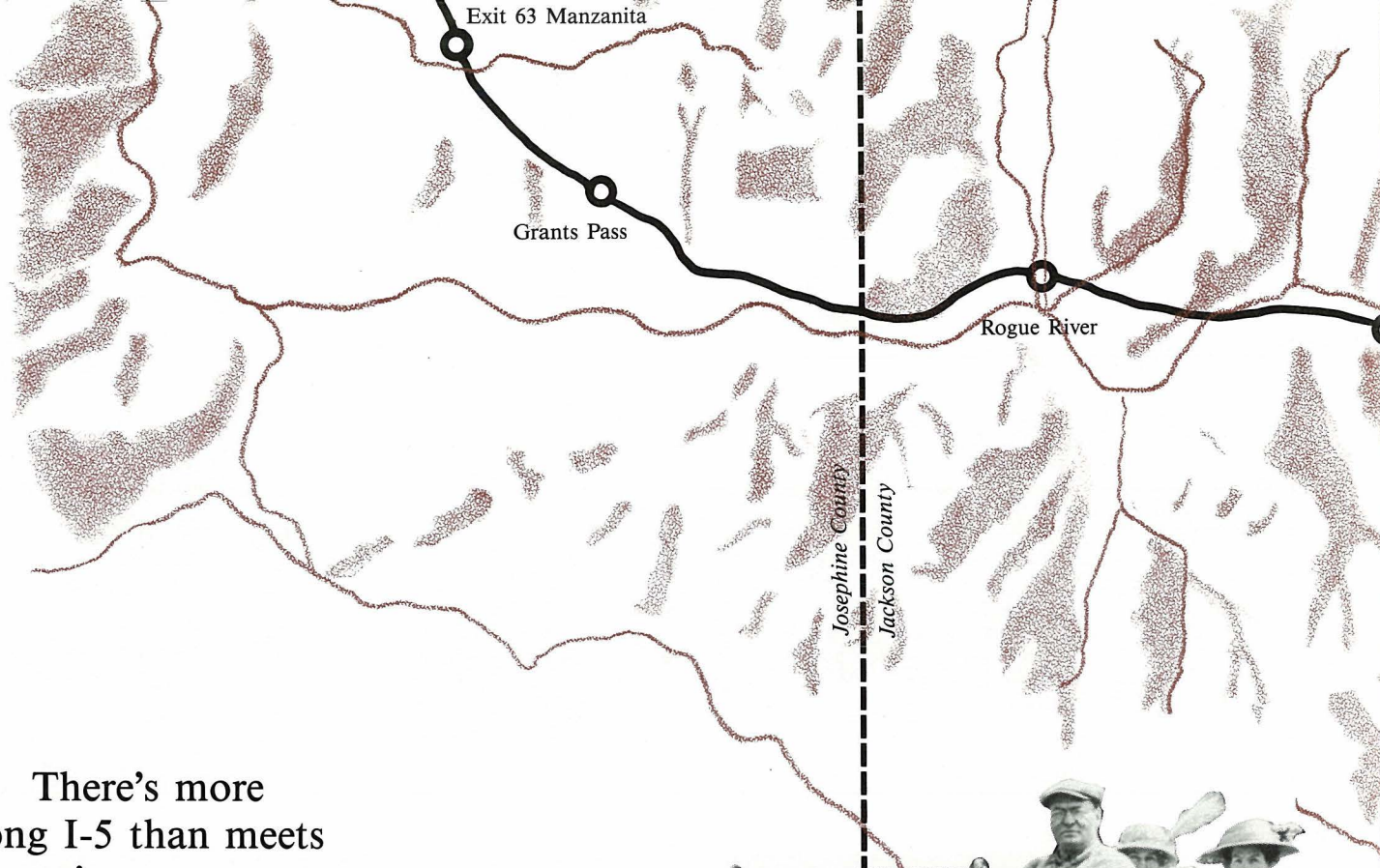
20 Then and Now

31 Welcome Members

30 From the Collections

Front cover: In the pre-dawn hours on August 6, 1912, a small crowd of sleepy Ashland residents gathered to watch flames consume the Ganiard Opera House on the corner of Pioneer and East Main Street. SOHS #13213

Back cover: An unidentified man tinkers with his roadster on a trip to Crater Lake. SOHS #13455.



There's more
along I-5 than meets
the eye!

Part one of a
two-part series finds
tantalizing historic
tidbits along the
interstate highway
from the Oregon-
California border to
Eugene.



Drive-along History

by Marjorie O'Harra

Old Hill

Central Point

Medford

Bear Creek

Ashland

Emigrant Lake

Driving along Interstate 5 through Oregon is like following a thread that ties together the story of the beginnings of the state. What better place for drive-along history?

This story, which is being presented in two installments, is meant to be read aloud by a passenger and, it is hoped, to be enjoyed by all as the freeway sweeps you along from the forested ridges of the Siskiyou Mountains on the south to the waters of the Columbia River on the north. For the most part, it deals with Oregon's history before statehood was granted in 1859.

Just let the mileposts guide you as you read along.



TABLE ROCK SENTINEL

Re 4 June 1991 ~ B5

WELCOME TO OREGON

Indian footpaths crossed the mountain passes and cut through the long valleys of this beautiful Pacific Northwest country long before the explorers and fur trappers came, establishing the route now generally followed by the freeway.

As you enter Oregon from California you will see Pilot Rock, the remnant of an ancient volcano thrusting up from the Siskiyou Mountain skyline just north of the border. Pilot Rock has served as a guidepost to travelers for centuries. It was near here in 1841 that Indians felled burning logs across the trail in an unsuccessful attempt to turn back the Wilkes Expedition, an exploring party sent by the government to gather geographical and scientific information that would help encourage American colonization of the Northwest. At that time the territory was jointly claimed by both Great Britain and the United States. South of the Siskiyou Mountains was Mexican territory.

Many of the place names we use as we drive along today are reminders of stories told and retold until they have become part of our written records. For some, the beginnings are obscure.

The name Siskiyou, given to the mountains that the sweeping curves of Interstate 5 now climb, is believed to come from the Cree Indian word "siskiyawatom," which refers to a spotted horse or pack animal.

The legend is that during the winter of 1828, a heavy snowstorm hit the area and overtook a party of fur trappers led by Archibald McLeod, a chief factor of the Hudson's Bay Company. McLeod, so the story goes, lost most of his animals, including a bobtailed horse. His followers, who were familiar with the Cree language because of the good relations that existed between French and Indian fur traders and the Cree Indians, called the place Pass of the Siskiyous as a compliment to their leader. This name eventually was extended to the entire mountain range.

MILEPOST

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Continuing north on Interstate 5, with the Siskiyou Pass now behind you, the Bear Creek Valley comes into view and you will soon see Emigrant Lake. The lake was named in memory of the pioneer families who came to Oregon over the Applegate Trail.

The Applegate Trail, sometimes called the South Road, offered an alternative to



the dangerous northern route the Oregon Trail followed along the Snake and Columbia Rivers. It branched south from the Oregon Trail at Fort Hall in what is now Idaho, then turned west to cross the high desert country of northern Nevada and finally the Cascade Mountains. It entered the Bear Creek Valley at the base of Green Springs Mountain where you now see Emigrant Lake. The trail turned north from here and generally opened up the route you will follow on the freeway today.

The Applegate Trail was established in 1846. Many wagon trains bringing settlers to the Oregon country would come this way.

The Applegates—Jesse, Lindsay, Charles and their families, whose name this south road would make well known—came to Oregon with the Great Migration of 1843. Lindsay vowed to open a safer route than what the Oregon Trail offered after his son, his nephew and a friend drowned as they attempted to guide their raft through a whirlpool in the Columbia River. The tragedy occurred near the end of their long journey to the Willamette Valley.

Two and one-half years later, Jesse and Lindsay left the land they had cleared and planted in care of their wives and children, and, along with thirteen other men, set off to try to find a southern route into Oregon, a route through a region marked "unexplored" on the maps. Each man had a pack animal and a saddle horse. Jesse Applegate was captain of the group. The dispute with Great Britain over the bound-

Well before the construction of I-5, a tiny marker along an unpaved road identified the Oregon-California border in 1923. SOHS #8224

ary of the Oregon Territory was not yet settled, and the men knew that in case of war military troops as well as immigrants would depend on a southern route.

They were gone from their homes for more than four months, cutting their way through dense forests, searching for passes through steep and difficult terrain, picking their way across parched and lava-strewn plateaus and desert country, always pushing on. Often they were without sufficient food or water for themselves or their animals.

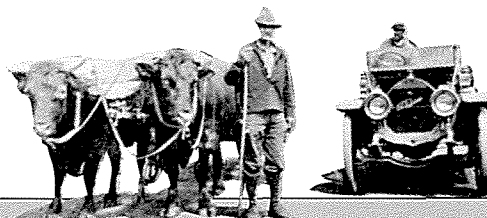
When they succeeded in finding the route they sought, however, Lindsay made the following entry in his journal: "For this assistance we make no demands. The consciousness of having opened up a better and safer road than that by way of the Columbia River is satisfaction and compensation enough for us for all our hardships and labors."¹

MILEPOST

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For the next few miles Interstate 5 follows the meandering of Bear Creek, from near Ashland to north of Central Point where the stream flows into the Rogue River.

Because bears were plentiful in the foothills it drained and meat meant food to pioneer families, Bear Creek is the name that persisted. Originally, however, the stream was named Stuart Creek as a



Ashland is the first town north of the California border and was established in 1852 as a market and supply center for pioneer settlers. It was named after either Ashland, Ohio, the birthplace of Abel Helman, who laid out the townsite on his donation land claim, or for Ashland, Kentucky, home of the Whig leader Henry Clay.

Medford was established in 1884 as a railroad station and business center when railroad construction reached the middle ford of Bear Creek. It was named by David Loring, a civil engineer for the railroad and a native of Massachusetts where there was an existing city named Medford. The word Medford comes from the old English words mead and ford, meaning ford at a meadow.

Central Point was so named because two important pioneer wagon roads crossed at this point near the center of the Rogue River Valley. One was the main north-south road between the Willamette Valley and California, and the other was the road between Jacksonville and Sams Valley.

Pioneer photographer Peter Britt captured a nineteenth-century pastoral view of the Bear Creek Valley. SOHS #1341



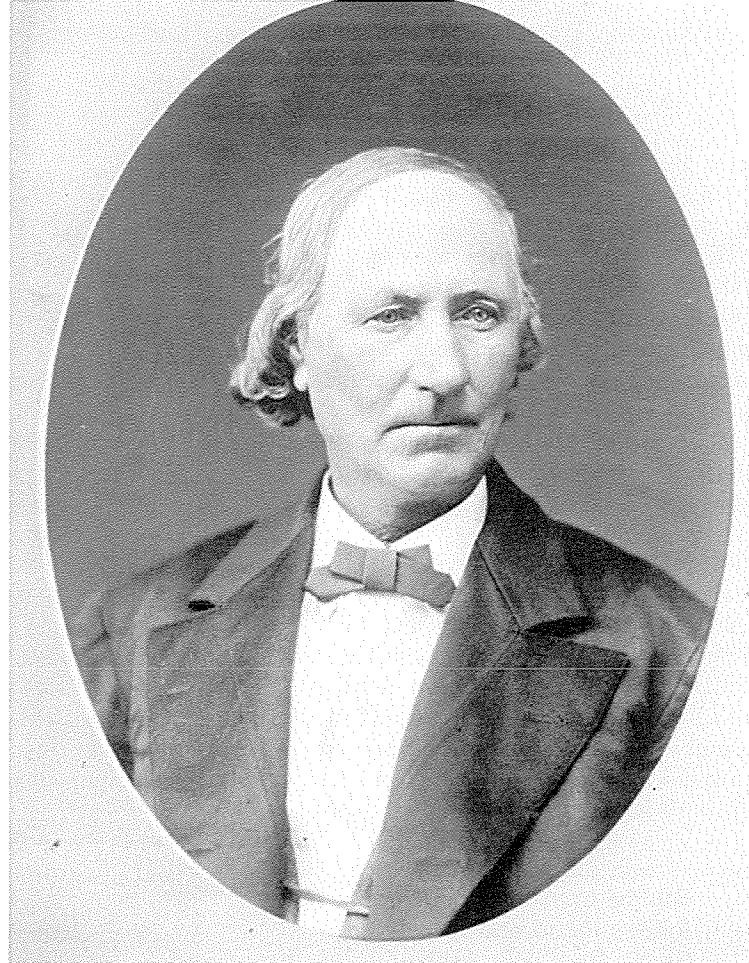
memorial to Captain Jimmy Stuart of the Oregon Mounted Rifles, the first soldier to be killed in Indian warfare west of the Cascades.

The year was 1851. Jimmy Stuart was riding south from Oregon City with a detachment of men who had orders to map out a road through the Umpqua River canyon. Near Yoncalla they were met by Jesse Applegate, who said there was an Indian uprising in the Rogue River Valley and that volunteers there could not handle the problem. He asked for help.

The captain in charge of the soldiers had orders to map a road, not fight Indians, but he agreed to send out a few men to act as a scouting party. He put Captain Stuart in charge.

When the scouting party reached the Rogue River, the soldiers made camp not far from the Table Rocks you will see jutting up from the valley floor just north of Central Point. Starting out at daylight the next day, the soldiers encountered Indians. The conflict was short. Captain Stuart went down. His men got him back to camp, but they could not remove the arrow that pierced his body. He lived in agony through that day and part of the next before he died. His men buried him under an oak tree near the banks of the stream, and the settlers he died defending said it would be called Stuart Creek in his memory.

Records were sketchy; however, popular references were accepted, and when maps



were drawn, Stuart Creek was recorded as Bear Creek. The pledge to Jimmy Stuart was forgotten.

**EXIT
40**

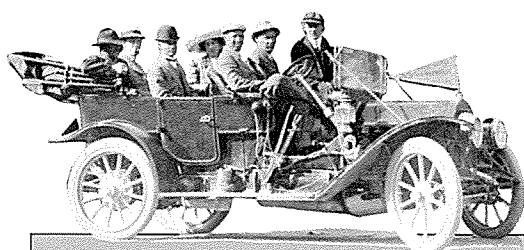
If you leave Interstate 5 at Exit 40—you can return to it again at Exit 43—you will drive through the historic

town of Gold Hill, which lies just across the Rogue River from the freeway. The name is a reminder of the excitement that struck this part of the Oregon Territory in the early 1850s. The word was “gold!” Men came north from the gold fields in California and south from farms in the Willamette Valley to get rich quick (few did) prospecting for gold in the rivers and smaller streams of southern Oregon. Many of them subsequently took up donation land claims.

