
LATAH LEGACY

THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE LATAH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

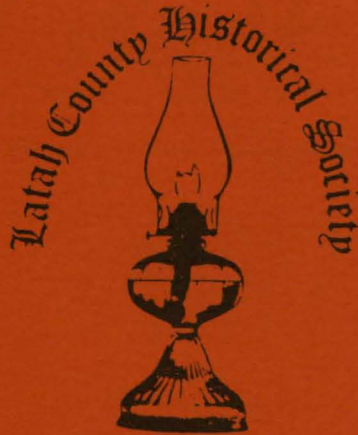


Camp 8, Potlatch Lumber Co. - See Letters, p. 22

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MINERS MUST EAT - WILLIAM J. McCONNELL
AND THE BOISE BASIN GOLD RUSH

by Edward Burke

In the late autumn of 1861, Moses Splawn and a friend were prospecting for gold along the Salmon River. A lone Bannock Indian followed them from place to place curious about what the white men were searching for. Splawn noticed his interest and invited him to an evening meal. The Indian eagerly accepted and became quite friendly. He told Splawn about a place which lay to the south and west where the "yellow sand" could be found. In the light of the campfire he traced a diagram in the ground and described the country in detail. He warned that there were Indians in the area and would not be very friendly toward the white men. Splawn was very much interested and decided to return to Walla Walla and recruit a large search party and wait until the following spring to make the trip after the snows had melted.

By April, he had been able to find only seven men who were willing to take the risks of making such a trip, however they set out hoping to pick up additional men along the way. They were only two days out from Walla Walla when they met a large party of 50 men under the leadership of a Captain Tom Turner. They were on their way to search for the famous "Blue Bucket Diggings." Splawn agreed to accompany Turner on the condition that if they were not successful in this venture, they would then help Splawn in his search.

In late July, the Turner search began to break up as they weren't able to find the campsite where two little girls had found enough "yellow rocks" to fill a small blue painted sand bucket. The yellow rocks

were later found to be gold. The story was widely known and a great many people searched in vain for the fabulous site. Only four men of Turner's group were willing to join Splawn, as the rest scattered to many other places. Splawn was fortunate to meet a party of 6 prospectors who were working with George Grimes. They were anxious to accompany Splawn so they proceeded on their way.

The Bannock Indian's directions proved to be accurate and the search party found itself in a basin country surrounded by a range of high mountains. Several streams were found flowing through the basin from north to south. They made camp beside one of these streams and the site was later to become a mining town named Centerville.

One of the prospectors named Fogus discovered gold in a shovelfull of gravel from the stream. Excitedly the others watched as he washed out a quantity of gold from his gold pan. They worked their way northward following the stream and prospecting as they went. Outriding guards warned that they were being followed by Indians on both flanks, however nothing happened until they had reached the northern rim of the basin and then the inevitable attack came. Grimes was the only fatal casualty. The party held a meeting and decided to bury Grimes in one of the prospect holes and then leave for Walla Walla. Grimes' gravesite is marked today with a marble shaft and the nearby pass through the mountain range is named in his memory as is the stream along which they prospected.

Upon returning to Walla Walla and displaying their gold samples, the miners created quite a sensation. The news spread quickly. River steamers carried it along the way to Portland, Oregon. The following spring, the gold rush began in earnest (Hailey, History of Idaho, pp. 36-48).

William McConnell had been teaching school in Yamhill, Oregon, which is near Portland. He and a friend, John Porter, decided to go to the site of the gold strike. They would play a much different role than that of the miners. McConnell's experience in California gold fiends had given him the insight of supplying the miners with food. He had noticed the farmers in the valleys near the gold fields in California had a ready cash market for their fruits and vegetables of which they had ample supply.

