

SOUTHERN OREGON HERITAGE

Today



IT STARTED
WITH A BANG
**Medford's
Glorious Fourth
of July, 1900**

THEY SCoured THE HILLS
**Gin Lin's Search
for Gold**

FROM HOURGLASS TO
BOYISH

**The Shape of
Women's
Fashion**

JULY 2000
Vol. 2, No. 7

HISTORIC HANLEY FARM

★ OPENS JULY 1ST ★

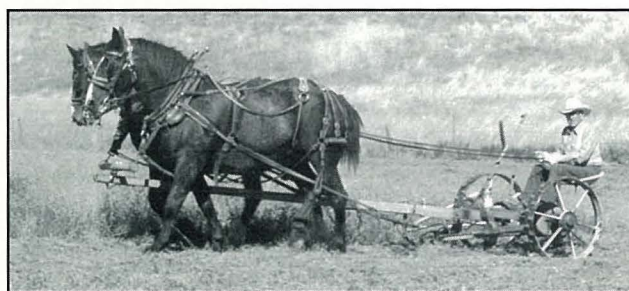
In 1946 the Hanley sisters had a dream...



*...it was about
preserving Southern
Oregon's heritage.*

Today the dream continues.

- Historic home tour!
- Picnic on the grounds!
- Stroll the unique gardens.
- Take trail to top of Hanley Butte.



Special Saturday events!

HOURS

FRIDAY & SATURDAY
10AM- 4PM
SUNDAY NOON- 4PM

ADMISSION

Members free
5 & under free

CHILD \$2 (6-12)

ADULT \$3

SENIOR \$2 (65+)



The Hanley Farm home built in 1857 is on the National Register.



1053 HANLEY ROAD ☎ (541) 773-2675

SOUTHERN OREGON HERITAGE TODAY
Editorial Guidelines

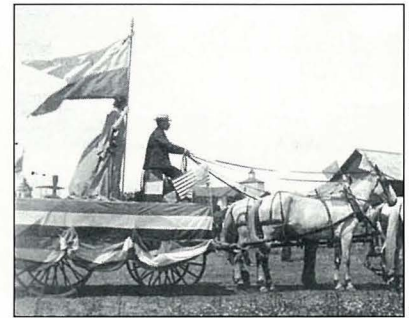
Feature articles average 3,000 to 4,000 (pre-edited) words. Other materials range from 500 to 1,000 words. Electronic submissions are accepted on 3-1/4-inch disks and should be accompanied by a hard-copy printout. Cite all sources and construct endnotes and cutlines using the *Chicago Manual of Style*. The author is responsible for verification of cited facts. A selection of professional, unscreened photographs and/or line art should accompany submission—black-and-white or color. The Southern Oregon Historical Society reserves the right to use Society images in place of submitted material. All material should be labeled with author's name, mailing address, and telephone number. Manuscripts will be returned if accompanied by a self-addressed envelope stamped with sufficient postage. Authors should provide a brief autobiographical note at the end of manuscripts.

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SOUTHERN OREGON
HERITAGE
*Today***FEATURE:****The Center of It All**

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SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY #17094

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PHOTO BY BRUCE MCGARVEY



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ON THE COVER

Lady Liberty holds an American flag and a firecracker in this vintage postcard, which sums up Medford's celebration a century ago.

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Southern Oregon Heritage Today is published monthly by the Southern Oregon Historical Society, 106 N. Central Ave., Medford, OR 97501-5926. (541) 773-6536

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Southern Oregon Heritage Today is produced using Quark XPress on Macintosh computers and is printed by Ram Offset Lithographers.

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Gin Lin Trail

*"THE HILLS WERE ALIVE WITH
THE SOUND OF 'GIANTS.'"*

by Connie Fowler

Pine, oak and manzanita now shade the trail through piles of cobbles left over from Gin Lin's hydraulic mining operations. Below, Peter Britt took the portrait of Gin Lin.

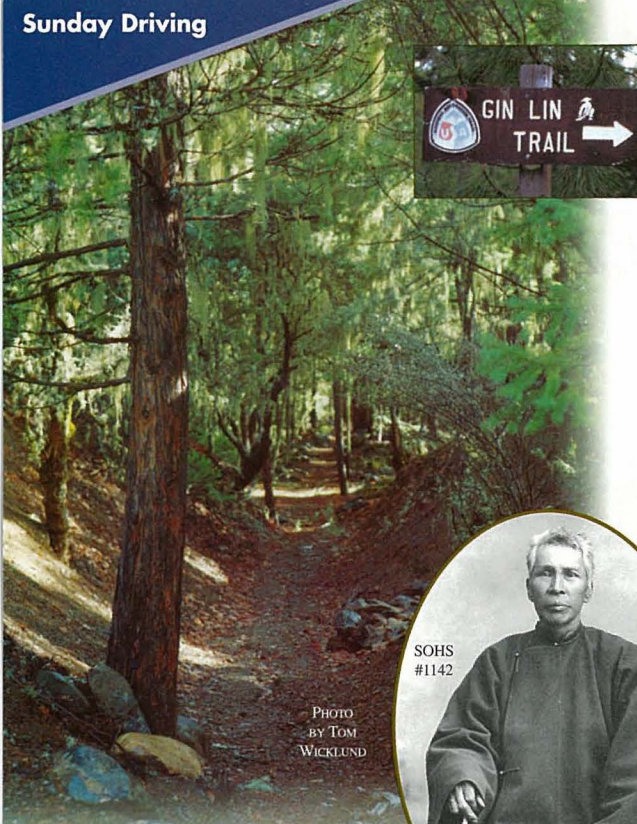


PHOTO
BY TOM
WICKLUND



SOHS
#1142

In the 1880s, giants ravaged the hills and stream beds of the Applegate Valley. These giants, neither human nor animal, changed the face of the land so extremely that only another ice age could make such an impact.

In the mid-1800s, miners seeking their fortunes in the gold fields of Southern Oregon quickly exhausted the most easily accessible gold deposits along the streams. Chinese miners and temporary immigrants or "sojourners" who hoped to make their fortunes and return to China—became experts at extracting the gold from the harder-to-mine bench and terrace deposits higher above the stream beds by using a method called hydraulic mining.¹

They dug long ditches to carry water to the deposit to be mined. The water was then diverted down the hillside through a riveted iron pipeline and out a long, heavy nozzle called a giant, or monitor. All this hydraulic engineering resulted in enough water pressure at the nozzle to allow the miner aiming the giant to literally blast away whole hillsides of soil, cobbles and boulders in order to wash the gold-bearing material into a long riffle box, where the heavy gold could be trapped in the riffles and recovered.