In 1860, Thomas Chavner, an immigrant from Ireland who had settled on a donation land claim on the banks of the Rogue River, hit the Gold Hill pocket, said to be one of the richest strikes ever made in Oregon. Some twenty years later, when it became known that the railroad would follow the river channel through this part of the valley, Chavner laid out the townsite of Gold Hill and donated it as such so the railroad would choose this place as a stop

Twenty years after striking it rich in the gold fields, Irish immigrant Thomas Chavner donated land for the town of Gold Hill.

SOHS #11642



George Brinton McClellan, who eventually became general-in-chief of the U.S. Army, was a West Point classmate and friend of Jimmy Stuart's.

Assigned to Oregon for military duty, he came to the Rogue River Valley to find his friend's grave, and made the following entry in his journal: “On the eighteenth of June, 1851, at five in the afternoon, died Jimmy Stuart, my best and oldest friend. His grave is between two oaks, on the left side of the road, with J.S. cut in the bark.”

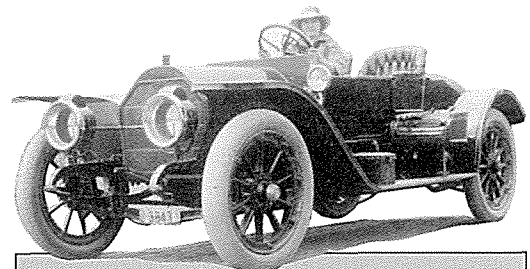
along the route. The Gold Hill station became a regular freight and passenger stop when the Southern Pacific line was completed between Sacramento and Portland in 1887.

For the next fifteen or so miles the free-way follows the Rogue River, crossing it just before you come to Valley of the Rogue State Park, Exit 45-B. This is a popular day-use as well as overnight park.

The town of Rogue River, situated where Evans Creek flows into the Rogue River, grew around the Woodville Post Office, established in 1876. (Settlement of the area, however, dates back to the 1850s.) The name was changed from Woodville to Rogue River in the early 1900s.

The origin of the name has led to much discussion and speculation. The river was

Stores, inns and taverns lined the street of Gold Hill (below) and Woodville (Rogue River) (bottom) in the nineteenth century. SOHS #1203, 1056



Grants Pass was founded in 1883 when the railroad reached the banks of the Rogue River. The name reflects the excitement, it is said, of an earlier date when a group of road workers heard the news that Union General Ulysses S. Grant had captured Vicksburg (Vicksburg Campaign, 1862-63). Before the Civil War, Grant had been stationed at Fort Vancouver on the Columbia River from 1852 to 53. The workers were so happy with the victory they named the place they were working at the time Grant's Pass. The name later was applied to a post office, then to the town.

called Trashit by the local Indians. It was named Gold River by the Oregon Territorial Legislature, and in the journals of early explorers and fur traders it was called the River Coquin, Rogue River and Rascally River.

The story that the word "Rogue" comes from the French word "Rouge," used because of the red color of the water during flood season and changed by Missourians to "Rogue" on the theory that "... them French couldn't spell," has been discounted as "incorrect and fanciful."

The most widely accepted theory is that the French were the first to call it by the name "Les Coquins" (The Rogues) because the Indians living in the land through which it flowed were "... a peculiarly troublesome lot."²

However it came to be, the name Rogue River now is nationally recognized and identifies one of the most well-known wild and scenic areas of the West.

The Rogue River flows from Boundary Springs, in Crater Lake National Park, Klamath County, through Jackson, Josephine, Douglas and Curry counties before it empties into the Pacific Ocean at Gold Beach.

**EXIT
63**

A good place to stop and read a bit about frontier life and courage is the Manzanita Rest Area. The pioneer Harris family's cabin stood on the rise





A wood plaque at the Manzanita Rest Area (above) marks the site where Mrs. Harris (right) defended her family's cabin against an Indian attack. Photo by Natalie Brown, SOHS #4713

where the grove of trees now provides a shady wayside for travelers. A large wood plaque tells the story. It was here on the morning of October 9, 1855, just after Harris, his young son and the hired man had gone to the fields, that twenty Rogue River Indians attacked the remote homestead.

T. A. Reed, the hired man, was killed some distance from the cabin. His skeleton was found a year later. Nine-year-old David Harris was never seen nor heard of again. Harris ran for the house, where the family kept the guns. He was shot in the chest as he reached the door. Mrs. Harris pulled him in, shut and barred the door, and went for the firearms: a rifle, a double-barreled shotgun, a revolver and a single-barreled pistol. She began to shoot, hoping to keep the Indians from attacking or setting fire to the cabin. A shot fired by the Indians hit nine-year-old Sophie in the arm and the terrified child climbed to the attic and hid.

Harris died about an hour later. The Indians ran the horses from the stable, burned the outbuildings and watch the house from under the cover of brush.

Mrs. Harris, her husband and the hired man dead, her son missing and her daughter wounded, continued to load and fire the weapons, shooting through the crevices between the logs of the cabin walls. Some



accounts say Sophie managed to mold lead bullets for her mother as she defended their home.

Finally the Indians left. Mrs. Harris and Sophie ran from the house and hid all night in a thicket of willows near the road. The next morning several Indians passed but didn't see them. Later in the day a company of volunteer soldiers from Jacksonville came and found the exhausted woman and her child.

Indian trouble started in the Oregon Territory in the 1850s, prompted in part by the Donation Land Act passed by Congress. The act offered 160 acres free land in Oregon for each adult, or 320 acres for a couple. As more settlers came, Indian resentment increased as land was cleared and fenced and cabins were built. Treaties made with the natives were not always honored. Congress was in the East and the money to make good on promises made in the West was not always available. The Oregon Territory was far from the seat of government and power.

A number of encounters, battles and massacres that came to be called the Rogue River Indian Wars occurred between 1851-1853 and 1854-1856.

MILEPOST

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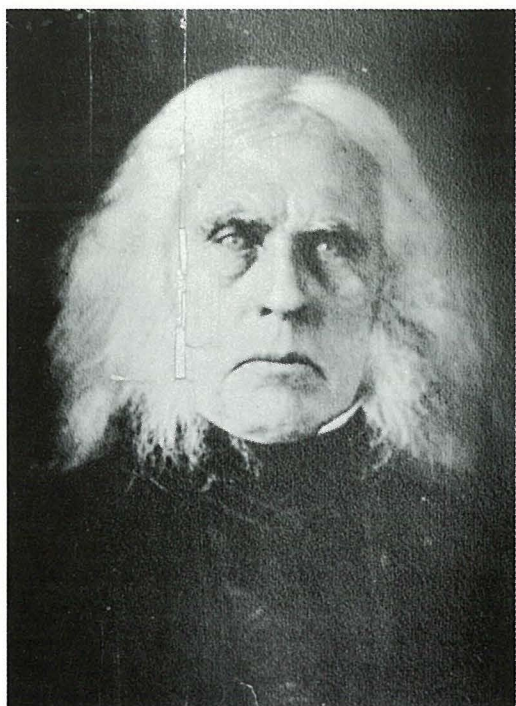
The freeway crosses Jumpoff Joe Creek just before you reach the Hugo Exit. There may be other stories about how the creek got its name, but the most reliable one follows.

The creek was named following an accident that involved the son of Dr. John McLoughlin, chief agent of the Hudson's Bay Company post in Fort Vancouver, a man later known fondly as the "Father of Oregon" because of the help and encouragement he gave American missionaries and pioneer settlers.

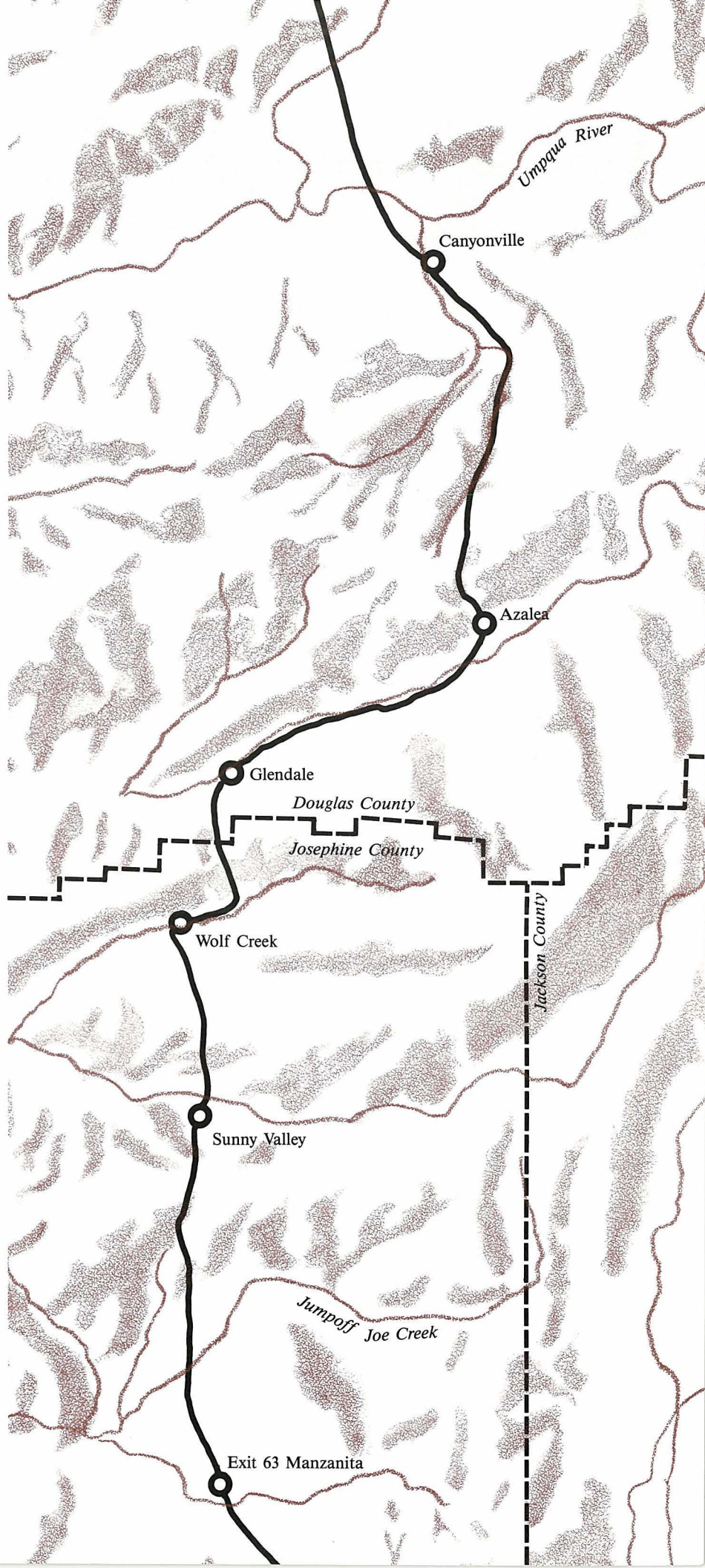
In 1828, young Joe McLoughlin found himself in southern Oregon with a party of trappers. The men camped for the night on the banks of this stream and Joe, who came in later than the others and after dark, fell over the edge of a cliff. He died later as a result of the injuries he received in the fall.

Just past Hugo, which was named for an early settler, the freeway climbs toward Sexton Mountain Pass. The following story is told:

"In about the year 1853 a widow by the name of Caroline Niday settled on a location at the foot of the mountain. She kept a wayside tavern on the road and travelers were delighted to enjoy the restful hospitality of the place. She married David Sexton and the place became known as Sexton's."⁴



Although Dr. McLoughlin (above), the "Father of Oregon," lived to a ripe old age, his son Joe did not. Young Joe died from injuries following a fall over a cliff in a tragic incident which gave the name Jumpoff Joe Creek to the nearby stream. SOHS #13452



**EXIT
76**

Wolf Creek Tavern—at Exit 76, with easy return to the freeway—was built in the 1870s as a wayside inn

designed to appeal to a genteel clientele. Henry Smith, owner and host, was a teetotaler and would allow no alcoholic beverages on the premises. He offered a ladies' parlor, a tap room where men could warm their feet by the fire, and a fine dining room. Upstairs were ten comfortable sleeping rooms and a ballroom.

Wolf Creek Tavern has been restored and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It is owned by the State of Oregon and is operated as a restaurant, hotel and banquet facility. The innkeepers invite you to "... stop and rest here, as people have for generations. Enjoy Wolf Creek's renewed hospitality."

Road-weary I-5 travelers find Wolf Creek Tavern the same refreshing stopover used by nineteenth-century stagecoach voyagers.
Photo by Susan Ray

**EXIT
71**

As the freeway drops into Sunny Valley you will see off to your right the covered bridge that spans

Grave Creek. The story of Grave Creek is one of tragedy. It was here in 1846 that the first party of immigrants to come into Oregon over the Applegate Trail stopped to bury a young girl named Martha Crowley. Martha's sister, her brother, and her brother's wife and child had died on the trip out from Missouri. Her father died several days after Martha was buried. The mother Catherine was the only family member to survive the trip and reach the Willamette Valley.

The freeway climbs out of Sunny Valley and carries you toward Wolf Creek.

Travel over the mountain pass ahead was somewhat easier in the 1860s than it had been for the early pioneers. By then the California and Oregon Stage Line stages, pulled by teams of four and six horses, carried passengers and mail along the route Interstate 5 now follows. The 700-mile trip between Sacramento and Portland took between six and seven days. Food, drink and overnight accommodations were offered at sixty stage stations located every twelve to fifteen miles along the way. Many were taverns where men quenched their thirst at the end of a day's hard travel.



It is an invitation well worth acting upon.

MILEPOST

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So far in our drive-along history we have passed through Jackson County (established January 12, 1852), named for President Andrew Jackson, a hero of the War of 1812 and a political leader known for his opposition to power groups and monopolies, and Josephine County (created January 22, 1856), named after Josephine Rollins, the first white woman to make the county her home.