The following is from McConnell's own story which he gave to a reporter for the Idaho Daily Statesman for publication January 2, 1916:

"I and my partner, John H. Porter, arrived at Horseshoe Bend on the 30th day of April, 1863, having started from Yamhill, Oregon, on the first day of that month. We came to Idaho for the purpose of gardening, bringing with us six pack animals loaded with our little garden outfit. Portland, at that time, as now, was the principal city in Oregon. There we expected to purchase our garden seeds, but we were disappointed in one particular. It was our intention to plant a quantity of onion sets, but there were none in the Portland market. Fortunately I was able to secure a small lot in Yamhill before we started. We shipped our horses and supplies, including a plow, a pair of horse-collars and hames, intending to use rope for harness, to The Dalles, and there on the sandbar behind the old Umatilla House, we packed our six horses and walked to Idaho, arriving as stated on April 30th. We located a tributary of the Payette now known as Porter Creek, and the next day, May 1, 1863, broke the first ground with a spade and planted a few onion sets we had



William J. McConnell.

brought from Yamhill. With a ditch to bring water out of the creek and fences to build, we had no time to build a house so we lived in a tent for two seasons. In our efforts to garden we did as neighbors--limited our efforts to what we could accomplish without hiring outside help. Consequently our garden the first year was small, smaller in fact than the gardens of those who located earlier on Brainard Creek. There were three gardens using water from that creek, Nicholson and Alford, and Hogan and Camel, and Tom Hill's, which with ours located on Porter Creek made four gardens to supply the needs of from 15 to 25 thousand persons.

"There were only two small gardens near Boise that year, the largest being in Stewart's gulch, and none others nearer

than Walla Walla and Umatilla. We gardeners were the first monopolists in Idaho and if you have ever been informed that a farmer cannot enjoy a monopoly, your informant was not in Idaho, at least not in the Boise Basin, at that time.

"Four weeks after planting our onion sets we pulled them all one Sabbath morning. We tied them in bunches, one dozen in a bunch. We counted one hundred bunches total. I packed them into Placerville the same day and sold them for a dollar a bunch as fast as I could hand them out. They were the first green vegetables offered in the market. Early beets and turnips came a little later bringing in the open market 45 cents a pound including tops which made excellent greens. Green corn was marketed at \$2 per dozen ears; cucumbers also \$2 per dozen; tomatoes 35 cents a pound and potatoes the same.

"The advent of the first pack train load of watermelons into Idaho City was an epoch in early history not to be forgotten by at least one young man, who purchased one of the largest and most luscious of the melons. A wagon road had been constructed up More Creek from Boise valley, and among the first patrons of the road were two emigrant wagons owned by a sturdy Missourian and his family, the outfit having recently completed the trip across the plains. The family consisted of the husband and wife and two grown daughters. They made a temporary camp on Buena Vista

bar and erected their tent, but two gallant young miners who occupied a log cabin nearby, offered to give up their cabin to the family and they in turn occupied the tent. Accordingly, the transfer was made and, as probably was anticipated, friendly and pleasant relations were established. I appeared on the scene with my watermelons, and was halted within a short distance of the cabin which had been surrendered to the family, and was soon surrounded by a clamorous crowd, all of whom wanted to buy a melon. The attention of the girls having been attracted, they importuned one young man to buy them a melon. "Certainly," he responded and immediately ran out crying "Hey there Cap, bring us a melon." I selected a large one and delivered it at once. He asked the price and I informed him it would be 25 cents a pound--the weight was marked on the melon rind--32 pounds, hence making the price \$8.00. The girls were shocked, and I presume the young man was jarred, but at that price for melons, 25 cents per pound, were the least profitable owing to the loss in breakage while being packed."

McConnell sold his interest in his farm in 1865 and returned to Yamhill, Oregon, to marry Louisa Brown. He came back to Idaho later to purchase a general merchandise store in Moscow in 1880. He subsequently became Idaho's second elected governor in 1892 and served two terms in office, after which he returned to Moscow to spend the remainder of his days.

MARCELLUS McGARY; A Legend in His Own Time

by Anna Marie Oslund

In order to do justice to my 1909 informants, I have to include Mr. and Mrs. Homer Dinsmore, Troy, Idaho, as they have helped me to reconstruct the information that they and I received from Mrs. Dinsmore's parents, Marcellus and Melissa McGary in Helmer, Idaho, 1909-1910. The McGarys were the informants, and it is their history and experiences with them that I chose to relate.