Mostly the Chinese miners kept to themselves, working long, exhausting days, digging mile after mile of ditches with pick and mattock, stacking rocks and boulders, and extracting the gold. In dress, language and customs, they were different. Those differences elicited much

prejudice and hostility from the European-American community, perhaps because the Chinese chose not to assimilate, because they sent much of their money back home to waiting families, or just because they dressed differently and wore their hair in long braids.²

Gin Lin, a giant in the Chinese community, took advantage of opportunity, providing workers for European-American miners and owning several mines himself, including a three-mile stretch above the mouth of the Little Applegate River. In fact, Gin Lin was the first mine owner to install hydraulic mining equipment in Southern Oregon.³ His industry and ingenuity helped him amass an estimated \$1 million fortune and earned him a certain respect among his European-American peers. He even cut off his "queue," or braid and made some attempt to fit in with the white culture.⁴

After successfully mining in other parts of the Applegate Valley, in 1881 Gin Lin bought claims in the Palmer Creek drainage in the upper Applegate area.⁵ There his mining crews turned mountainsides into

valleys, littered with cobblestone mining waste, called "tailings."⁶

Eventually, as the gold played out, the Chinese miners returned to their homeland with their earnings, taking everything with them—even the bones of their exhumed dead for reburial in China.⁷

We romanticize the gold mining era of our history, but today the ecological devastation caused by hydraulic mining would not be tolerated. Still, it is a fascinating part of Southern Oregon's early settlement, and it is hard not to appreciate the determination and hard work of Gin Lin and others.

A fun, easy way to experience some of this history is to visit the Gin Lin Interpretive Trail in the upper Applegate area. You'll see tailing piles, blasted out hillsides and ditches, and learn about headboxes, sluices, giants, and more. To get to this low-elevation Forest Service trail, take Highway 238 through Jacksonville to Ruch. Just past McKee Bridge and before the road crosses the river, turn right on Palmer Creek Road. The trail is clearly marked off to the side of Flumet Creek Campground. It is essential that you pick up a brochure at Star Ranger Station or at the trailhead to help you identify what you are seeing. 🌲

Freelance writer Connie Fowler ranches with her husband, Ben, in the Little Applegate Valley.



SOHS #5959

Workers use the powerful water stream from a "giant" to blast apart an old stream bed in the Applegate Valley in the late 1800s. The water washed rocks, soil and gold into a riffle box where the gold settled out.

ENDNOTES

1. Kay Atwood, *Minorities of Early Jackson County, Oregon*, (Medford: Gandee Printing Center, 1976), p. 2, 6.
2. Connie Fowler and J.B. Roberts, *Buncom: Crossroads Station*, (Medford, Buncom Historical Society) pp. 36-38.
3. Jeff LaLande, *Sojourners in Search of Gold: Hydraulic Mining Techniques of the Chinese on the Oregon Frontier*, reprinted from *Industrial Archaeology* 22 (1985) in Oregon Collection, Jackson County Library, Medford, Ore., p. 40.
4. *Oregon Sentinel*, 9 February 1867.
5. *Gin Lin Mining Trail*, United States Forest Service brochure, 1995.
6. *Medford Mail Tribune*, 30 November 1990.
7. *The Pictorial History of Southern Oregon and Northern California*, (Grants Pass, Ore.: Grants Pass Bulletin, 1959), p. 78.



The Shape of Fashion: 1900-1925

by Mary Ames Sheret




Hemlines continued to rise in the 1920s reaching twelve inches above the ankle by 1925. The fashionable look was youthful and boyish. Dresses, many sleeveless, hung loosely from shoulder to hem with little difference between the front and back. Belts dropped to the hip line. Beads, sequins or fringe adorned short evening dresses. The style depended on the "movement of the woman to lend shape and sexuality to forms that would otherwise appear sterile."¹ Although a far cry from the hourglass form of 1900, corsets or girdles were still needed to create the fashionable, androgynous shape.

Beginning in 1911, hemlines on "hobble skirts" became so narrow that a woman took only small steps or risked injury. On a summer afternoon in 1913, "Miss Norling (of Medford) was demonstrating how long a step she could take impeded by the tight skirt. But she attempted too long a step and fell. Her arm was broken near the wrist."²

ACC #67.109.2

Women's fashion changed dramatically during the early years of the twentieth century. When the century began, the hourglass form was the height of fashion. A woman obtained this S-shaped silhouette only by lacing herself into a corset that pushed her chest out and her hips back, and created an unnaturally small waistline. Layers of undergarments along with long, sweeping skirts created a rustle when she walked. Elegantly decorated bodices puffed out and drooped over the waist, creating a pigeon-breasted effect. As the decade progressed, corsets lengthened creating a straighter, smoother hip line and by 1910 a more natural silhouette became fashionable.

French fashion designer Paul Poiret changed the look of dresses in the early teens. Inspired by costumes of the Russian Ballet, Poiret created dresses that fell loosely from a woman's chest. While the new, slim, tubular silhouette was well received, women did not abandon their corsets. They remained necessary to help create the new shape.

The First World War broke out in 1914 and by the time it was over in 1918, women's fashion had also changed. As part of the wartime labor force women wore less-restricting, more masculine garments. They savored this new freedom and fashion designers agreed. 

Mary Ames Sheret is curator of collections and exhibits for the Southern Oregon Historical Society.

ENDNOTES:

1. Stella Blum and Louise Hamer, *Fabulous Fashion 1907-1967* (New York: Costume Institute, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1967), p. 11.
2. Medford Mail Tribune, 19 August 1913.

BLACK BOOT ACC #2271
WHITE SHOE ACC #72.69.5

"Justrites" corset, ca. 1900

ACC #984.4.35.100



On exhibit through 2000, *The Shape of Fashion: 1900-1925*, in the Jacksonville Museum.