Just past Milepost 80, Interstate 5 enters Douglas County, created January 7, 1852, and named for Stephen A. Douglas, a U.S. senator from Illinois and chairman of the Senate Committee on Territories. This was an especially important position in the

A charming covered bridge nestled in picturesque Sunny Valley belies tragedies that beset early immigrants passing through the area. Photo by Susan Ray

1850s because of the growing battle over the issue of slavery. Douglas argued that the people of new territories and states should be given freedom of choice in the issue of slavery. He believed that popular sovereignty would resolve the issue peacefully.

Slavery was being debated in the Oregon Territory as one of the major issues of statehood. The Democratic Party was the majority party and did not oppose slavery. The Whig Party (later the Republican Party) was anti-slavery. Many settlers had come from the South and were pro-slavery in their sympathies, but opposed to having Negroes in Oregon because of the cheap labor they would provide. Anti-Negro sentiment was strong from the beginning. For economic reasons the desire was to keep Oregon a free state.

On three occasions (1854, 1855 and 1856) the people of the Oregon Territory voted down statehood. Hotly debated each time were the issues of slavery and liquor.

Apparently the arguments Sen. Douglas made for popular sovereignty appealed to the people who named the county for him. He was a man historians call “. . . one of the few men of his era with a truly national vision.”⁵

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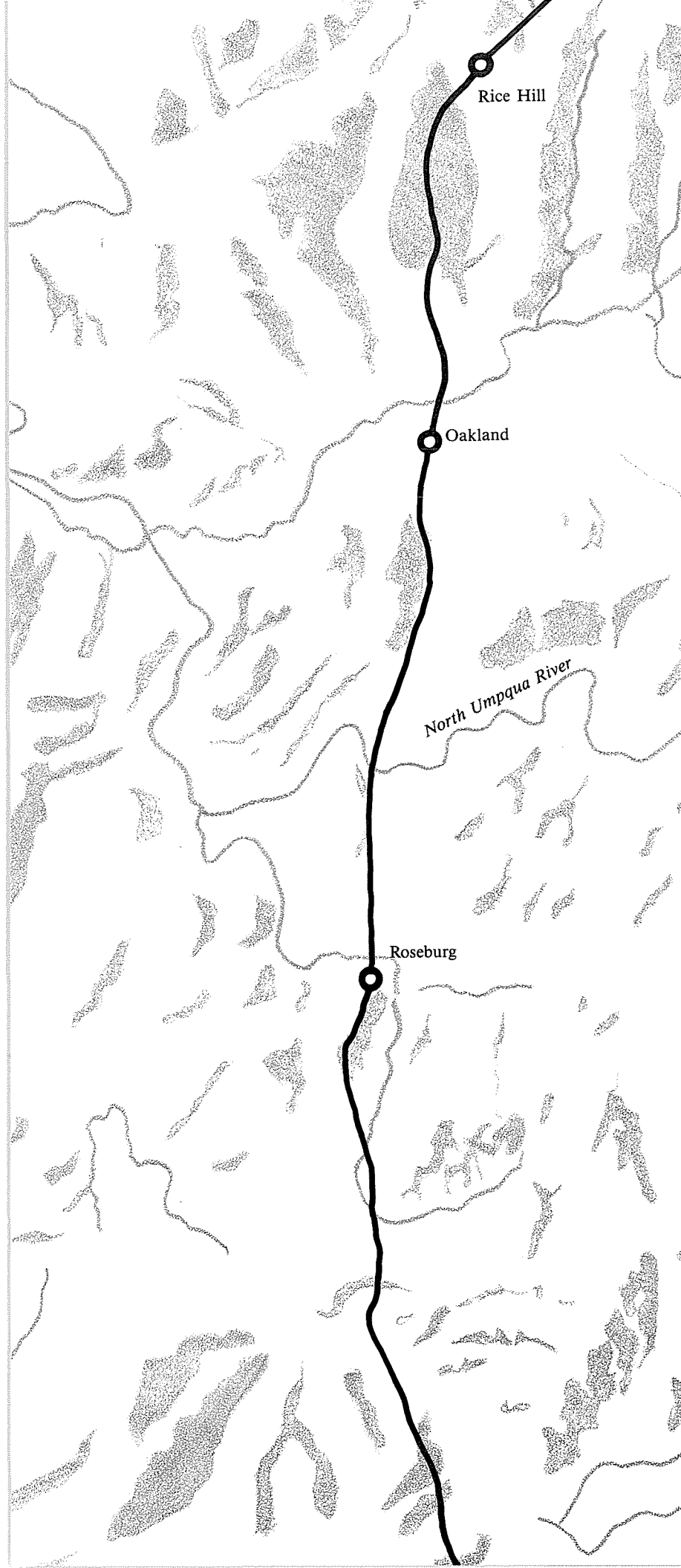
At the foot of the hill just past the Glendale exit, the freeway carries you into the pastoral beauty of the Cow Creek Valley.

Pioneers settling in the valleys west of the Cascades wrote of the profusion of wildflowers, of “. . . buttercups in such quantity as to resemble a yellow sea.”⁶

Still to be found in abundance in valleys much like the one you are driving through now are Indian pinks, lamb's tongue, trillium and Jacob's ladder; white and yellow lilies; cat ears, birdbills, lady slippers, lupine, poppies, wild iris, dogwood and pink flowering wild currant.

Botanists eventually gave scientific names to Oregon's wildflowers and classified them in their proper families, but to the pioneers they were enjoyed for their simple beauty.

Because Douglas County is noted for its beautiful wild azaleas, it should come as no surprise to find that the small community located in the foothills at the northern end of this lovely valley should be named Azalea, Exit 88.



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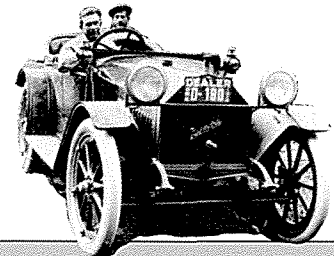
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Just past Azalea, Interstate 5 climbs toward Canyon Creek Pass, elevation 2020 feet. This is the place where the first immigrants to enter Oregon by way of the Applegate

Trail suffered hardships impossible for us to imagine today as the freeway carries us so swiftly up the steep mountain grade.

These people had come west with a large wagon train that followed the Oregon Trail to Fort Hall. Here the train split. One group with some ninety or so wagons decided to follow the new southern route into the Oregon country and the Willamette Valley. The pioneers had been told this trail was both shorter and easier than the northern route.

But there was no way to avoid the desert of alkali and mud lakes the trail must cross in what is now the northern part of Nevada. Grass, water and fuel were scarce. Cattle and oxen died. Indians stole livestock and ambushed straggling wagons. Then the pioneers reached mountains only



One particularly vindictive member of the party was Jesse Q. Thornton, a lawyer from Virginia who, with his wife Nancy, decided at Fort Hall to join those who would follow the new southern route to Oregon.

Thornton blamed guides David Goff and Levi Scott, members of the original Applegate exploration party, for the severe hardships the group encountered in Canyon Creek Pass. He remained especially hostile toward Jesse Applegate for the rest of his life.

Once established in Oregon, Thornton served as judge of the Oregon Provisional Supreme Court for several years. He resigned in 1847 to go to Washington, D.C., where he worked to bring about the creation of the Oregon Territory.

He practiced law in Oregon City, Albany and Portland and was active in public affairs. His memoirs, including the story of the tragedy at Canyon Creek Pass, have become part of Oregon's written history.



Jesse Applegate. SOHS
#256

to find forest fires had littered the trail with fallen trees.

When the first wagons reached the Rogue River Valley in October 1846 and stopped to wait for the last of the group to catch up, the exhausted travelers found a beautiful place where grass, water and fuel were plentiful. They lingered too long. An early winter brought heavy rain and snow, cold and mud. When they started north again, travel was slow. Cattle and teams were weak, and people were weary. By the time they reached Canyon Creek Pass, the narrowest part of the gorge was filled with water between three and four feet deep.

Families had to abandon their wagons and their possessions in order to wade through the canyon. Several people died of consumption. There was no food. A relief party came from the Umpqua Valley to meet them but could offer only survival help.

Few had kept records or journals, but some of those who did were bitter and blamed others. Specifically, they blamed Jesse Applegate because he had promoted this route so enthusiastically.

The next year, however, another immigrant train came this way and arrived in the Willamette Valley in good condition.

The Applegate Trail became a well-traveled immigrant road.

Tragedy struck Canyon Creek Pass again in more recent times. On January 16, 1974,

just north of Milepost 97, another harsh and wet winter unleashed a massive earth slide that buried a small Pacific Northwest Bell Telephone Company relay station in which ten men were working. One survives. A cross on the east slope of Interstate 5 now marks the spot.

MILEPOST

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Just north of Canyonville the freeway makes a graceful curve around a broad bend in the South Umpqua River. It will cross the Umpqua several times as you continue north.

Umpqua was the Indian name for the locality, a word that came to be used to identify both the river and the natives who lived in the foothills and valleys it drains.

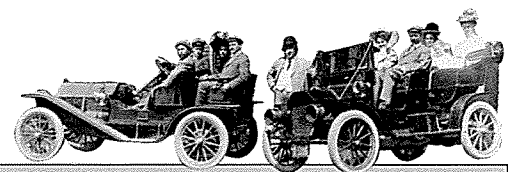
Many of Oregon's towns, rivers and other geographical features are identified by Indian words. Few are spelled as pronounced by the natives, however, because no written language existed. The early settlers often pronounced the same words differently and the spelling varied when they were written.

Some accounts say twelve Indian nations, grouped together into some eighty to one hundred tribes, lived within the present boundaries of Oregon and that these people spoke ten distinct languages.

MILEPOST

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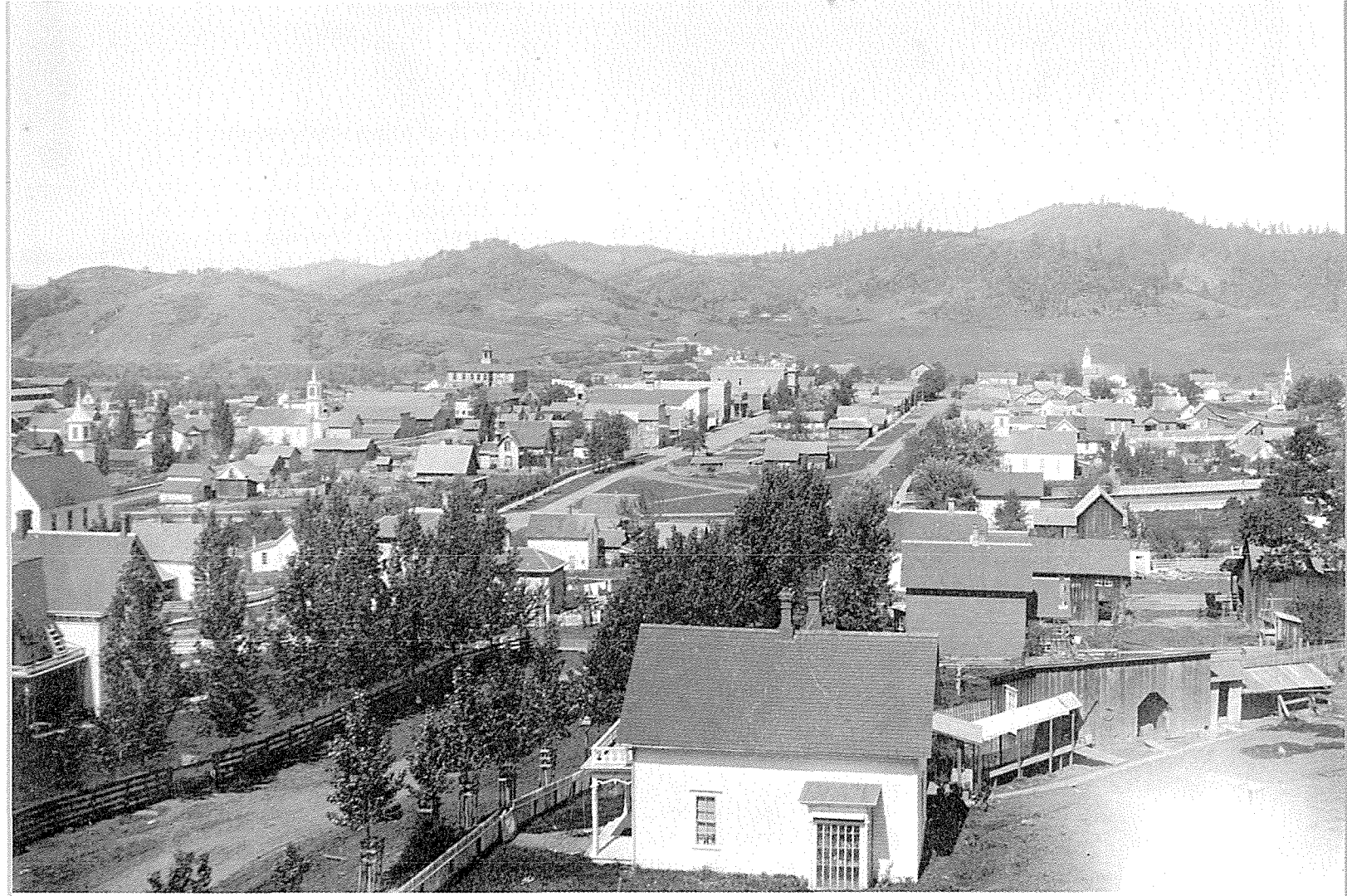
In more recent times Native Americans familiar with the language of their ancestors have explained that it is extremely difficult to produce the correct sounds of Indian words with English letters. The word written Coquille,



Canyonville is nestled in the foothills at the north end of the Canyon Creek defile, at the bottom of one of the steepest mountain passes in Oregon.

From the head of Canyon Creek Pass the drop is more than 1200 feet in eight miles to Canyonville, elevation 747 feet.

The community grew around a post office established here in 1852 to serve the settlers who were beginning to claim land in the diminutive valleys lying along the South Umpqua River and its tributaries.



Douglas County residents voted Roseburg the county seat in 1854, and the town soon became a sprawling commercial center.
SOHS #13453

for instance, sounds more like "coquilth."