Marcellus McGary was born in 1851 in Scotland County, Missouri, of Scotch-Irish parents. His wife, nee Melissa Snodgrass, was Pennsylvania-Dutch and Roanoke Indian. Both received the rudiments of education in the pioneer schools of the day, supplemented by an avid craving for knowledge satisfied in part by reading. This was especially true of Marcellus. Mr. and Mrs. McGary were of high intelligence mixed with a native shrewdness, a keen sense of humor, and an ever present optimism.

Mr. and Mrs. McGary were no doubt inoculated with the Irish-Dutch-Indian folklore of which superstition was the main ingredient and by which they were surrounded, but for some reason it didn't take with either of them. Marcellus was absolutely immune to anything supernatural, however, this did not prevent him from making use of folklore if and when it became necessary for the furthering of his ideas and plans, and of these he had plenty.

Marcellus was an inventor. For him to observe the strain and pain of laboring people was to sit down and start into space, or close his eyes and think. By that I do not mean that he was averse to work, but he was averse to hard work if by using his head the work could be made easier.

Mr. McGary was the inventor of the Back-Water Valve which was patented on October 4, 1887. On this he took first premium at the fair at St. Louis, Missouri, in the late fall of 1887. This valve was attached to a float that automatically closed the flow of the water in the pipes when the water reached the desired level in the tank or trough. This valve is used in scores of places today; the most common is the valve controlling the float in the toilet water tank.

Newspaper clippings concerning this mechanism cut from the ad columns of the St. Louis Chronicle, St. Louis, Missouri, 1887, are in the possession of Mrs. Homer Dinsmore, Troy, Idaho.

His next invention and perhaps the greatest, because of its far reaching consequences, was the lighter than air airship, the forerunner of today's airplane. How he conceived the idea, and what he did to pursue it, is an epic in itself.

Mr. McGary had, as far back as he could remember, been a studious observer of the flight of birds and insects, and of movements of fish in water. From the speculation on their methods of locomotion he conceived the idea of a machine that could be flown in the air. He then launched upon a long period of experimentation.

First a model had to be constructed, so he made a little car on a platform to hold the motor. Then there had to be something to hold the car aloft; the answer was a balloon. His wife Melissa and a group of neighboring women went to work sewing the balloon by hand. It was made from expensive silk. When completed it was oiled and waxed to make it completely air-proof. Wings patterned after the common housefly and fins similar to those on fish were

added. The balloon was not enough to elevate the car but when the wings were operated by hand it was noted that the car responded but not enough to be elevated. Next, a small motor consisting of nothing more than a spool-like thing and rubber bands were added to power the wings. The response was greater but still not enough to completely lift the car aloft, but there was enough success to encourage the inventor to continue.

One day while fishing he noted the propulsion by the wind of a maple seed. He stooped and picked up a seed, tossed it into the air and noted the graceful slow spiraling of the seed. Here was an object in nature that could fly without flapping of wings or wiggling of fins but could direct its course by tilting the wings or the fins as fish and some seeds do, and thus be guided to a desired location.

So far he had worked with small models. He now decided to make a larger airship as he decided to call it. The model that he placed on exhibition at various times consisted of a cigar-shaped balloon about five feet long from which was suspended a car that carried the motor and the propeller. The balloon contained enough gas to raise the car and when the wings were put into motion they furnished the additional power to lift the ship and propel it into space. As the power ran out the airship slowly settled down to the ground. Again and again, he tried to patent his invention but was refused because it was termed "impractical and impossible." Such reverses did not stop him.

At the next try, he built a full-sized plane capable of carrying two men who were to provide the power. He took this plane



Helmer, Idaho, about 1905. The Marcellus McGary shoe shop is at the left end of the building on the left.

to St. Louis in 1895, but was not permitted to show and explain his invention. At the Louisiana Exposition in 1904, he was again denied. This time a prize of \$100,000 was offered to the man who could exhibit a plane that would fly five miles and return.

At last Mr. McGary was compelled by circumstances beyond his control to concede defeat. One balloon was destroyed by fire. It took money to build and transport his planes, and it took time to always be tinkering on his models, and it brought hardship on his family.