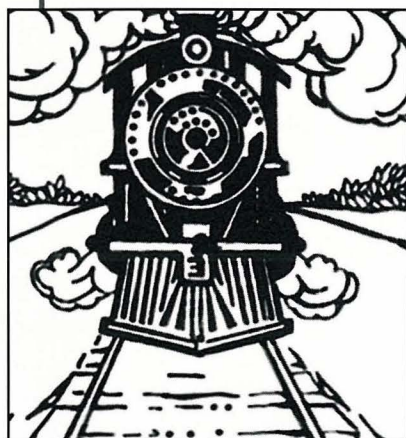
SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Things To Do in July

PROGRAMS: *(see listings below for complete descriptions)*

	DATE	TIME	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
July Craft of the Month	July	Museum hours	CHILDREN'S MUSEUM	Toys to Remember. Free
Hanley Farm Opening	Sat., July 1	10:00-4:00p.m.	1053 HANLEY ROAD	House & garden tours. Minimal fee.
	Sun., July 2	noon-4:00p.m.		
Old-Fashioned Ice Cream Social	Wed., July 5	2:00-4:00p.m.	BEEKMAN HOUSE	Families. Free
Full Steam Ahead: the Railroad and Southern Oregon	Tues., July 11	10:30a.m.	BUTTE FALLS LIBRARY	Stories, songs, crafts. Free
	Wed., July 12	10:00a.m.	WHITE CITY LIBRARY	
		2:00p.m.	MEDFORD LIBRARY	
	Thurs., July 13	10:30a.m.	PHOENIX LIBRARY	
		1:00p.m.	TALENT LIBRARY	
	Wed., July 19	10:30a.m.	SHADY COVE LIBRARY	
		1:00p.m.	PROSPECT LIBRARY	
	Thurs., July 20	11:15a.m.	RUCH LIBRARY	
		2:00p.m.	APPLEGATE LIBRARY	
	Tues., July 25	10:30a.m.	CHILDREN'S MUSEUM (sponsored by Jacksonville Library)	
		2:00p.m.	ASHLAND LIBRARY	
	Wed., July 26	10:30a.m.	CENTRAL POINT LIBRARY	
		2:00p.m.	EAGLE POINT LIBRARY	
	Thurs., July 27	9:30a.m.	ROGUE RIVER LIBRARY	
		1:00p.m.	GOLD HILL LIBRARY	



Program Details

For times and locations, see schedule above.

JULY CRAFT OF THE MONTH

Toys to Remember

Fill your toy chest by creating your own old-fashioned top, buzz saw or tumbling acrobat. Families. 50 cents.

OLD FASHIONED ICE CREAM SOCIAL

Come join the fun on the grounds of the Beekman House. The ice cream is free; tours of the house are \$2 for adults; \$1 for children 6-12 and seniors (65+).

FULL STEAM AHEAD: the Railroad & Southern Oregon

Children of all ages are invited to travel through history during Full Steam Ahead: the Railroad and Southern Oregon, a history-based program sponsored by the Society and local Jackson County library branches. Full Steam Ahead will be winding its way through a community near you, bringing railroading stories, songs, crafts and exciting history of train travel from days gone by. Call (541)773-6536 for more information.



SIDEWALK SALE!

The Society is participating in the Heart of Medford Sidewalk Sale

Friday, July 28
10:00AM - 4:00PM

You'll find bargains galore!
HISTORY CENTER, MEDFORD

Historic Open House Tours

July 2, 11:30AM - 4:00PM

• John Banks House, 132 Fifth, Ashland

July 3, 9:00AM - 1:00PM

• J.W. Merritt Store & House, 117 E. Pine, Central Point

July 23, 10:00AM - 2:00PM

• Buckhorn Springs Resort, 2200 Buckhorn Springs Road, Ashland

A MESSAGE OF THANKS TO ALL SUPPORTING MEMBERS AND ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

On behalf of the Society Board of Trustees, Society Foundation Directors and all of us on staff, I want to thank you for your support before, during and after the Jackson County public budget hearing held May 4. As you know, the budget for all Jackson County History Museums Association members was cut by 14.5%. Without your support through letters to the editor, attendance at the hearing, and separate letters to the commissioners and budget committee members, it would have been worse. Our sincere thanks goes to all of you.

Since the Society continues to face an uncertain future, membership in the Society is more important than ever. If you are a Supporting member, please consider upgrading your membership. If you are an Associate member, please consider joining--memberships begin as low as \$20.00. The Society needs your continued support. Call Membership Coordinator Susan Smith at (541)773-6536 for more information.

Brad Linder
Executive Director

EXHIBITS: *(see listings below for complete descriptions)*

	LOCATION	MUSEUM HOURS
Century of Photography: 1856-1956 Ernest Smith, Butte Falls Photographer High Water: A Traveling Exhibit from the Oregon Historical Society	HISTORY CENTER	Mon. - Fri., 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Miner, Baker, Furniture Maker Jacksonville: Boom Town to Home Town Politics of Culture: Collecting the Native American Experience Hall of Justice The Shape of Fashion: 1900-1925	JACKSONVILLE MUSEUM	Wed. - Sat., 10:00 am.-5:00 pm Sunday, noon - 5:00 pm
Ongoing 'hands on history' exhibit	CHILDREN'S MUSEUM	Wed. - Sat., 10:00 am.-5:00 pm Sunday, noon - 5:00 pm
Rethink/Reweave/Recycle	3RD ST. ARTISAN STUDIO	Fri. & Sat., 11:00 am - 4:00 pm
Archaeology of the Upper Rogue	WOODVILLE MUSEUM	call 582-3088 for hours

Exhibit Details

For times and locations, see schedule above.

CENTURY OF PHOTOGRAPHY: 1856-1956

Highlights the work of two area photographers Peter Britt and James Verne Shangle, with cameras from the Society's collection.

ERNEST W. SMITH, BUTTE FALLS PHOTOGRAPHER

The Butte Falls Historical Society exhibit features Ernest W. Smith, Butte Falls photographer and surveyor (north window, History Center). A portion of his office has been recreated for the display and includes a free-standing photo reproduction of Smith with his camera.

HIGH WATER: A Traveling Exhibit from the Oregon Historical Society

Dramatic photographs of Oregon floods from 1862 to the present. Many Oregonians, from early settlers to today's generation, have suffered from floods, a recurring part of Oregon life. On display through August 12. A special exhibit focusing on local floods of the last 150 years will be on display through fall 2000.

MINER, BAKER, FURNITURE MAKER

Explores the development of the Rogue Valley and the impact the industrial revolution had on the settlement of Southern Oregon.

THE SHAPE OF FASHION: 1900-1925

Women's fashion changed dramatically during the early years of the 20th century, reflecting the changing role of women in society. On display through December is a selection of daywear, evening gowns, and undergarments that shaped women's fashion from the hourglass form to the boyish silhouette.

JACKSONVILLE: Boom Town to Home Town

Traces the development of Jacksonville.