Variant forms of Santiam include Ahalapam, Sandeam, Santainas and Sandeham.

Calapooya has been recorded in English as calapoosie, col-lap-poh-yea-ass, call-law-poh-yea-as, Kala-pooahas and collapoewah.

For some words no interpretation has been given.⁷

Under terms of a treaty made in 1853 with the Cow Creek Indians, the Indians were to relinquish all claims to the valley except for the upper part, where they could continue to live. They also could continue to fish in the falls of the creek and hunt in the mountains. For this they were given oxen and seed grain.

The Indians tried this new way of life. For two seasons they cultivated the ground. Then they gave up and joined the Rogue River Indians in warfare.

Settlers in the Cow Creek Valley gathered together in crude forts for safety. They slaughtered the oxen that had been given to the Indians to feed the volunteer soldiers that had been called to protect them, and they fed the grain to the soldiers' horses.

Eventually the natives were defeated. At the end of the Rogue River Indian Wars, the vanquished were taken to the Grande Ronde and Siletz Indian reservations.

EXIT 120

Roseburg was named for Aaron Rose, who arrived in the land of the Umpqua and Calapooya Indians in 1851, traded a horse for a land claim, and settled near where Deer Creek flows into the South Umpqua River.

Rose built a crude clapboard cabin on the edge of the Oregon-California immigrant road. Some sources say he sold "whatever he could procure or produce" to immigrants, teamsters and packers who passed this way. Other sources say he opened his house as a public tavern.⁸ He may have done both. That he became a "well-known character in Southern Oregon" is not disputed.⁹

With an influx of settlers in 1852, Rose platted a townsite on his land, and the next year Lewis L. Bradbury opened a store there. Other businesses followed, with

Rose encouraging development.

With the location of the county seat to be determined by election in 1854—Winchester was the only rival town—Rose donated three acres of land and gave \$1,000 for construction of a courthouse. It is also said that he entertained lavishly before the election.

Rose's town was chosen by a wide margin, and the following year it began to be known as Roseburg.

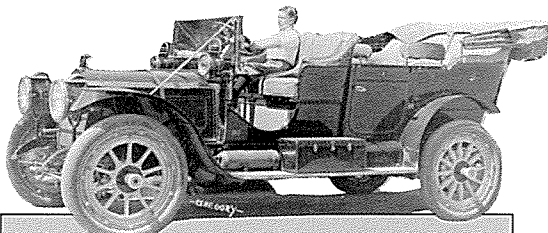
Rose farmed, operated a hotel, butcher shop and general store, and traded in horses. He served from 1856 to 1857 as a member of the Territorial Legislature, and he helped build the road from Roseburg to Coos Bay.

In 1867 he married Frances Carrington. The couple had four children.

**EXIT
138**

Oakland was the name of a post office located in 1852 in the gently rolling hills of the Calapooya Creek Valley you are now entering. The community lies just east of the freeway.

From here mail was carried by saddle and pack horse to Jacksonville, a gold mining town in the southern part of the territory; to Scottsburg, a supply point for miners on the Umpqua River; and to



Indian reservations were established in Oregon in 1853 in order to remove the natives from areas of white settlement.

The Grande Ronde Reservation, in the western part of Yamhill and Polk counties, included just under 60,000 acres and encompassed the Grand Ronde River (not to be confused with the Grande Ronde River and valley in eastern Oregon). Nearly 2,000 Indians were placed here in 1856.

The larger Siletz Reservation (1,382,400 acres), established the following year, extended westward from the Grand Ronde Reservation to the Pacific Ocean. The Siletz River south of Tillamook Bay became the center of the reservation.

Eugene and Corvallis, in the Willamette Valley.

Mail service was poor until the Pacific Mail Steamship Company inaugurated once-a-month service from California into the Columbia River in 1850-1851. Letters from the East came by way of Nicaragua, later by way of Panama. By 1856, mail routes in the Oregon Territory covered 968 miles.

MILEPOST

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8**

Just north of Rice Hill, Interstate 5 sweeps into Yoncalla, a community set in a series of small valleys named for the mountain known by the Indians as "yonc-calla," or home of the eagle bird. When the first white set-

Oakland's downtown still retains its nineteenth-century charm. Photo by Natalie Brown

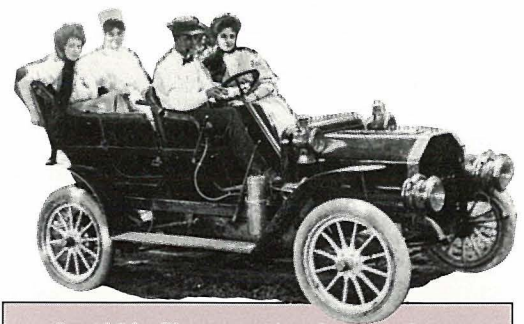


tlers came in 1848, the valley was the home of the Yoncalla Indians.

The three Applegate brothers and their families moved here from the Willamette Valley in 1849.

Charles and his wife Melinda had sixteen children and were ranchers. Their home still stands in Yoncalla, is still in the family, and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Lindsay and his wife Elizabeth (Melinda's sister) had twelve children. After several years, they left Yoncalla to go to the mountains south of Ashland where they owned and operated the Siskiyou Toll Road, then lived in Ashland. Lindsay served as a member of the Oregon Legislature in 1862. In 1865 they went to Fort Klamath, where Lindsay was the first Indian agent.



In 1988, Shannon Applegate, descendant of Charles and Melinda, wrote the book *Skookum*, a family history and story that emphasizes the lives of pioneer women. "How did it feel to be a mother witnessing the death of her child on the way to Oregon?" "What did it do to a young woman's life when she learned that her father had scratched her name from the family Bible?"

Shannon lives in the ancestral home in Yoncalla.

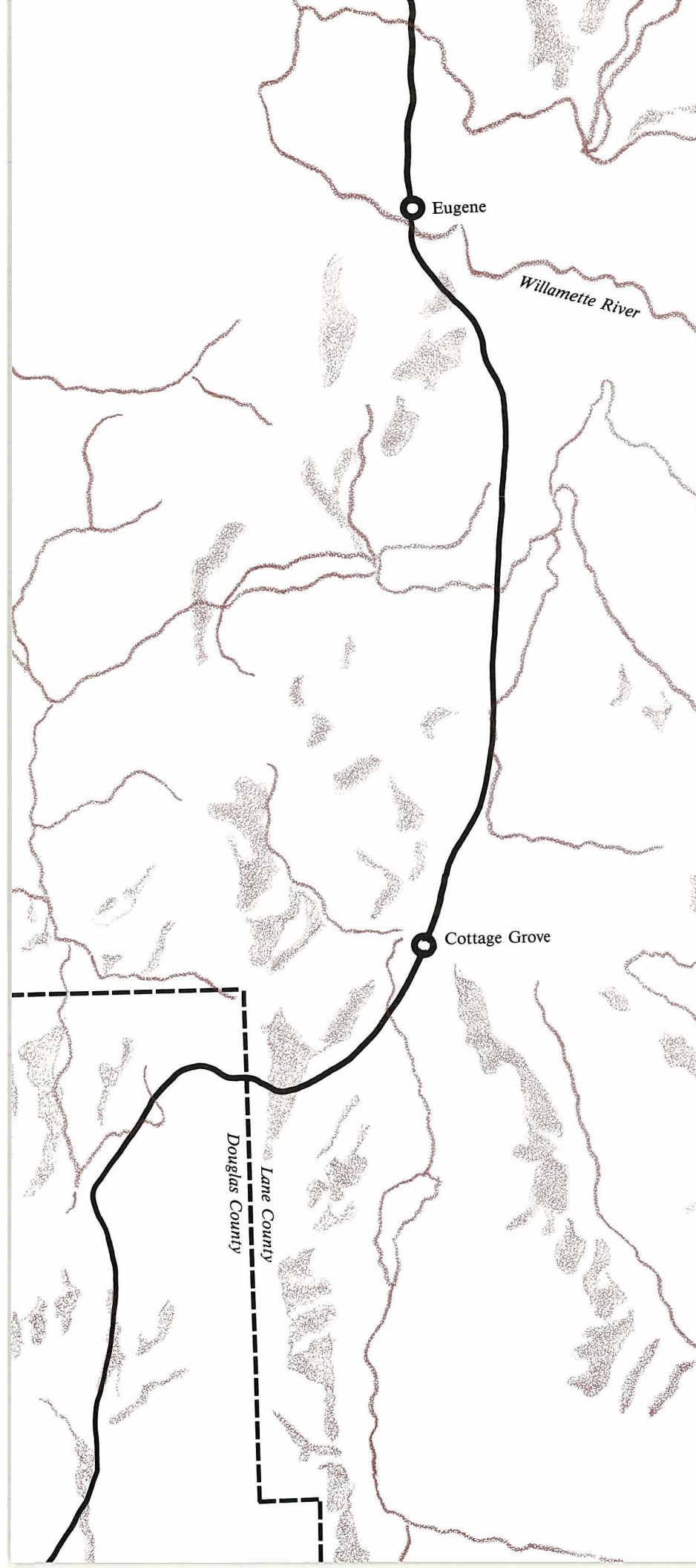
Illustrations for *Skookum* are by artist Susan Applegate, also a descendant of Charles and Melinda.

Skookum was published by Beech Tree Books, William Morrow, New York, and is available in The History Store in the History Center and in most bookstores and Oregon libraries.

Jesse and Cynthia had a family of thirteen and they, too, were ranchers in Yoncalla. They were known for their hospitality, and Jesse for his interest in public affairs and politics. A constant student, Jesse had a fine library and became a well-known writer on public issues. He had served in 1845 as a member of the legislative committee that revised the provisional government, helped unify the Oregon country and influenced the development of Oregon as a territory. Jesse was a member of the State Constitutional Convention in 1857, although he withdrew before the work was complete. He was an outspoken Republican who worked diligently for the election of Abraham Lincoln as president.

Jesse backed financially the political candidates he favored, and when the money wasn't repaid, he eventually went bankrupt and lost the property in Yoncalla.

In 1865 he and Cynthia went to northern California, where he worked as a ranch hand and she cooked. The work was hard. When friends and supporters in Oregon government realized their plight, they agreed this was no way to treat a man (and his wife) who had worked so hard to



found the state. They purchased acreage in Yoncalla, where Jesse and Cynthia built a home and lived out their lives. They are buried in Yoncalla, as are Charles and Melinda.

MILEPOST

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Interstate 5 continues north over the forested hills and through the diminutive valleys that separate the Umpqua and the Willamette River drainages.

Near Milepost 170 you enter Lane County, established in 1851 and named for Joseph Lane, the man President James Polk appointed governor of the Oregon Territory in 1849 after Abraham Lincoln declined the appointment. (Lincoln did not accept, it is said, because Mrs. Lincoln didn't want to live in such a remote place.)

Joseph Lane was born in North Carolina and educated in Kentucky. He served in the Indiana Legislature and as an officer in the Indiana Volunteers during the Mexican War. His first official act as Oregon

territorial governor was to demand the surrender of the Cayuse Indians responsible for the Whitman Massacre. He led campaigns during the Rogue River Indian Wars, but he also worked diligently for fair treatment of the natives.

Lane was elected territorial delegate to Congress in 1851, a position that carried no voting privileges. The Oregon Territory had recognition, but little or no authority or control over its own destiny.

When Oregon became a state in 1859, it was represented by two U.S. senators, one of whom was Joseph Lane. It was while serving in the Senate that Lane was nominated for vice president of the United States on the Democratic ticket with John C. Breckenridge. The Republicans won the election, Abraham Lincoln became president, and Joseph Lane retired from public life.

Lane was known for his strong Southern and pro-slavery sympathies. His name also was linked with talk of the creation of an independent nation for states west of the

I-5 crosses the Willamette River or its tributaries at several locations throughout the Willamette Valley
Photo by Natalie Brown



Rocky Mountains. Some suggest that it was Lane's strong political position that "brought to a close his brilliant career."¹⁰

Joseph Lane and his wife Polly had ten children. A son, Lafayette, served as state representative and was elected to Congress. A grandson, Harry Lane, served as mayor of Portland and as a U.S. senator.

MILEPOST

180

The freeway continues north, carrying you into the widening valley of the Willamette River. The Willamette is the longest river in Oregon. It makes its way through eight counties and meanders some 180 miles before it flows into the Columbia River. It is one of the few rivers in the nation that flows north.

There has been a great deal of controversy over the spelling of the name, everything from Wilhamet to Walla Matte, but the accepted spelling has come to be Willamette.

There are several theories as to the meaning of the word. Some say it means "spill water" and others say it means "big river, almost, not quite."

This long, green valley, where land was plentiful and fertile, was the first region of the state to be claimed and developed. At the beginning of the 1850s there were 13,000 white settlers in Oregon; at the end of the decade there were 52,000, and the majority of them lived in the Willamette Valley.

A few of the newcomers were attracted to the southern part of the territory, but in the Willamette Valley farmsteads and cultivated land soon reached into the foothills, and small towns and schools dotted the valley floor. Portland became the major center of commerce and Oregon City was the center of social life. The capital finally settled permanently in Salem.

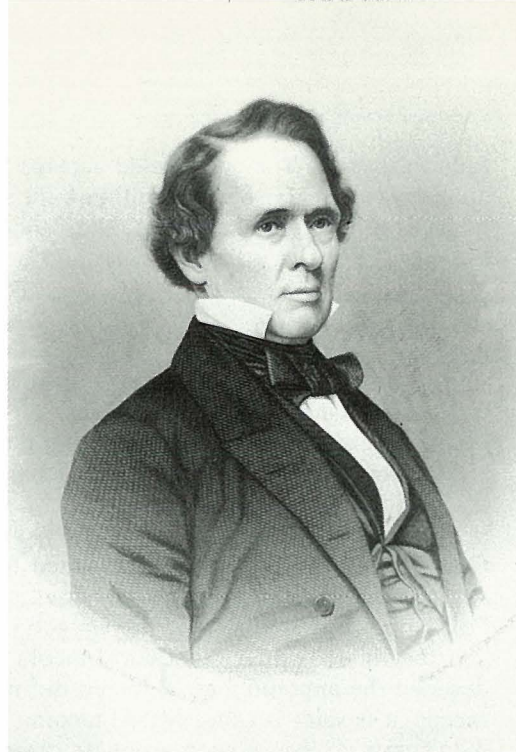
The Willamette Valley remains the most heavily populated part of the state today.