But who is to say that this struggle, his ideas and principles on flight, his many attempts to build a machine that could navigate the air, a struggle that antedated the success of the Wright Brothers' invention by 8 years, could have been instrumental in making the Wright Brothers' invention a success?

Clippings from the following papers pertaining to Mr. McGary's inventions are in the possession of Mrs. Homer Dinsmore, Troy, Idaho: The Kahoka Gazette Herald, Kahoka, Missouri, Jan. 5, 1894; Scripp's McRae Telegram, Memphis, Missouri, Feb. 5, 1894; Cleveland Advocate, Cleveland, Texas, Jan. 9, 1963.

Mr. McGary had, for almost 20 years, been nurturing a dream while the members of his family had been more or less fending for themselves. Now his sons, Eugene, Jim, and John, were grown and had already left for the West. They, too, had dreams but not of the airship variety. For some reason, now lost, they came to Helmer, Idaho, then a group of houses surrounded by tall trees. Jim became a cruiser for Potlatch and later a locator for incoming settlers. Gene went on to California, and John filed on a timber claim in the high country north of the Potlatch River.

Florence, the youngest, was still home with the parents. For years she had been her father's companion in his successes and reverses. It was she who had handled all the correspondence pertinent to in-

ventions, patents, materials, and legal matters. She found time to go on to school and was, as of 1905, a teacher, a very young teacher, to be sure, but as only girls of talent and ability became teachers in those days, she was well qualified.

One afternoon Mac, as his old neighbors now called him, sat in his favorite chair staring into space. Florence noticed and recognized the look and whispered to her mother:

"Look at Pa, do you suppose that he is at it again?"

"Sure thing, I wonder what kind of deviltry he is cooking up this time."

They didn't have long to wait; in seven days they had sold their belongings and were headed for Helmer, Idaho. Helmer, from being a few houses among big trees, by now had begun to look like a settlement. Already there was a store, a livery barn, a boarding house, a blacksmith shop, a post office, and a school was being built.

John had already built a cabin and was busy clearing land and building roads. Mac lost no time in filing on a 160 acre homestead next to his son's claim. They built a cabin, a small barn, cleared a few acres of land, and set out fruit trees. This was no mean job when there was nothing but timber for miles and miles in every direction. Florence was by this time teaching in the newly built log cabin school in Deary. Joe Wells, a Negro from the South, was the clerk. It was Uncle Joe, as he was called, who signed her pay checks.

The winters were very severe so the McGary's moved into Helmer. They built a two story frame building which in a short time became both a lodging and boarding house. The Washington-Oregon-Idaho-Montana (W.O.I.M.) Railroad had just been completed; the Weyerhaeusers were building logging camps all through the virgin timber; saw-mills were buzzing; long

trains of pack animals were seen winding along the trails. Most of the men who came to this pioneer country were young and strong, but the work was hard; the hours were long, the food poor, and doctors were far away. This was in 1906.

Once again Marcellus McGary sat staring into space and before long another invention was born. This progeny was named the Electro-King. Although the Electro-King came into being in 1906 he is still up and around and is doing well. It is an electric vibrator powered by batteries that send an electric current through the body or through anything that is conductive of electricity. It was meant to alleviate rheumatic pains, but it does more than that; it stimulates every organ of the body.

Immediately after the Electro-King came two other inventions, the electric belt that cures while the person sleeps and the electric comb that not only restores youthful color to grey hair but also makes hair grow on bald heads. When Mr. McGary was asked how he happened to think about this invention he answered, "It is said that necessity is the Mother of Invention, and certain it is that these pain ridden men crippled by rheumatism needed it."

There was a brief business in making and selling the machine but gradually it died down as doctors settled in the nearby towns, and modes of travel improved.

I met the McGarys in the fall of 1909. I had known their daughter Florence for several years so it was not exactly by chance that I got my first position as teacher in the Helmer School. If I were to single out one year from my many excitement-filled years, that year would top them all. I cannot give all the credit for this to the McGarys because there were other characters in the village capable of telling tales and doing deeds, and strange to relate, I became known as a character, too.

I needed desperately to save money so I rented a little house and went to house-

keeping. I discovered that I couldn't cook, and what was worse, I didn't seem to be able to rustle anything to cook either. The outcome was that Mrs. Mac took pity on me and invited me to live with them. I accepted gladly.