POLITICS OF CULTURE: *Collecting the Native American Experience*

Cultural history of local tribes and discussion of contemporary collecting issues.

HALL OF JUSTICE

History of the former Jackson County Courthouse.

CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

Explore home and occupational settings from the 1850s to the 1930s through "hands on history."

RETHINK/REWEAVE/RECYCLE

Members of the Rogue Valley Handweavers, Far Out Fibers and the Saturday Handweaving Guild will present an exhibit of recycled items creatively woven at the Third Street Artisan Studios through September 2.

ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE UPPER ROGUE

For almost 30 years, archaeologists have studied the history of the native peoples of the Upper Rogue. The BLM and Southern Oregon Historical Society have designed a small traveling exhibit reporting this archaeology work. The exhibit is traveling to local historical societies over the course of the year.

MYSTERY OBJECT OF THE MONTH



SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY SITES

Phone: (541) 773-6536

unless listed otherwise

Fax: (541) 776 7994 • Email: info@sohs.org

Website: www.sohs.org

HISTORY CENTER

106 N. Central, Medford
Mon - Fri, 9:00am to 5:00pm

RESEARCH LIBRARY

106 N. Central, Medford
Tues - Fri, 1:00 to 5:00pm

HANLEY FARM

1053 Hanley Road
Fri, Sat, 10:00am to 4:00pm
Sun, noon to 4:00pm

JACKSONVILLE MUSEUM & CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

5th and C, Jacksonville
Wed - Sat, 10:00am to 5:00pm
Sunday, noon to 5:00pm

C. C. BEEKMAN HOUSE

Laurelwood & California streets, Jacksonville
Wed - Sun, 1:00 to 5:00pm

JACKSONVILLE HISTORY STORE

Mon - Sat, 10:00am to 5:00pm
Sun, 11:00am to 5:00pm

THIRD STREET ARTISAN STUDIO

3rd and California, Jacksonville
Fri., Sat, 11:00am to 4:00pm

U.S. HOTEL

3rd and California, Jacksonville
Upstairs room available for rent.



*April's
Mystery
Object:
telephone
pole spikes*

April's Mystery Objects were telephone pole spikes. Congratulations to Beverly Przybylski of Lincoln City, for answering correctly!

July Mystery Object:

This small brass object utilized steam & was used to get peoples attention. Do you know how?

Send your answer on a postcard with your name, address, and phone number to: News & Notes Mystery Object, SOHS, 106 N. Central Ave., Medford, OR 97501, or by email to info@sohs.org.

SOHS #18002

Medford's first telephone operator, Lillian Barr, is the Goddess of Liberty, surrounded by Civil War veterans at the front, and Spanish-American War veterans at the rear. That's Medford grocer Isaac Wolfe at the reins.

mid-May, members of the finance committee reported that they had \$500 in hand and expected to have even more by July. With such good news, a committee of arrangements was appointed, headed by *Medford Mail* publisher A.S. Bliton. He and four others selected the members of five committees who would plan and ensure the success of the celebration.

Voting for the "handsomest and most popular young lady in Medford" began at the end of May, with proceeds going to the celebration fund. Balloting required supporters to buy tickets at any store in Medford, vote for the young lady

of their choice, and drop their ticket into the official ballot box at the post office. The lucky woman chosen would become the Goddess of Liberty and ride in the parade upon a decorated float.³

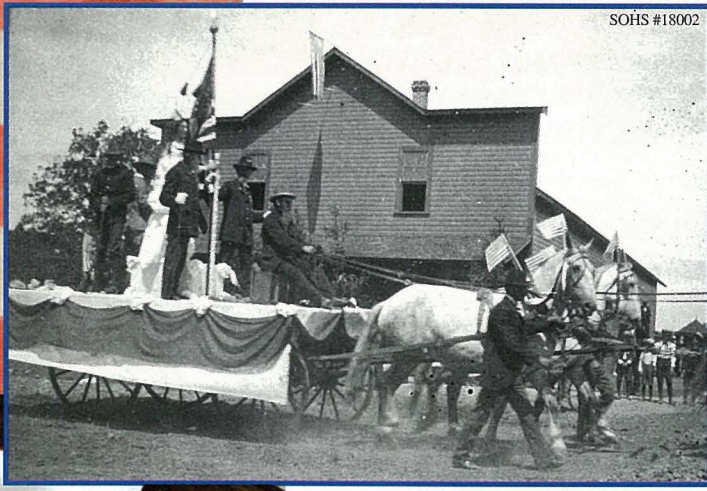
When the big day finally arrived, a light breeze drove a few clouds across the morning sky as the parade took shape behind J.A. Whitman's bicycle and wagon store. Spectators, dressed in Sunday best, walked the dusty streets seeking the best vantage point. Some climbed the remaining native oak trees that still shaded Medford in the dog days of summer. The second- and third-story windows of Main Street offered a more secure viewing platform, but a few brave men climbed out of the windows and onto the old wooden awnings. Main Street was lined at the curb by ten-foot pine trees, cut from nearby forests, which were attached to stands or lashed to awnings for support. American flags waved everywhere.

Expecting a large crowd, the celebration committee had devised an elaborate line of march. From Whitman's store on Front Street near Eighth, the parade would move north on Front to Main, turn right near Perry's fruit warehouse at the Southern Pacific tracks and proceed through the business district, until it reached Riverside. Next came a turn to the south for two blocks, then west on

Ninth Street until the pageant reached Central. From here, a series of right turns at Central, Sixth, and then Riverside would bring the procession back to Main Street. A march west on Main and the parade would conclude at the Washington School park, where patriotic oratory and celebrations were scheduled.⁴

The grand marshal of the procession, Jackson County Sheriff Alex Orme, declared that he had never seen so many people at an event in all of his thirty years in the valley. At just past ten o'clock, with an estimated six to eight thousand spectators along the route, Orme's carriage began to move and the parade was under way. The carriages of the celebration committee and dignitaries of the day, state Senator Todd Cameron, Judge William Colvig and Medford Mayor J.J. Howser, were separated by the martial music of Medford's fifteen-piece Cornet Band. The first float was the Liberty Car, a red, white and blue canopied wagon carrying forty-five elementary school girls dressed in white. Each girl represented a state in the Union. The Goddess of Liberty came next.⁵

Goddess Lillian Barr, Medford's first female telephone operator, had won a miraculous victory. Trailing Tessie