MILEPOST

192

Interstate 5 crosses the Willamette River just past Exit 192, the first of several exits that give access to Eugene. The central part of the city lies west of the freeway.

One of the most colorful characters to be associated with Eugene and with Oregon's early history is Joaquin Hiner Miller, who in later years came to be



Joseph Lane. SOHS #4776

known internationally as the Poet of the Sierras. As a young man Miller lived in the fledgling town that was beginning to establish itself on the banks of the Willamette River.

Eugene was named for Eugene Skinner who, with his wife Mary and their family, came in 1847 and lived in a cabin at the foot of Skinner's Butte. Mary was the first white woman here, and the couple's daughter Lenora was the first white child born in the county.

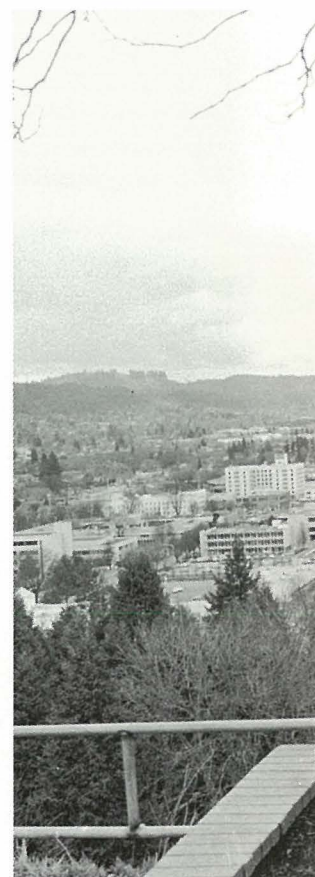
The Skinners farmed, operated a ferry, and donated land for county buildings when the town was laid out. Eugene also practiced law and served as postmaster and county clerk.

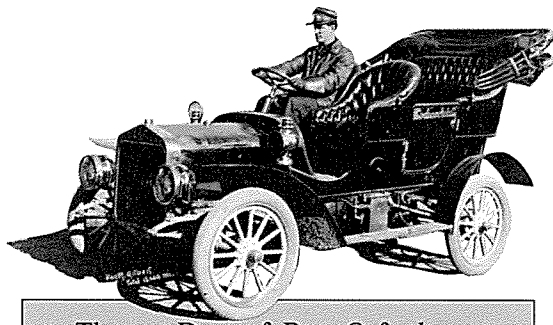
Joaquin Miller was thirteen in 1852 when his family arrived in the young town that already was an important center for agriculture, milling and river transportation.

At age sixteen, Joaquin left home to seek adventure in the California gold mines. Historians say he was a "restless youth."¹¹ He lived with the Shasta Indians for a year, then returned to Eugene, where he enrolled in Columbia College.

He taught school and he studied law. In 1861 he was admitted to the bar. Rather than practice law, however, he took a job riding pony express from Walla Walla to the Idaho gold mines. He returned to Eugene in 1862 to become editor of the *Democratic Register*, then the *Democratic Review*. Both newspapers were suppressed during these Civil War days because of

A view from Skinner's Butte overlooks the city of Eugene; both the hill and the town were named for early settler Eugene Skinner. Photo by Natalie Brown





Theresa Dyer of Port Orford was a writer who contributed to early Oregon periodicals under the pen name "Minnie Myrtle." She and Joaquin Miller met on a Thursday and were married the following Sunday. He deserted her after their third child was born while they were living at Canyon City. (Lewis McArthur, in *Oregon Geographic Names*, offers support for the story that Joaquin and Theresa had a cabin in what is now Myrtle Park, a natural park southwest of Canyon City, and that he gave the place this name in her honor.) After the separation, Theresa supported herself and her children by sewing, writing and lecturing. A second marriage lasted only a short time. In 1881, destitute and ill, she went to New York, where Joaquin helped her until she died a short time later. She is buried in New York City.

their strong pro-Southern sympathies. Miller was known as a leader in the pro-slavery faction that made Eugene a center of political and journalistic activity.

Miller drove a herd of cattle across the Cascade Mountains to Canyon City in 1864, and planted the first fruit orchard in that region. His cabin in Canyon City is now a museum. While living there his writings *Specimens* and *Joaquin et al.* were published.

In 1870 he went to Great Britain, where he became famous after a London publishing house published his work "Song of the Sierras." Shortly thereafter he returned to the United States, making his home at various times in New York, Washington, D.C., and in the Bay Area. He continued to travel to Europe and Asia.

He was a newspaper correspondent in the Klondike (1897-1898), and he covered the Boxer Rebellion in China in 1899. He was married three times, to an Indian girl in 1857, to Theresa Dyer in 1862, and to Abbie Leland in the early 1880s.

Joaquin Miller died in 1913 at age 74, now referred to as a "noted person."

In the next *Table Rock Sentinel*, our exploration of I-5 history continues north from Eugene to the Columbia River.



ENDNOTES

1. Devere Helfrich, *The Applegate Trail*, Klamath Echoes, No. 9 (Klamath County Historical Society), 1971.
2. Lewis A. McArthur, *Oregon Geographic Names*, Fifth Edition (Western Imprints, Press of the Oregon Historical Society), 1982, p. 114.
3. McArthur, p. 631.
4. McArthur, p. 662.
5. W. H. Harris and J. Levey, editors, *New Columbia Encyclopedia*, (New Columbia University Press), 1975, p. 679.
6. Howard McKinley Corning, editor, *Dictionary of Oregon History*, (Binfors and Mort Publishing Company, Portland, Oregon), 1989, p. 86.
7. McArthur, p. 177.
8. Corning, p. 212.
9. McArthur, p. 634.
10. Corning, p. 190.
11. Corning, p. 166.

Marjorie O'Harra is a retired journalist and a lifelong resident of southern Oregon who is glad fate chose to drop her off here in the comfort of the twentieth century. She has written several books and numerous articles about southern Oregon.



Then & Now

by Natalie Brown

When the new Schuler Apartment Building owned by businessman Ira E. Schuler opened in 1926 on the corner of Sixth and Oakdale, many Rogue Valley citizens felt that modern living had come to Medford. The white stucco structure's twenty-five apartments boasted good-sized rooms, disappearing beds and "vapor vacuum" heat. But by far, the building's most commented-on feature was its electrification.

Public and press stood in awe of the diversity of electrical conveniences offered to residents. Each apartment came equipped with a gleaming, white enamel, built-in Standard electrical range and a compact Frigidaire refrigerator, complete with a dainty icemaker. Tenants could enjoy clear reception of favorite radio programs on personal radio units connected to a central receiving set located in the basement. And with certain far-sightedness, contractors called for extra receptacles to supply electricity for the latest personal appliances.

Families also found favor with the electrically-equipped laundry room and the automatic Otis elevator so simple that "even a child could run it with ease."

No wonder nearly every apartment was claimed and more than a dozen tenants moved into their rooms before construction was completed.

Called one of the finest apartment houses in the entire state, this citadel of contemporary living



Designer and draftsman W. Nourse Jewett photographed the Schuler Apartment Building when it opened in 1926 (top). Sixty-five years later, the building stands relatively unchanged. W. Nourse Jewett photo courtesy Ruth Jewett, contemporary photo by Rachel Linder.

was constructed almost completely through local efforts. Medford contractor Larkin Reynolds supervised the erection of the structure from plans drawn by designer and draftsman W. Nourse Jewett. Rogue River Lumber Company supplied building materials, and Trowbridge Cabinet Works completed most of the millwork in its plant on South Fir street. People's Electric Store supplied and installed the appliances and conveniences that would make the apartment building one of the show spots of southern Oregon.

Well-designed and sturdily constructed, the Schuler building stands relatively unchanged after sixty-five years. The original Otis elevator still provides access to the structure's three floors and basement, and free-standing radiators continue to keep residents comfortable in the Rogue Valley's changeable climate. Recognizing the building's contributions to Medford's downtown community, the state recently recommended listing the Schuler Apartment Building on the National Register of Historic Places.

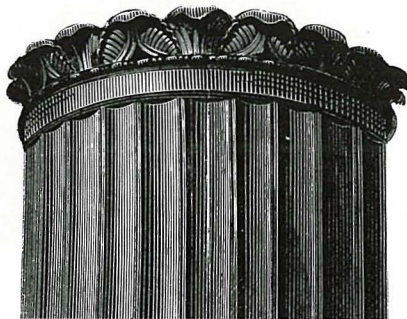
MYTHS OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Is it a landmark? Is it on the National Register? Both are common questions when people are trying to decide if a site or structure is "historic." But many are confused about what being on the National Register means, what is listed, and how a specific site came to be recognized.

The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) is a nationwide inventory of the properties that have been identified for their significance to our past on either the local, state or regional level.¹ It is not an "exclusive" list. The NRHP includes more than 50,000 properties from sites, districts, and objects, to buildings and other structures. A listed property may be found to be "significant" for its association with at least one of four criteria: A) a broad theme of history; B) an individual or organization; C) architectural design, building technology, use of materials, or association with a significant builder/architect; or D) archaeological value, either historic or pre-historic.

The words "National Register" usually bring to mind imposing Queen Anne houses or stately brick storefronts. But the register includes everything from simple cabins to estates, abandoned frame stores to brick commercial blocks,

wagon trails, cemeteries, mining equipment, and archaeological sites. Each entry may not necessarily fit the popular image of a "landmark," but it is recognized by the National Park Service for its role in the history of our nation's development.



by George Kramer

In Oregon alone more than 1,000 individual properties and thirty historic districts have been placed on the NRHP since the program's inception in 1966. In Jackson and Josephine counties, more than one hundred sites are listed. Many of these are well known, such as the Medford Public Library, the Episcopal Church in Grants Pass, or the Swedenburg House in Ashland. Far more National Register properties in the Rogue Valley remain little-known to the general public.

Adding to the public's confusion about the NRHP is its continually evolving nature. There is a certain tendency to assume that if a building or site isn't *on* the NRHP that it isn't "historic." Nothing could be further from the truth. When Congress created the NRHP as a part of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, it didn't fund any type of survey of the country to document what was or wasn't historic.² For the most part, a property is listed on the NRHP only when its present owner takes the initiative to nominate it.³ As a result, many currently unlisted, and therefore unheralded, structures and sites are "historic" in every sense of the word. They would likely prove eligible for the NHRP, but they are not on it simply because they've never been nominated for inclusion.

There isn't space here to document all of the National Register properties in our area, nor to cover all the potentially eligible ones that come to mind. And surely there are many sites and structures that are still waiting to be discovered. But in celebration of National Historic Preservation Week, here are some brief notes on a few of the Rogue Valley's lesser known historic sites. Each is an important part of our past, some have been formally acclaimed and some not.

MYTH

National Register properties must be perfectly restored.

CARGILL COURT APARTMENTS

The National Register is not, as many suppose, limited to "beautiful buildings," but includes sites and structures that have significant connection to important past events. So a listed property can still be in need of what is euphemistically called "TLC." Perhaps the best local example of such a fixer-upper is the Cargill Court Apartment complex, located at Sixth and Ivy in downtown Medford. It was listed on the NRHP in early 1990.

Originally, the building that would become Cargill Court was built for Dr. Elias Hull Porter as the Medford Sanitarium, an early specialized medical hospital. The three-story brick structure was completed in 1917 and boasted a hydro-therapy facility in the basement and a penthouse that served as Dr. Porter's operating room. By 1921 Dr. Porter closed the sanitarium, and a short time later two flanking brick wings were built. The complex was re-christened "Cargill Court."

Cargill Court brought new respectability to apartment living in Medford, and many prominent citizens called the complex home. These included, among others, local attorney Porter Neff, Medford City Attorney Frank Farrell, educator E. H. Hedrick and, for a time, orchardist David Rosenberg. Cargill Court served as a model, in design as well as status, for a string of downtown apartment dwellings that culminated with the construction of the Medford Plaza in the 1950s.

During the late 1950s downtown living in Medford grew less popular. By the 1970s Cargill Court had fallen on hard times. A series of fires, some arson-related, had reduced the property to a dangerous condition. Following actual

Cargill Court Photo by Natalie Brown



condemnation by the city, the owners, in an attempt to save the structure, negotiated a partial demolition that removed most of the exterior woodwork and all the interior. A rear frame portion was demolished and the structure was surrounded with a high chain-link fence. And so it sits today, await-

ing restoration, demolition or whatever the future may hold. But even in this condition, under criterion "A" for its prominent role in the development of Medford's once thriving downtown apartment community, Cargill Court was significant enough to justify its recognition as an NRHP property.

Grand, impressive structures are registered.



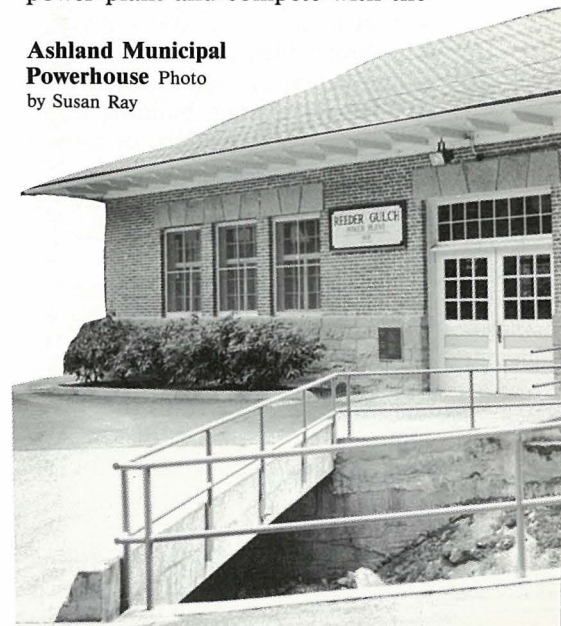
ASHLAND MUNICIPAL POWERHOUSE

In 1987, the city of Ashland Municipal Powerhouse, located above the city in the Rogue River National Forest, was listed on the National Register. A thirty-two-by-fifty-foot brick structure built in 1909, the powerhouse once again serves as a major element in Ashland's city-owned utility.