Mac, too, was delighted about the arrangement because now he had a willing listener. He told me about the Electro-King and its almost superhuman powers, powers that I soon learned that he himself did not believe in. But I was young and liked a good argument so I rose to the hook and the winter-long debates began.

The first initiation to the Electro-King was a neighborhood party given at the McGarys. All the young people were present as was also an old man named Dillman. Dillman, too, was a character if there ever was one. He was a Civil War veteran, and as he stated, "A veteran of many other wars not quite so civil," referring, no doubt, to the fact that he had been married at least five times.

We had a good time at that party. We played and sang "Happy is the Miller boy" and "Skip to my Lou" with Mac standing there, all aglow, tapping time with his foot to the music. Dillman was the life of the party, he was all over that floor, but somehow he always came to a stand still by my side giving the impression that he was my partner. We sat down to rest for a minute and suddenly noticed that the Electro-King was on a chair next to Mac. We became quiet and when Mac asked Sookie, he always called his wife Sookie, to turn out the lamp and light a couple of candles instead, as it smelled as if the lamp was smoking, we began to feel kind of funny, I did anyway. Mac began to fool with that contraption, as most of the people called the King, but said very little and what he did say savored of the mystic.

We were all to join hands as we had done in the singing game except that the Electro-King was to take the part of one player. I was to stand on one side of the King and Mac on the other. Each of us held a cold wet pad that was connected

to the machine. The rest of the players formed a circle and all of us held hands and NEXT TO ME STOOD DILLMAN.

Very little if any power was turned on at first. Mac began in a soft half-hushed voice to insinuate that in our ring was a devoted pair of lovers. To my horror old Dillman squeezed my hand. Most of the girls blushed, but as I was told later, I turned white. The boys snickered and glanced sideways. On went Mac's voice.

The machine would pick out the ones who had been very friendly by sending a shock through the circle to the guilty ones. The guilty one would then have to drop his neighbor's hand. Every one held his neighbor's hand so tight that the knuckles stood out white, and stared straight ahead. The shock came and it was a good one, and was followed by a mightly squeeze of Dillman's hand. The guilty one would know that his true love was in the circle



Left to right, back row - Anna Marie Anderson (teacher), Lilly Liner, Atlee Wilkins, Nona Wilkins, Floyd Lawrence, Ray Kennedy.
Front row - Myrtle Compo, Mary Wilkins, Gladys Miller, Esther Liner, Eddie Kennedy, Hilda Liner. (from the book "The Trees Grew Tall," by John B. Miller)

Helmer School about 1910.

if he felt two hard shocks. They came, and so did the pressure from Dillman's grimy hand. The next shock would be hard and long, but could be averted if everyone would silently plead with the King not to reveal his or her name. All stared stonily ahead, but --- lips moved, but not mine. I bit my lips to keep from screaming, so hard that I could taste blood when the seance finally came to a close. Then Mac announced, "I can tell by the air that the pressure will become greater, so great that innocent girls will faint. The volume increased, and plop went a virgin, plop-plop two more. That broke the circle and with that the shocks ceased. The one who really suffered from this spiritual seance was Mr. Mac who laughed so hard that he got purple in the face and Sookie had to let go of the regulator on that infernal machine and run for a dipper of water.

That was just the beginning of that excitement-filled year. A few weeks later another party was announced. The party was at the same place by the same people. Everyone considered himself immune to Mr. Mac's tricks after the first highpower inoculation, anyway, what could or would he do with a harmless thing like that. It is just possible that we did not know Mac, and certain it is that we underestimated the power of Sookie.

Innocent singing games were played as usual, then faintly above the noise I thought I heard the purr of the Electro-King in a corner. Others heard it too, and a few glanced anxiously toward the door. Said Mr. Mac, "Be not afraid, I'm not going to permit the spirit to frighten you. I just want to show you its power for good or evil. To begin with I'll give each one of you a number that you must remember." This he did.