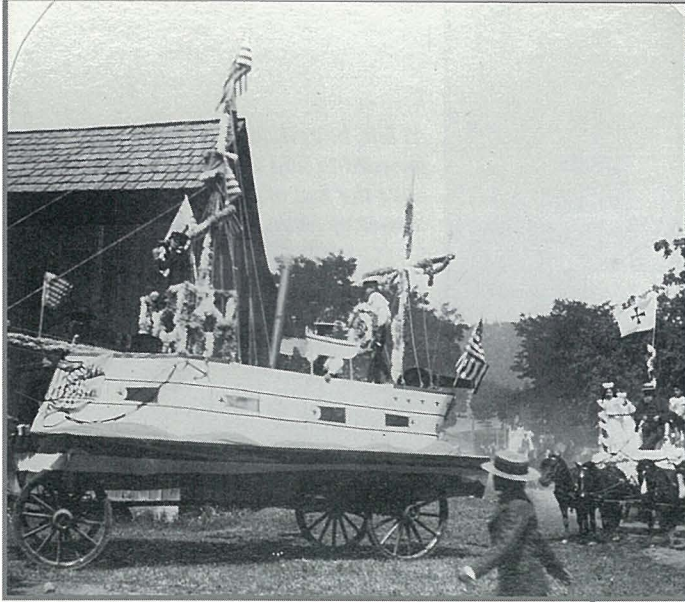


CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS
BY DANA HEDRICK AND
MAGGIE JAMES

At left, the Liberty Car led the parade, carrying forty-five schoolgirls in white dresses, representing the forty-five states in the Union. Volunteer firemen with the "Hard Up Hose Company" stand behind the float.



SOHS Acc. #79.9.11

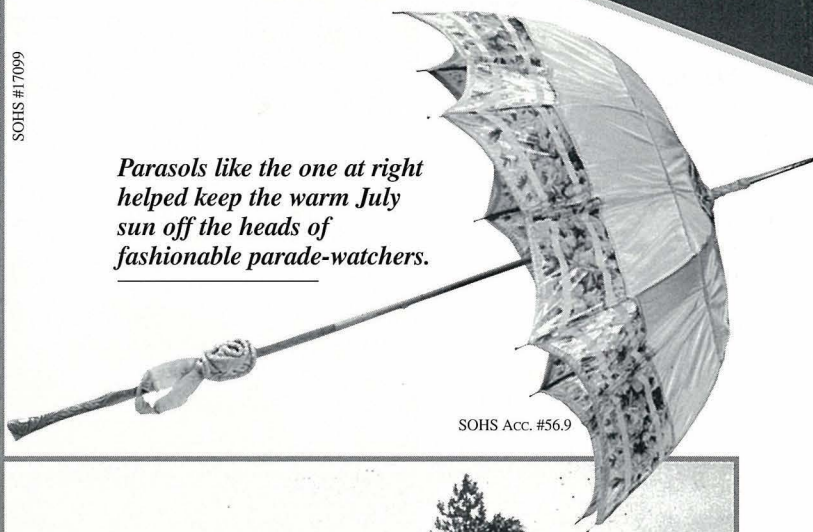


SOHS #17099

Above, crowds cheered when this replica of Spanish-American war hero Commodore Dewey's flagship, the Olympia, passed, followed by a float honoring the state of Oregon.

prepared floats passed by, the advertising continued with "Dewey" washing machines and Racket stores vying for the crowd's attention. But soon, word of a near-tragedy began to circulate.

Henry Boyden and Horace Nicholson, "The Hardware Men," were riding their decorated wagon to the formation area, accompanied by S.A. Carlton, and the Danielson boy, Chaumas. Something gave way on the wagon, and with Horace holding the reins, the team of grays was startled into a frenzied, disoriented run. A collision with a woodpile threw everyone to the ground, tangled in decorations and surrounded by splintered pieces of the wagon, which had broken away from the running horses. Boyden and Carlton were barely scratched but the Danielson boy was suffering from shock, and Nicholson looked bad. When Dr. Pickel arrived, the victim was unconscious with loss of blood, cuts, and bruises on his head and body. Later, those who had seen Nicholson's injuries would say that his chances of continuing his "earthly interest," wouldn't have been worth a thirty-cent bet. It had been a close call and it took nearly a week before he was "able to sit up and notice things," and shortly after that before he could "move about, just a little, with the aid of crutches." Nicholson was a popular man in town. He was the



SOHS Acc. #56.9

Parasols like the one at right helped keep the warm July sun off the heads of fashionable parade-watchers.



SOHS #17098

This may be the "Welcome to Medford" float, ridden by Edith Webb, at the end of the official parade.

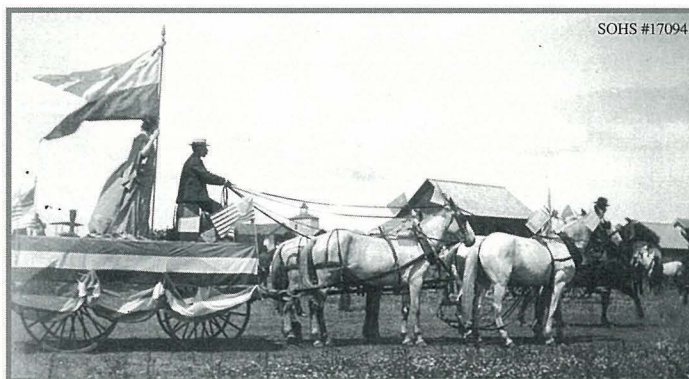
current fire chief of the hose company and for the Fourth of July celebration he had been chairman of the sports committee. Some of the afternoon races would be canceled and not all the events would continue as planned, but Nicholson was alive and the *Medford Mail*, reported two days later that "No man in Medford would be more missed than Horace."⁷

Spectators in carriages and on horseback joined at the end of the parade, followed by those on foot who continued the promenade to the grove of trees on the Washington School grounds. Washington stood where the County Courthouse stands today and was the site of the formal celebrations of this Independence Day. The Cornet Band began to play as the crowd formed. Those who wanted to hear the orations and exercises moved forward as close as possible, while others picnicked just east of the school in the city park.

The noisy crowd became silent as fifty men and women of Medford's Choral Union began to sing Verdi's chorus from *Ernani*, "O Hail Us Ye Free." Dr. Robert Burnett, chairman of the music committee and one of the best voices in the valley,

was joined in the chorus by fellow committee member Grace Foster. Both had sung together in groups and as a duo many times, and one year later, the popular dentist and the elementary school teacher were united in marriage.⁸

The invocation by the town's Baptist minister, T.L. Crandall, a few introductory remarks, and the choir's rendition of Gounod's "The Soldier's Chorus" set the stage for the reading of the Declaration of Independence by seventeen-year-old Mae



SOHS #17094

The unidentified woman above, holding a streaming banner, is riding a float bedecked in red, white, and blue that may have represented a local business.