Ashland was the first Jackson County city to have electric power, in 1889.¹⁶ Originally, a group of private investors formed the Ashland Electric Power and Light Company and was granted a perpetual franchise to serve the community. By 1908 however, the city

of Ashland had begun to rethink the wisdom of the exclusive contract and decided to build its own power plant and compete with the

Ashland Municipal Powerhouse Photo by Susan Ray



private company. In 1908 Portland engineer Frank C. Kelsey was hired and the Reeder Gulch canyon was selected as the best site for the new municipal generating station. Medford contractor R. I. Stuart built the powerhouse from Kelsey's plans, and the turbines were in operation by late 1909.

Of course, the private investors in the Ashland Electric Power and Light Company were none too pleased with the sudden competition the city itself represented. A series of conflicts, with the city

revoking the "perpetual" franchise itself in 1911, ended as might be expected—in the courts. Finally, in November 1915, the Ashland Electric Power and Light Company sold most of its property to the California-Oregon Power Company. The powerhouse continued to serve Ashland's needs until 1965, when increased maintenance demands shut the turbines down. The original generating equipment was sold for scrap three years later.

The Ashland Municipal Powerhouse is the oldest such facility in

the state. As an artifact of the city of Ashland's development of a municipally owned utility, Ashland being one of only two cities in Oregon which owns its own electrical generation facility, the powerhouse is a unique reminder of a crucial episode in the city's history. Following a complete renovation of the structure and the installation of new turbines in 1985, the Ashland Municipal Powerhouse is once again a vital link in providing electricity to Ashland residents and businesses.



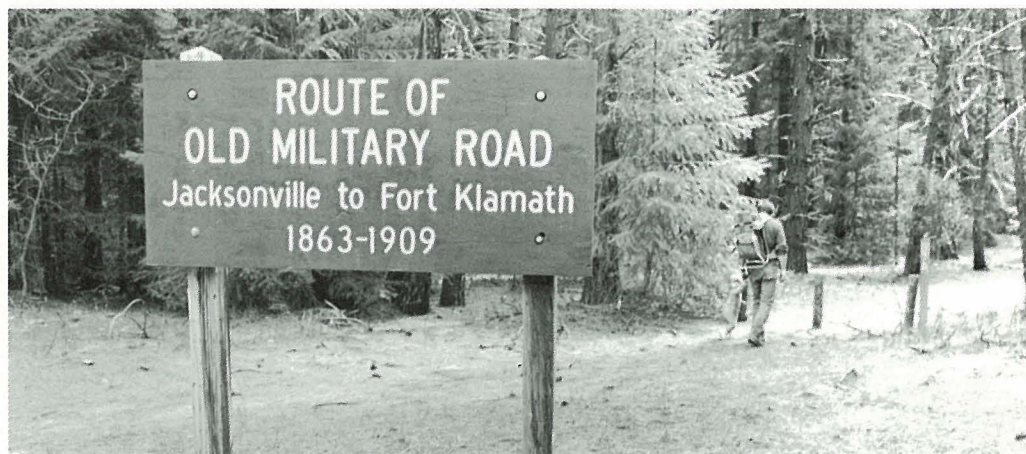
Only buildings can be placed on the National Register.

Old Military Road
Photo by Natalie Brown

JACKSONVILLE-TO-FORT KLAMATH MILITARY WAGON ROAD

In 1863 a group of the U.S. Army's Oregon Volunteers under the direction of Colonel Charles Drew built a wagon road over the Cascades. It connected Jacksonville with newly constructed Fort Klamath, north of Agency Lake in Klamath County. Fort Klamath would play a pivotal role in the various conflicts in the Klamath Basin, including the much-documented Modoc War that culminated with Captain Jack's stand in his famous "stronghold" in northern California.

As the first improved connection between the Rogue and Klamath valleys, the Jacksonville-to-Fort Klamath road was an important



link in the development and settlement of southern Oregon. "The road was used to transport the first sawmill (1863) into the Klamath Basin, setting the stage for large-scale utilization of this region's immense stands of ponderosa pine in later years,"¹⁸ wrote one historian.

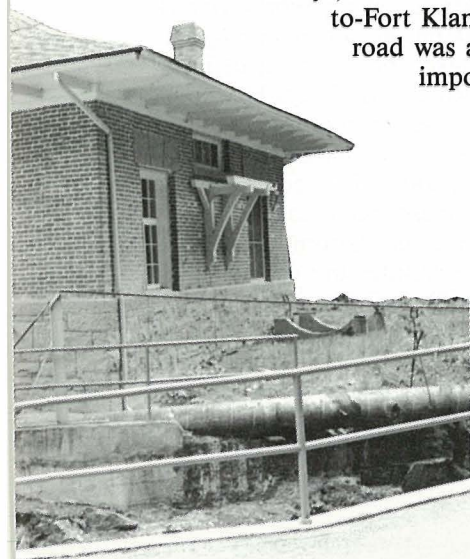
The route of the Jacksonville-Fort Klamath road is a steep one, plagued by deep snow drifts and other seasonal obstacles. By 1865 other routes, more easily traveled, had replaced it as the main link across the mountains. But the old road continued to see use, and it was not until 1909 that the last wagon is thought to have covered its entire distance.

While the entire route of the

Jacksonville-to-Fort Klamath Military Wagon road is known, most of it is in private hands and has been erased by later improvement or development. The history of these stretches is not easily identifiable. In NRHP terms, they lack "integrity" in historic appearance. However four small segments, owned by the federal government,¹⁹ still retain sufficient integrity to merit listing on the NRHP.

As a site, there are no buildings or structures associated with the Jacksonville-Fort Klamath Road. But some of the nominated sections still show the parallel "ruts" of the heavily laden wagon wheels that transported the tools and raw materials needed to develop the Klamath Basin over 125 years ago.

continued



MYTH

All National Register residences are beautiful Victorians.

Clark-Norton House Photo by Timmothy Bullard



CLARK-NORTON HOUSE

Devastating fires play a large role in the history of many of Oregon's towns. Much of Ashland's Plaza burned in 1879 and the new buildings, many of which still stand, were made of brick as a result. In our own century both Bandon and Astoria have had major fires. Fires played a role in Grants Pass' early years as well. In both 1899 and 1902 huge blazes damaged many of that city's commercial and residential buildings. Learning its lesson, Grants Pass quickly turned to brick as the preferred construction material. Soon both bricks and the contractors who could build them were highly prized in Grants Pass.

One brick mason of note, Henry J. Clark, arrived in Grants Pass and quickly prospered. Clark had extensive experience working on the Oregon State House in Salem and on opera houses in both Ashland and Grants Pass. In 1903 he began construction on what was to be an apartment building but which became his own residence.²² Naturally he turned to the material he knew best and the unusual boxy home, no doubt related to the intent of the original design, was soon finished. The house was one of only ten known brick residential structures in Grants Pass built prior to 1910. Clark lived in the house only a short time. He and his wife divorced and the house

was sold to Harry D. Norton in 1904.

Norton, an attorney, had a long and active career in the Rogue Valley. He served in the State Senate, was the Grants Pass city attorney and in 1928 was elected a circuit court judge. Norton moved to Medford in 1929. In the 1930s Norton was elected to the Jackson County Court, the equivalent of today's board of commissioners, and played a prominent role in the Good Government Congress situation in the mid-1930s. His opposition to that radical political movement made him a prime target of that group's unsuccessful attempt to control Jackson County government

with rigged elections and mob violence.

The unassuming Clark-Norton House was converted to commercial uses following World War II. Various businesses including a dressmaker, professional offices, and even the Trailways bus depot were housed in the building over the years. The odd brick house, now surrounded by commercial development, seems an unlikely candidate for "landmark" status. But the architecture of the Clark-Norton House, the oldest of the three remaining original brick residences in town, and its association with both Clark and Norton were of enough significance for it to be listed on the NRHP in 1985.

MYTH

**Buildings must be old
to be nominated for the
National Register.**

ROGUE THEATER

Unlike the other potential NRHP buildings mentioned so far, the Rogue Theater, at H and Seventh streets in Grants Pass, was not built by an early pioneer or important settler. As a commercial structure built in the late 1930s, just over fifty years ago, it seems an unlikely candidate for "historic" status.

Although not an ironclad rule, most properties must be at least fifty years old for consideration for the NRHP.¹² This often causes problems for younger properties such as the Rogue Theater, as development marches over them before we've gained historical perspective on their architectural or social value.

Earlier movie theaters are only recently being recognized as important reminders of the era when Saturday matinees and opening nights were major events in America's small cities and towns. Many communities have begun to restore their once-grand movie palaces, such as the Broadway in Portland, for use as performing arts centers. Locally, similar plans surround Medford's Craterian Theater. Much slower has been the public's appreciation of the art deco-style theaters of the 1930s. Klamath Falls recently lost its wonderful Tower Theater to make way for new development.¹³ Here in the Rogue Valley we are lucky to have two art deco theaters that survive, both still showing movies: the Varsity in Ashland and the Rogue Theater of Grants Pass.

The Rogue Theater was designed by Robert Keeney of Medford's Clark and Keeney Architects and was built by Elmer Childers, also of Medford.¹⁴ Advertisements claimed the Rogue was "Oregon's newest and most beautiful theater." The building itself is classically art deco, with its original multicolored



Rogue Theater

Photo by Natalie Brown

ceramic tile façade typical of the exuberant use of color and forms of that style. A flowing thirty-nine-foot-high neon sign topped by a "Sally Rand fan" dominates the facade. It was built by the Neon Display Company of Portland, which boasted the sign was "a crowning jewel [for] which there is no equal in the state."¹⁵ The Rogue's first show, "There Goes My Heart," starring Frederick

March and Virginia Bruce, opened November 9, 1937.

The Rogue Theater remains remarkably intact, still a vital and appreciated element of downtown Grants Pass. Hopefully it will long remain so. As one of the most interesting and attractive art deco buildings in southern Oregon, the Rogue Theater could likely be listed on the NRHP were it ever nominated for that honor.

continued

MYTH

Only nineteenth-century structures are placed on the register.

Butte Falls Ranger Station

Photo by Natalie Brown

BUTTE FALLS RANGER STATION

Shortly after assuming office, President Franklin Roosevelt sent to Congress a series of measures designed to relieve the unemployment of the Depression through public works projects. While some viewed these programs as non-essential "make-work" giveaways, in many areas the New Deal construction programs represented a major infusion of new dollars and jobs that created structures of lasting significance and utility.

The first relief measure passed by Congress, in March 1933, created what eventually came to be known as the Civilian Conservation Corps, or CCC, intended as an agency to work with the Departments of Interior, Labor and Agriculture on various projects. CCC camps were established throughout the Pacific Northwest and, at the direction of the Forest Service, the CCC built trails and other recreational improvements. For this article the CCC is of note for its construction of literally hundreds of ranger stations, administrative offices, staff housing, warehouses and outbuildings. In 1987 a collection of these CCC/Forest Service properties was listed on the NRHP as a "multiple property" nomination.

The Butte Falls Ranger Station



is a complex of nine individual buildings, all constructed by the CCC between 1935 and 1938. The simple, vernacular-style structures are typical of the CCC projects for the Forest Service. Although relatively unassuming, according to the nomination each of the buildings exhibits "very high qualities of design and execution."²⁰

Collectively the buildings of the

Butte Falls Ranger Station form an important cohesive grouping which "manifests the principles of comprehensive site planning initiated by the Forest Service during the Depression."²¹ Within the context of the large number of Forest Service stations built by the CCC, the Butte Falls Ranger Station reflects the dramatic impact of the CCC on our area prior to WWII.

MYTH

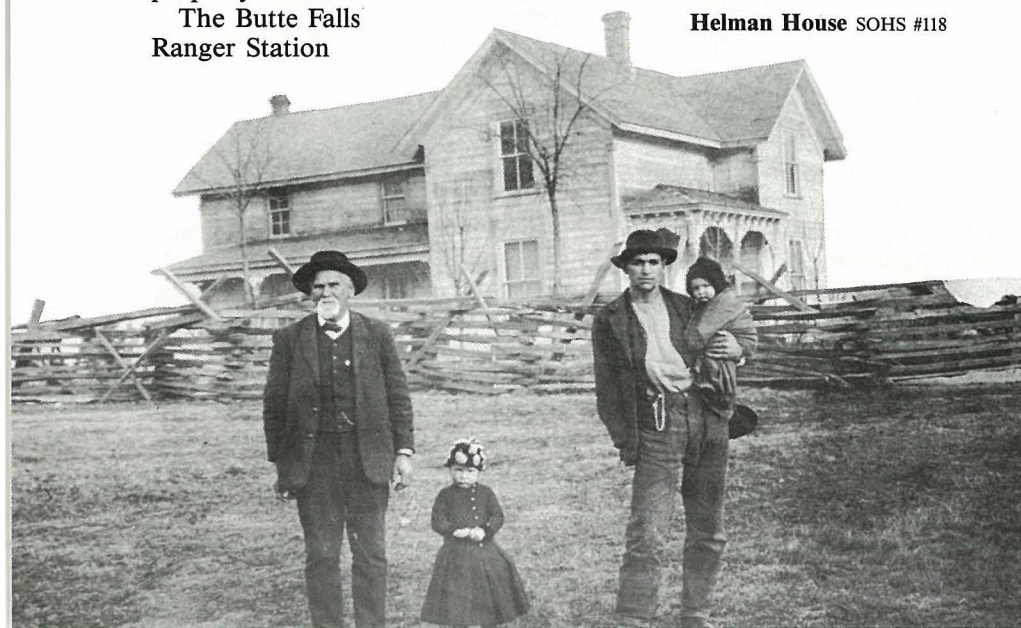
Properties of city founders are always registered.

Helman House SOHS #118

ABEL HELMAN HOUSE

Some structures, such as Ashland's Helman House, are absent from the National Register despite their obvious historic merit.

Abel Helman moved to the Ashland area in 1851-52 and with two friends, Robert Hargadine and Eber Emery, established the town of Ashland along the banks of Ashland Creek. The new city was centered on the sawmill he and his partners built at what is now the entrance to Lithia Park. The



Plaza, in front of the mill site, and most of Ashland's present downtown is located on what was Helman's claim.