SOHS Acc. #3536

This walking stick, featuring a portrait of General U.S. Grant and the star symbol of the Grand Army of the Republic, dates from 1892.

Merriman. Likely filled with nervousness and trepidation, the young lady finished with confidence and gracefully accepted the cheers and applause of the crowd.

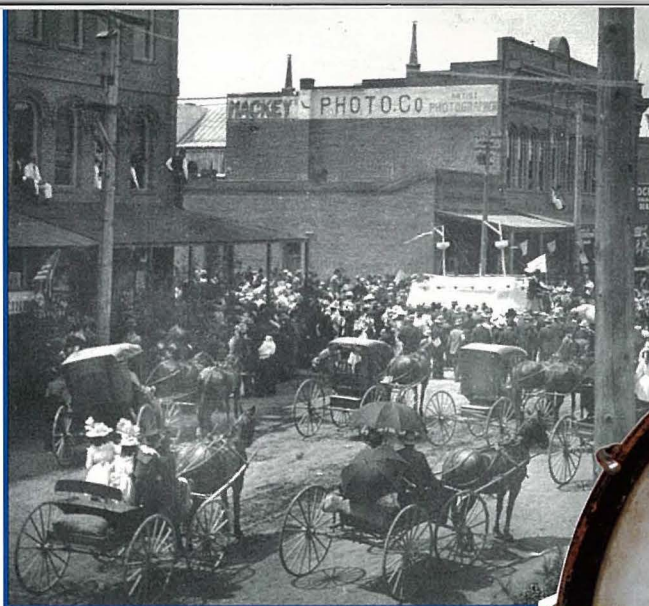
Early in life, Judge William Colvig had wanted to be a Shakespearean actor. He often joked that the frustration of that ambition "had robbed the world of a great actor, and forced upon it an indifferent lawyer." The title "judge" was honorary: "The only thing I'm judge of is good whiskey," he said.

When the celebration committee had discovered that their scheduled speaker, State Senator G.C. Brownell, would mysteriously not appear, they turned to Colvig, one of the most knowledgeable and popular men of the county. The judge was always prepared to speak and, as expected, when he took the platform he forcefully delivered an "eloquent and masterly" oration. The *Medford Mail* expressed the thanks of all: "Mr. Colvig is always ready to aid in times of distress and he very generously gave to us the assistance asked for, and for all of which we are most grateful."

Nine innings of play were all that stood in the way of a fifty-dollar prize for the winning team.

As the day progressed, cumulus clouds formed high above, and the gentle morning breezes were replaced with gusty noontime winds. Accompanied by the festive crowd, the chorus sang the "Star Spangled Banner." The band played a few more martial tunes, then everyone dispersed for lunch.

The afternoon began with a comical street parade to the public grounds northwest of town. John Hardin's Calithumpians, some dressed as clowns, entertained with a boisterous and disorderly march. To the amusement of the crowd, men dressed as the "Goddess of Liberty" and the "Angel of Peace" rode atop mock floats. The afternoon was meant for fun, and the sight of young boys chasing greased pigs and climbing greased poles quickly ended any pretensions of solemnity. A large rope was brought



At left, buggies and spectators press forward to join the unofficial parade once the last of the floats pass the corner of Main and Central.

out and a series of tug-of-war contests were held between young and old, male and female. While the children challenged each other in the three-legged, sack and foot races, their fathers placed bets on the horses.

An area was cleared, bases set out and standing crowds enclosed a baseball field. Nine innings of play were all that stood in the way of a fifty-dollar prize for the winning team. Those in the know said that Medford and Eagle Point were evenly matched and the betting, which always accompanied these contests, was likely to be heavy. The game was played "... with much zeal and spirit and amid a great deal of cheering on the part of the crowd, but although the small boys yelled and the Medford boys played gallantly, Eagle Point carried off the purse." Local games of the era were seldom defensive struggles, and this one ended in a score of 20-13.

In the city park, Professor Nelson and his assistant, Professor Merritt, were placing the balloon and inflating burner on the ground, in preparation for Nelson's ascent. The inflation required the burner to force a ten-foot-long flame inside of the balloon, and the effort

Enthusiastic crowds watch after the parade as teams from Medford and Eagle Point play a Fourth of July baseball game. Eagle Point won.



SOHS Acc. #3997

was being thwarted by the gusty winds. The flame fluttered and wandered erratically, threatening to burn the fabric of the balloon itself. After several attempts, Professor Nelson conceded that a balloon ascension today would be impossible. Cries of "fake" and "fraud" erupted from the crowd, particularly from those who had come a long way to see "one of the greatest living aeronauts." With rumors raging that Medford had



SOHS #17095



SOHS Acc. #89.39.3

used the balloon ascent as a ruse to attract a large crowd, city fathers and the celebration committee looked for a way to rescue the town's honor. After some discussion, Nelson agreed to try again on Saturday, July 7. Medford's reputation would be mended, somewhat, and the professor, if successful, would be able to collect his \$125 fee.

By late afternoon the crowds began to disperse. Not everyone would stay for the \$500 fireworks extravaganza that evening. While there was still daylight, tired families boarded wagons and trains for their distant homes. The fireman's ball at the Angle Opera House was declared a success, but a replacement hose cart was still nearly two years away. "From the beginning to the end the day was one round of pleasure. Every one was happy. The small boy, the large boy, the young boy, the old boy, girls, women, babies, each one was merry, jolly and happy from morning till night, nor do any of them grudge the time or the dollar spent."¹⁰

Saturday the winds were calm and barely 2,000 people were left to witness Professor Nelson's postponed flight. Twenty men held the balloon to the ground while it filled with the heated morning air. Just after eleven a.m., Nelson gripped the dangling trapeze and shouted "Let her go!" The gaseous bag shot straight up. As it drifted slightly north and then back to the south, the professor began to sway back and forth from the trapeze. Suddenly, as the crowd gasped, he let go his hands and caught the bar with his legs. With the slightest of effort, he righted himself and stood swinging confidently on the bar. When the balloon passed through 2,000 feet, Nelson cut himself away and for a few hundred feet hurtled earthward, until his parachute gradually filled with air. With a lightened load, the balloon turned upside down, and rapidly escaping air formed a momentary cloud in the sky. The collapsed balloon fell with "tremendous" speed, plummeting into J.A. Perry's yard at the corner of Main and Laurel. Minutes later the professor landed safely in John Wilson's yard at

604 W. Main. A blacksmith by trade, Wilson would construct the Wilson Opera House in 1902. Everyone was happy. The crowd had been thrilled, Professor Nelson had his money, and Medford had proved "...it was no fake."¹¹

Within months of the town's creation on a map, in late 1883, Medford's barely 400 residents had held their first Fourth of July celebration. By the time of the 1900 festivities, more than 2,000 lived there and the town was poised for

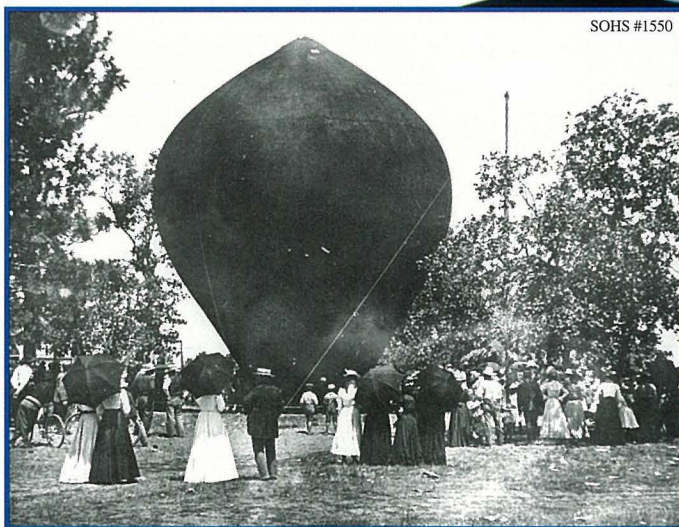
***The crowd had been thrilled,
Professor Nelson had his
money, and Medford had
proved "...it was no fake."***

tremendous growth and prosperity. Memories would fade and bad times would come and go, but for a few days in July 1900, Medford truly had been "The Center of It All."¹²

*Bill Miller is a library assistant with the
Southern Oregon Historical Society.*

ENDNOTES

1. *Medford Mail*, 29 June 1900, p. 2:3.
2. *Medford Enquirer*, 23 February 1900, p. 5:4; *Medford Mail*, 29 June 1900, p. 2:3.
3. *Medford Enquirer*, 18 May 1900, p. 5:4; 25 May 1900, p. 5:2.
4. *Medford Mail*, 29 June 1900, p. 6:4.
5. *Medford Mail*, 6 July 1900, p. 2:1; *Medford Enquirer*, 6 July 1900, p. 1:5. Parade and celebration information comes primarily from these accounts.
6. *Medford Mail*, 22 June 1900, p. 7:2.
7. *Medford Mail*, 6 July 1900, p. 7:3; 13 July 1900, p. 7:3.
8. *Ashland Daily Tidings*, 11 July 1901.
9. *Reminiscences of Fletcher Linn*, an SOHS unpublished transcript of reminiscences of Jackson County pioneers, 1974, p. 59.
10. *Medford Enquirer*, 6 July 1900, p. 1:5.
11. *Medford Mail*, 13 July 1900, p. 7:1. Laurel Street ended at Main in 1900.



Crowds gather at the city park on the Saturday following the Fourth as that "great aeronaut," Professor Nelson, prepares to ascend in his hot air balloon, a much-ballyhooed flight that was canceled on the Fourth because of dangerous winds.

Preserving the Bell's Toll

by Louise A. Watson

Listen! Can you hear the tolling of the church bells? They're as familiar a sound on Sunday morning in Medford as the slap of the newspaper on the doorstep.

At the Medford First United Methodist Church, the same five-hundred-pound bronze bell, hanging by a sturdy rope and operated by hand power, has summoned worshippers for more than a century. It was preserved from certain destruction to grace the belfry of a new church.

In November 1885, the Medford Methodist Episcopal Church (forerunner of today's church) was organized in Wolfe's Hall, at Central and Sixth, joining Methodist congregations in



SOHS #587

The Philadelphia-cast bell tolled first in the belfry of the Methodist Church building at Fourth and Bartlett, built in 1889.

Jacksonville and Ashland. Initially, the Medford Methodists worshipped at several locations, including the old Presbyterian Church site at Main and Holly streets.¹

In 1889, the congregation was able to build its own church on the southeast corner of Bartlett and Fourth streets. D.T. Lawton, Medford merchant and church leader, donated the land for the wood-frame structure, completed at a cost of \$4,000.

The bell, which originally was shipped around Cape Horn, first called the faithful at Centenary Methodist Episcopal church in Portland before being acquired by the Medford congregation.

Still, members wanted a bell for a finishing touch. But where could they get one they could afford? Enter Lawton and his wife, Amelia. Before moving to Medford in 1887, the couple lived in Portland and attended the Centenary Methodist Episcopal Church. They found out the old church was being torn down to make way for a new structure, a merger of two Methodist congregations in Portland. Amelia, known for her organization and dedication to church work, raised \$100 to buy the bell in 1892. Not only did she do the fund raising, but she traveled to Portland to personally oversee transportation of the bell by wagon to Medford.²

One curious detail of the bell's history could be a typographical error. Records show that it was cast in a Philadelphia foundry and transported to Portland around Cape Horn by sailing ship, a 16,000-mile journey taking three months.³ The casting date is reported in some newspaper and church archives as 1886; in others as 1866.⁴

Whatever its date, the bell is historically linked with Jacksonville in two ways. Just as Amelia Lawton did, well-known banker C.C. Beekman also made a special trip to purchase a church bell, going to San Francisco in 1880 to obtain the bell for the Jacksonville First Presbyterian Church. It is the only other bell in Southern Oregon known to have come "round the Horn."⁵ (The bell for the First Presbyterian Church in Medford did not make that journey, according to a church historian, but was added in 1900. The Ashland Methodist Church, first organized in 1864, installed its bell just twenty years ago and the First Baptist Church, dating to 1885, does not have a bell.⁶) In addition, Rev. William Royal, the father of Rev. Thomas Fletcher Royal of Jacksonville, founded the Centenary



PHOTO BY BRUCE MCGARVEY

Since 1924, the historic bell has occupied the belfry of the First United Methodist Church on West Main.