Like most early settlers' homes, Helman's first house was a simple log or hewn cabin located along Ashland Creek. As Ashland prospered, Helman built a larger farmhouse on a flat piece of land about one mile to the east. The house was apparently completed in 1879. According to the *Ashland Daily Tidings*, "Mr. A. D. Helman [is] to build a fine new residence for himself on property northeast of Tozer and Daley's mill . . ."⁴ The new house would serve as

Helman's home until his death in 1910.

A large two-story structure, the Helman House is simply detailed, typical of most vernacular farmhouses. Only the fancy trim on the porch, now removed, indicated any pretensions on the part of its prominent original owner. A barn, just east of the old house, is reportedly a portion of what once was a larger structure that dates from Helman's time as well.

As the Helman farm was parceled off, houses were built closer and closer to the old farmhouse. Today the structure stands inconspicuously in a typical residential

neighborhood. But the old Helman House does still stand at the corner of Orange and Helman streets, even if only a few are aware of its history. The house looks much the same as it did when a stern-looking Abel Helman and his children posed in front of it in 1887. The trees have grown, and the split rail fence has given way to progress and paved streets. But neighbors of the Helman home (of which this author is one) can still affirm the quality of the area's soil, a reminder of what all the locals called "Mrs. Helman's truck garden."



All beautiful Victorian homes are on the National Register.

CHAVNER HOUSE

Tom Chavner was an early settler in the area along the Rogue River first known as Dardanelles. In 1859, along with Jim Hays and some others, he struck gold and developed what eventually became known as the "Gold Hill Mine." When Chavner donated land and laid out a townsite just north of his homestead, the mine's name was used to christen the new city.

From the sale of his interest in the mine, and later from other business ventures, Chavner became relatively well-to-do. He and his family played a prominent role in the development of Jackson County. Although Tom Chavner died in 1888, his family remained on the original homestead, as they do today. In 1892 the Chavner family had the imposing Queen Anne dwelling built. It still stands, surrounded by original outbuildings, on Blackwell Road south of Gold Hill.

The design of the Chavner House was probably based on "Plans for an Eight-room Cottage," as published by the Connecticut architectural firm of Palliser and Palliser.¹⁰ The Palliser

firm was quite influential in residential design during the late Victorian period, and like those of George Barber of Tennessee (who designed the NRHP-listed Jeremiah Nunan House in Jacksonville), the firm's works can be found throughout the nation.

Unlike the Nunan House, which was assembled from a pre-cut kit shipped to Jacksonville, the Chavner House was built by local contractor E. W. Starr¹¹ apparently using the Palliser and Palliser blueprints.

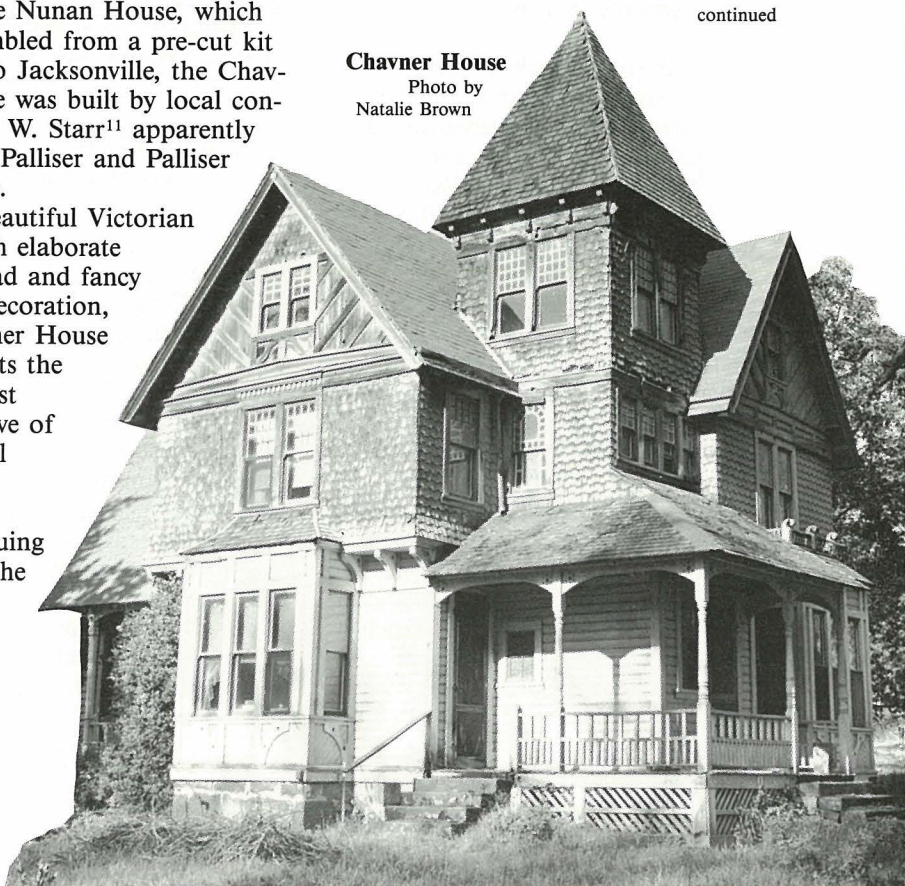
As a beautiful Victorian home with elaborate gingerbread and fancy exterior decoration, the Chavner House visually fits the image most people have of a National Register property. Its continuing ties with the Chavner family directly link it to the

development of Gold Hill. Doubtless the Chavner House would prove eligible for the NRHP, under both criterion "C" for architectural merit and criterion "B" for its association with the family. But, as yet, the Chavner House has never been nominated for the register.

continued

Chavner House

Photo by
Natalie Brown



MYTH

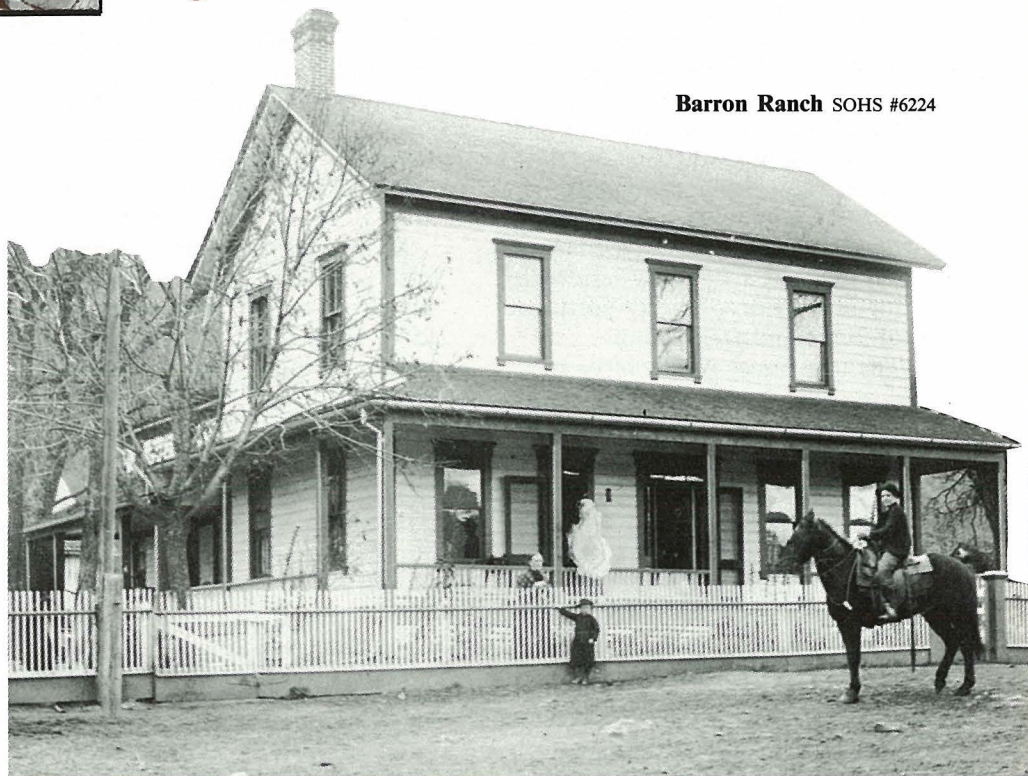
All former pioneer stage stops are on the National Register.

BARRON RANCH

Major Hugh Barron was one of the first donation land claimants in the Ashland area, settling at the foot of the Siskiyou in 1851. His ranch, along the trail east over the Cascades, quickly became a stopping point for travelers.

In the early 1850s, Barron's "Mountain House," operated in conjunction with James Russell and John Gibbs, served as a way station for new settlers, a source for provisions and, when needed, as a refuge from Indian attack. As the valley developed, the Mountain House also served as a post office. By 1858 the original log cabin had evolved into a more substantial building which served as a stage stop along the California and Oregon line.⁸ "The Mountain House was famed for its hospitality and entertained many distinguished visitors."⁹ The last stage pulled through the Barron stop in December 1887 just before the driving of the golden spike in Ashland that connected the city by rail to the south.

The Barron Ranch is significant for its important connections with the Barron family settlement south of Ashland, and early transportation routes in the Rogue Valley. Each of these would make the building significant under NRHP criterion "A." But the Barron Ranch house would likely qualify for the register as a surviving example of early design and construction methods as well. It is similar to other, better known pioneer homes in the Rogue Valley such as the Patrick Dunn House (c.1860), the Samuel Colver House (1856), or the recently destroyed David N. Birdseye House (1855-56). But unlike each of these pioneer homes, the Barron Ranch has never been listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



Barron Ranch SOHS #6224

MYTH

Unusual architectural styles always get recognition.

MALMGREN OFFICE AND HOUSE

Most Oregonians know that the Land Conservation and Development Commission, the overseeing body of Oregon's land use planning system, sets development policy for agricultural lands and forested areas. But under "Goal 5," the state also requires a survey of "cultural resources." Each local government must provide an inventory of historic sites, a method of evaluating their significance, and a plan to protect them when possible. The surveys range from impressively thorough catalogs listing hundreds of well-researched properties to short, one-page, bare-bones descriptions accompanied by

a photograph. The resulting "State of Oregon Inventory," despite its often uneven value, is the closest thing that we have to a comprehensive list of Oregon's historic resources.

A typical property on the statewide inventory is the Dr. Malmgren House and Office, located on West Second Street in Phoenix. We don't yet know enough about Dr. Malmgren himself to understand what role he played in Phoenix's history, so it is only the architectural merit of the buildings that is noted.

Malmgren's colonial revival-design house is certainly one of the grandest examples of that style in our area. The porticoed front façade's paired fluted columns and

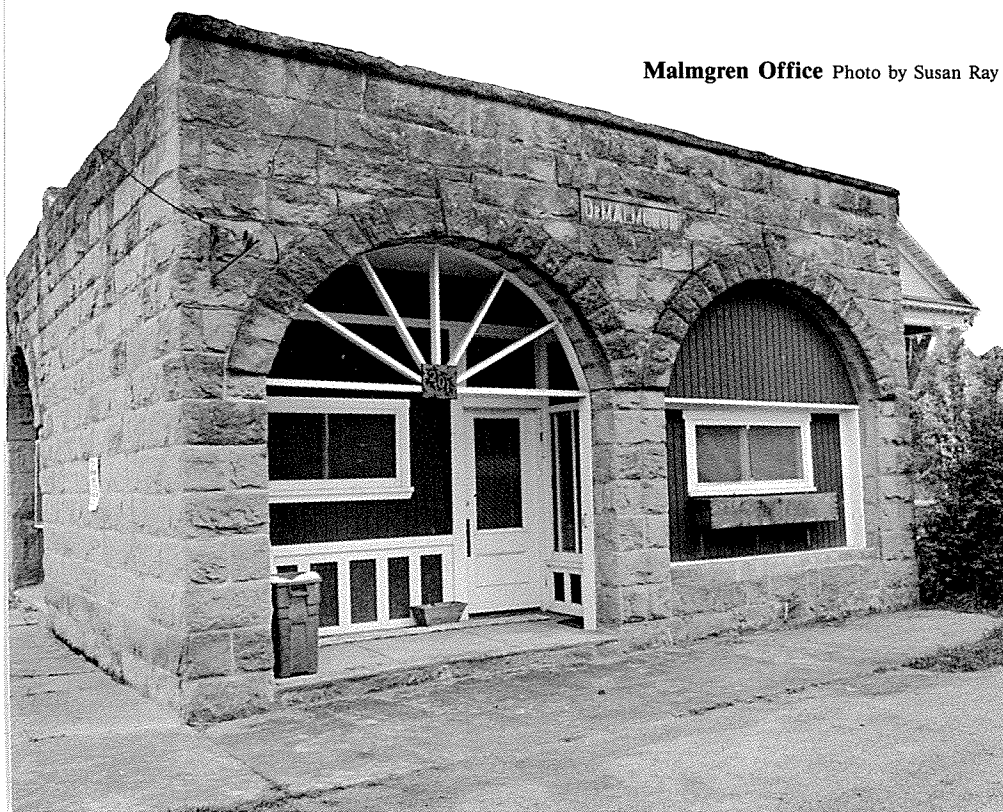
small balcony are typical colonial features, reminding us of the architecture of the antebellum South. Reportedly, Malmgren completed the house in 1912, two years before his stone office and drug store were begun next door. It is the office that holds special interest as a potential NRHP property.

Although only a modest building, the structural system of Malmgren's office is of stone, which simply means that the stone walls themselves support the roof.⁵ It is built of local materials quarried, according to the *Mail Tribune*, on nearby Colver Hill.⁶ Most stone buildings in our area date from the late 1880s-1890s. After that the use of the material was superseded by concrete, since concrete is relatively easy to work with and thus less expensive than stone. The Malmgren Office is therefore a fairly late example (1914-15), possibly the last in the Bear Creek Valley, of true stone construction.⁷

Both the Malmgren House and Office have architectural merit and potentially added significance from their association with Dr. Malmgren. But the stone office, under criterion "C," for its construction and use of materials, could prove eligible for listing on the National Register.



Malmgren Office Photo by Susan Ray



ENDNOTES

1. Nationally significant properties, although they are included in the register as well, are usually classified as national landmarks in recognition of their greater importance to the nation as a whole. The city of Jacksonville, for example, is a National Landmark. Others in Oregon include Timberline Lodge, the Lewis and Clark salt cairn near Seaside, and Villard and Deady halls on the University of Oregon campus in Eugene.

2. And, of course, even if there had been a nationwide comprehensive survey of sites in 1966, we are continually re-evaluating what of our past is important or interesting. Such a comprehensive survey, by definition, would always need to be updated and re-analyzed.

3. Both the state of Oregon and the federal government have adopted a variety of financial incentive programs to encourage owners of historic properties to do just that.

4. *Ashland Daily Tidings*, February 21, 1879.

5. As opposed to the more typical stone "veneer" laid over bearing brick, concrete or even a wood/metal structure. Granite in particular, usually that quarried in Ashland (for a time promoted as "The Granite City"), is commonly found as a non-structural veneer on local buildings.

6. *Medford Mail Tribune*, October 8, 1914.

7. Indeed, many early concrete block buildings were cast as "imitation stone" with quarry-look faces. Local examples include the Nininger House (NRHP 1909-10) on Pioneer Street in Ashland and the so-called "miracle-block" house at the corner of Holly and Fourth in Medford.

8. Although many pioneer structures in Oregon are *claimed* to be stage stops only a few can truly be proven so. The Barron Ranch, as well as the Rock Point Hotel (NRHP 1856) and the Wolf Creek Tavern

(NRHP 1874) are the only surviving *documented* travelers' stations on the line between California and Oregon.

9. *Medford Mail Tribune*, January 29, 1925, obituary of Martha A. (Mrs. Hugh) Walker-Barron. Mrs. Barron was the daughter of the early pioneer John Walker, whose family home still stands on East Main Street at the intersection of Walker Avenue and was itself listed on the NRHP in 1978.

10. See Palliser and Palliser, *Palliser's Late Victorian Architecture* (Reprint ed., introduction by Michael Tomlan), American Life Foundation, 1978.

11. See *Southern Oregon Mail*, October 7, 1892, "E. W. Starr who is working on the Chavner residence at Gold Hill will soon be through with that job as the contract being [sic] about completed."

12. Younger NRHP properties include one of the early "Golden Arch" McDonalds (in southern California) and the nation's first electric-power producing nuclear reactor, located just outside aptly named Atomic City, Idaho.

13. The community has turned its deco-period Esquire Theater into the Ross Ragland Center for the Performing Arts.

14. Keeney, Frank Clark's young partner, had designed Ashland's Varsity Theater in 1937. Childers had been a prominent Rogue Valley contractor for more than a quarter of a century, having built the Sparta Building, at Riverside and Main in Medford, in 1911.

15. *Grants Pass Courier*, November 8, 1938.

16. Atwood, Kay, "Reeder Gulch Power Plant/Ashland Municipal Powerhouse" NRHP Nomination, 1986.

17. George Kramer, "Cargill Court Apartments" NRHP Nomination, 1989.

18. Jeff LaLande, "Jacksonville-to-Fort Klamath Military Wagon Road" NRHP Nomination, 1979.

19. These sections are administered by either the Medford District of the BLM, the Rogue River or Winema national forests.

20. E. Gail Throop, "USDA Forest Service Administrative Buildings in Oregon and Washington," NRHP Multiple Property Nomination, 1986.

21. Ibid.

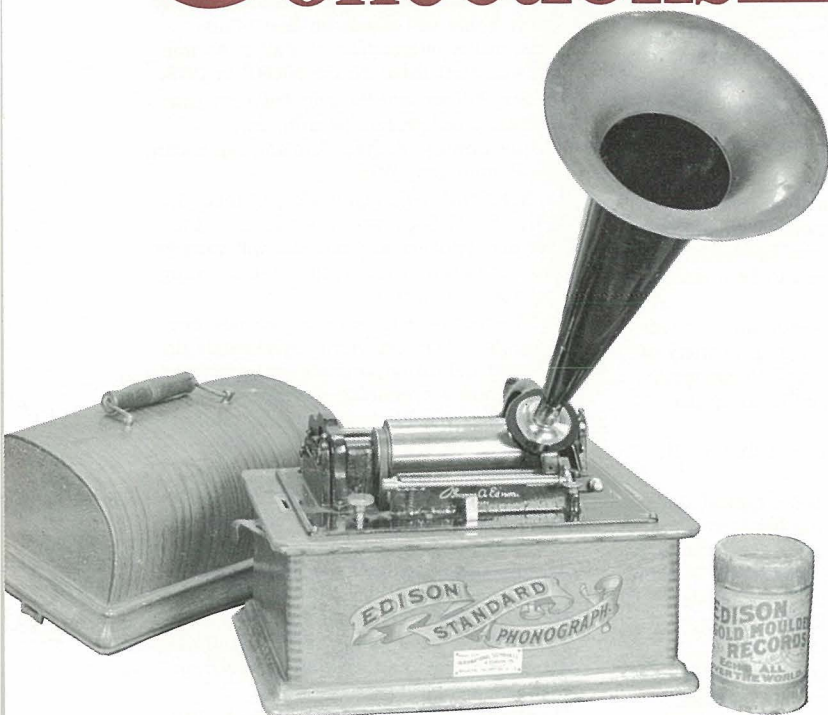
22. Kay Atwood, "Clark-Norton House," NRHP Nomination, 1985.

The author wishes to thank each and every individual involved with the preparation of the National Register nominations for the properties mentioned in this article. The information and research contained in those documents has been invaluable in writing these short overviews. Special commendation should go to the owners, both public and private, who undertook to document their properties for the future.

Historic preservation consultant George Kramer keeps an eye out for significant properties, atypical, traditional and otherwise, from his home in Ashland.

from the Collections

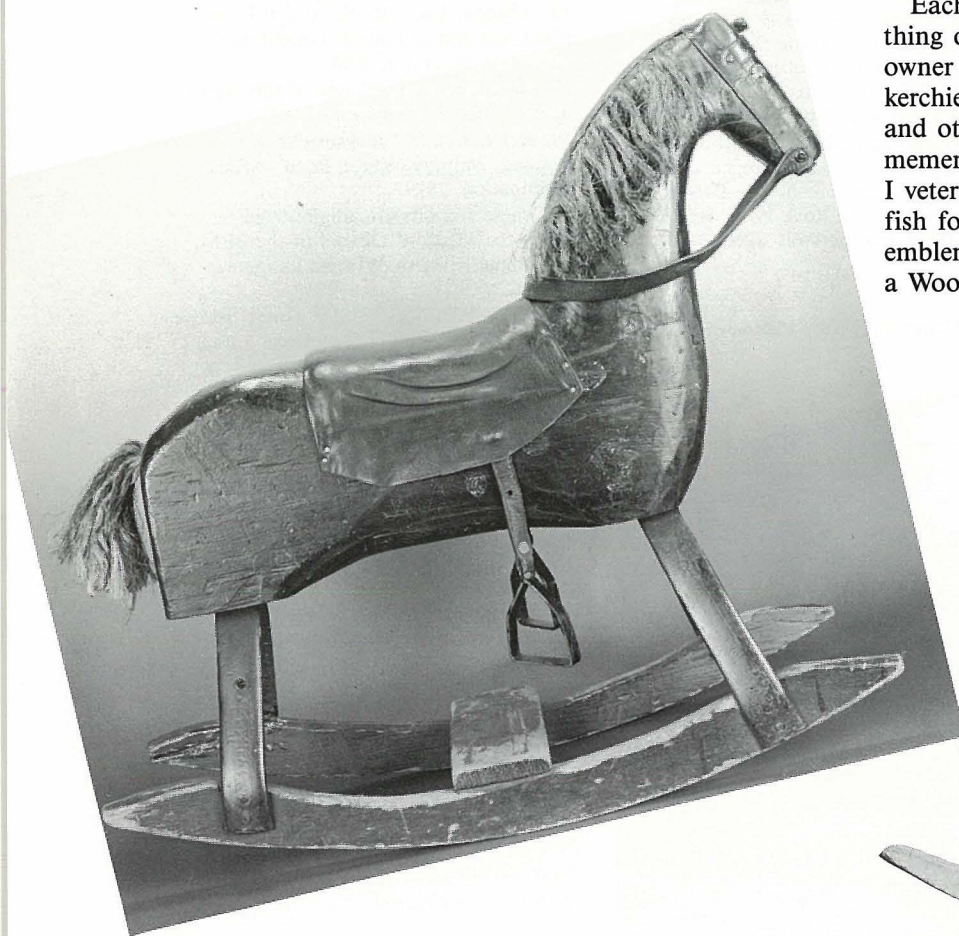
by Janette Meek



The phonograph was considered a treasure immediately upon its invention. When Thomas Edison heard his voice crackle out of the sound horn, he said he was "never so taken aback in my life." People were intrigued with the ability of this instrument to reproduce sound, voice and music. Following a day of work *Mail Tribune* editor and publisher Robert Ruhl, often came home to listen to his Edison Home Phonograph. The National Phonograph Company manufactured this phonograph with oak case in about 1905.

Harold David Carr would long treasure the gift he received on his fourth birthday in 1890—a rocking horse. The horse is made of a cedar log and finished with a sisal rope mane and tail. Another Rogue Valley resident received a wooden rocking horse about the same year. The deluxe model stands nine hands above the rockers and the mane and tail are made of real horsehair. Each horse has galloped many miles over the years.

Each of us save trinkets, defined by Webster's as "a thing of little value." A trinket is valuable only to the owner in recalling life experiences. This wooden handkerchief box covered with a burnt wood poinsettia and other decorations was perfect for keeping small mementos. This trinket box belonged to a World War I veteran and contains a piece of sandstone with a fish fossil, a heart-shaped charm, a Saxony hat emblem, a clay whistle, a Mexican pottery medallion, a Woodmen of the World button, two U. S. Army

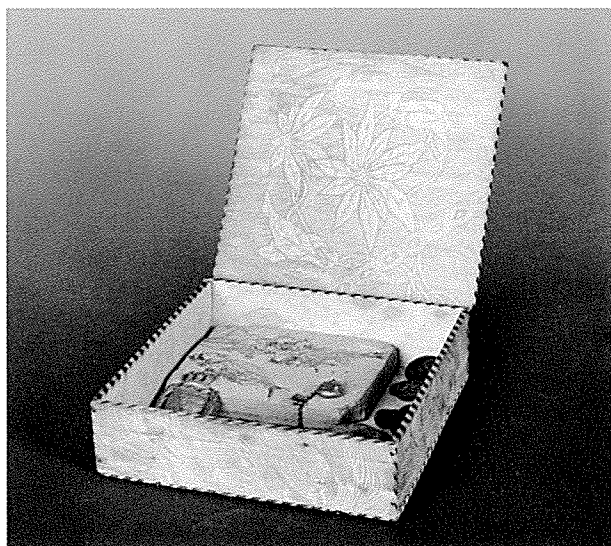


collar pins and other miscellaneous items. The anecdotes that accompany these trinkets were never written and have been lost. We can only imagine the events surrounding their collection.

After the battleship Maine was sunk in 1898 prior to the outbreak of the Spanish-American War, the words "Remember the Maine" were on the lips of every American—and on every imaginable manufactured item. This lamp is in the form of a bullet sitting on top of two cast-iron crossed cannons. The sides are embossed with "Remember the Maine" and "Admiral Dewey's Lamp." A round glass globe intricately painted with an image of a battleship rests on the bullet. W. E. Thomas owned this lamp which reflects the events and concerns of a patriotic American who called Medford home.

Eleanor Catherine Kubli Watson, daughter of Jacksonville miner Kasper Kubli, wore this radiant red silk dress detailed with black lace, beaded cuffs and collar in the 1890s. A Shogren label on the dress tells us it was made by Ann and May Shogren, Portland dress-makers from 1887 to 1918. An average Shogren dress sold for \$250 to \$500 and the most expensive sold for as much as \$1000. The Shogren clientele included Madame Ernestine Schumann Heink, the world-famous Wagnerian opera star; Sarah Winchester, the eccentric heir to the Winchester rifle fortune; the Meiers; and the Franks. Many of the artifacts donated to the Society include tidbits defined by Webster's as "a choice or pleasing bit (as of news)."

The newest exhibit at the History Center, Behind Closed Doors: Treasures, Trinkets and Tidbits, opens in June. A re-creation of the artifact storage facility will be included in the exhibit. The 11,000 square-foot storage facility is seldom seen by the public and holds approximately 80,000 artifacts donated over the Society's 44-year history. Look for these and many other treasures, trinkets and tidbits in the exhibit.



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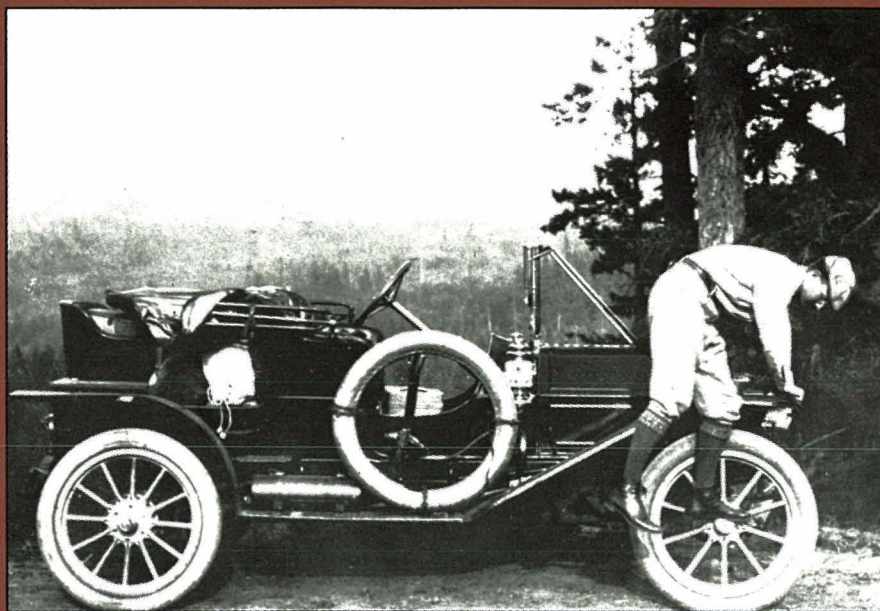
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