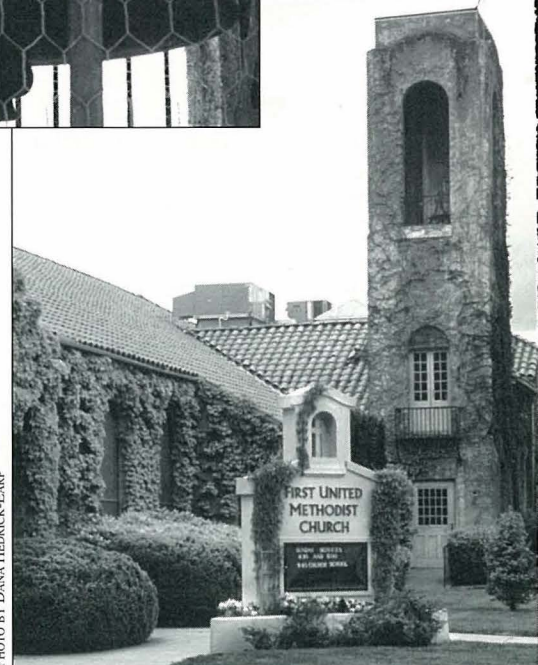


PHOTO BY DANA HEIDRICK-EARP

Church in east Portland in 1864, the same church that housed the bell before Amelia Lawton bought it. Rev. William Royal preached briefly in Jacksonville before leaving in 1854.⁷

When the Methodist Church moved to its present site on West Main Street in 1924, the bell came along, too. In 1964, it was dedicated, fittingly, to the memory of D.T. and Amelia Lawton.⁸

Louise Watson is a Medford freelance writer and editor.

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1. Medford Mail Tribune, 13 November 1960; Jane Snedcor, "History of Medford," (mimeographed manuscript, circa 1933, Jackson County Library, Medford, Ore.) p. 11.
2. "Methodism in Medford," First United Methodist Church archives, Medford, Ore., 1985.
3. "The History of our Tower Bell," First United Methodist Church archives, 1999.
4. Medford Mail Tribune, 14 July 1924; First United Methodist Church archives, 1985.
5. Historical pamphlet, First Presbyterian Church, Jacksonville, Ore.
6. Author interviews with members of churches mentioned, 25 April 2000.
7. Charles Sweet, "Jacksonville's Royal Family," Table Rock Sentinel, March 1987, p. 20; Methodist Church Archives, Salem, Ore.
8. Ibid., p. 69.



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Artenecia Riddle Merriman

by Janette Merriman

MERRIMAN RD

Artenecia Riddle Chapman and her family prepared for the journey west in 1851. But five days before their scheduled departure for Oregon Territory, her husband, John Chapman, died. Relying on her personal courage, Artenecia proceeded with her plans, and left Illinois with her parents and her year-old son, John.¹ Leading her wagon drawn by three yoke of oxen, she made her way to Southern Oregon.²

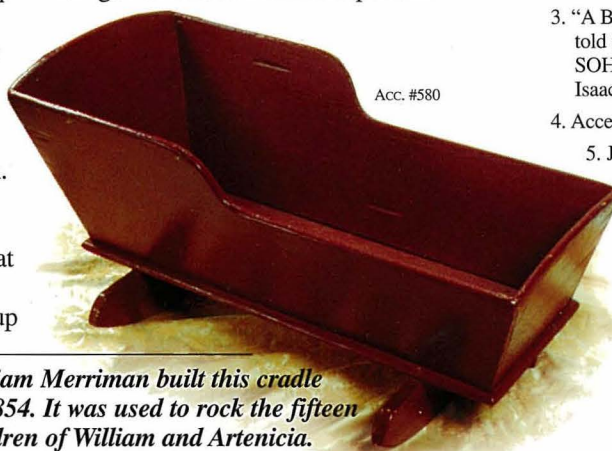
A year later, William H. Merriman left Illinois with the Isaac Constant wagon train, along with his ailing wife, Mary, and their two children. Mary's health never improved and she died early during the trip, followed by their son, who was poisoned by milk he drank from a cow that had eaten wild parsnip. This left Letta, William Merriman's daughter, to be cared for by his sister, Lucinda Constant.³

The widow Artenecia Chapman and the widower William Merriman met in Riddle, Oregon, and were married in 1853. William, a talented blacksmith and wagon maker, built a cradle to be used for their first baby, George, who was born on May 22, 1854. Artenecia rocked each of their fifteen children in this handsome cradle.⁴ The family also included William's daughter, Letta, and Artenecia's son, John. In 1857, the Merrimans moved to the Rogue Valley, purchased 120 acres (two miles north of present Medford along what is now Merriman Road), and began farming the fertile land. Anxious to pick up trade from the miners, they also operated a blacksmith shop. George learned the blacksmithing trade from his father.⁵

While raising the children and maintaining the household, Artenecia acted as an interpreter during the Indian Wars, utilizing her fluency in the Chinook language.⁶ The last baby, Winnifred, was born in 1874. Just three years later William died.⁷

Artenecia lived a long life. In 1917 her obituary reflected her dedication to her children: "In her later years she traveled from home to home of her children, with quiet dignity enjoying the amenities of life as we live it today, so lovingly tendered by the younger generation. ...With the touch of a finger she commanded the gas jet, the electric light and the thousand and one additions to comfort and convenience which science has given us, as compared with the tallow dip, the pine knot, the swinging crane in the open fireplace and the Dutch oven with which she so thoroughly satisfied the wants of her family as they grew to manhood."⁸

Many times during her life Artenecia was interviewed about the early days of Oregon and asked about the pioneer



William Merriman built this cradle in 1854. It was used to rock the fifteen children of William and Artenecia.



SOHS #5682

Artenecia Riddle Merriman, left, with her sister, Mollie Riddle Beall.

lifestyle. She also appeared in a film about pioneers at the 1915 Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco. Unable to visit San Francisco, Artenecia was told by her granddaughter of the surprise when her grandmother, or Mrs. Merriman as she is referred in the film, flashed upon the screen the moment she stepped into the Oregon building at the Exposition.⁹ This matriarch's enduring legacy is reflected in her commitment to the community and the upstanding, active children she raised in the Rogue Valley. ☞

Janette Merriman, owner of JCM Museum Services, is married to the great-great grandson of Artenecia Merriman.

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3. "A Brief Review of the Life of Isaac Constant," told in part by Lavinia Jane Constant Robinson, SOHS Research Library vertical file, "Journey of Isaac Constant Wagon Train, 1852."
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8. *Medford Mail Tribune*, January 1917.
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