This time I was a conspirator. The light in the lamp was blown out, and the candles were snuffed. Then Sookie handed me four small cereal bowls which I quietly placed under each leg of a chair conveniently near. Then I stepped up onto the chair. Then came Mr. Mac's voice, "Do not fear, when I call a certain number that one must

stand up and reach towards the center of the room. If a light flashes on you, you will know that your lover is present." Then he began a systematic rubbing on my back with a dried cat hide--stroking from the neck downward. He had explained to me before that this was to "charge me." Then he called in a loud voice, "All set. I am now about to call a number." All this hokus-pokus made the very atmosphere tense. I was all set with my hand reaching out into the darkness eager to touch some lover's hand. Mr. Mac counted, "One, two, three," but before he had time to call a number the tips of my fingers touched a round wheezing object that turned out to be old Dillman's bald head. Not only was there a flash, but also a crackling noise. I was told that I gave a low moan as I tumbled off the chair. Dillman was as surprised as I was and reared back so suddenly that he crashed to the floor and knocked Mrs. Mac off her feet.

Sookie was, unknown to me, a conspirator too. She was standing near Dillman and when Mac was through with his rubbing she whispered to Dillman to walk up closer to see what was going on. He did, and as it turned out Sookie had timed it just right. As for me, for the second time I had been outwitted by the Electro-King and his inventor.

The third time that Mac called the spirits to prove the fallacy of superstition was at the frog pond in the spring. The spirit was this time to show its power without the aid of the Electro-King.

It was the bewitching hour of dusk on a balmy May evening. The pond was full of frogs singing their madrigals of love, and the usual crowd was on hand to enjoy whatever of good or evil that Mac might be able to conjure. The Electro-King had been cleverly concealed behind a black stump with a heavy coat thrown over him to silence the purr. A cord was concealed in the grass and led to the edge of the pond. To make sure that no tricks were played on us this time, I took a seat in the grass close enough to the pond for my hand to reach the water. In my hand

was the end of the cord that led from the King. Sookie came strolling through the clearing just in time to pull the switch.

Said Mac: "I will now command all the frogs in this pond to die, and all will die," then standing tall and straight and raising his hand he thundered, "Die frogs, die." Into the water I slipped the electrode. The frogs gave a short "Ka-whack," turned on their backs and apparently died. Great was the consternation and fear among the people. Not a sound came from the frog-pond. Once again Mac raised his hand and shouted, "Frogs, live and sing again." Slowly here and there feeble "Ka-whacks" were heard and before long the whole pond was alive with "Ka-whacks."

Marcellus lived to see large planes close at hand when his son, Jim, took him to Spokane in 1922 to view the coming and going of planes at the Fairchild Airbase. He rejoiced as a child over the fulfillment of his boyhood dream on which he had expended a quarter of a century of energy.

The mountain on which the McGarys had their homesteads is today officially named McGary Mountain and is so designated on all maps large enough to show all creeks, rivers, mountains, and roads of the Potlatch Empire.

Marcellus McGary died in 1927 and is buried in the Avon Cemetery. Melissa McGary, daughter of the Roanoke, sleeps by his side.



After construction of the new schoolhouse in 1908. The school, which stood at the north edge of town, is seen above the roof of the Wilkins barn. At right center is the Compo home. The buildings along Main Street are toward the right, half hidden behind the nearby roofs. (from "The Trees Grew Tall," by John B. Miller)

HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION OF TROY, IDAHO, NEWSPAPERS

by Don E. Erickson

(Part one)

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to present the history of newspapers at Troy, Latah County, Idaho, from the first paper's founding until 1959. Where files were available, a description is given of the papers, editors, news, editorial composition, makeup, and its relation to the Troy community and its development. Files were only available for the periods from 1904 to 1907, and from 1932 to 1959. Therefore, a description of the paper and an accurate account of the editors during these intervening years is impossible.

Early History of Troy

A history of Troy newspapers must necessarily start with a brief history of the early town. The first evidence of a settlement in the immediate vicinity of Troy, Idaho, was a sawmill built in 1885 by J. Wesley Seat.¹ The Troy canyon was then dark and swampy, and thick with forest. A second sawmill soon followed, and in 1890, Erickson's sawmill was the third one to be erected. In this same year, John P. Vollmer was instrumental in bringing the Northern Pacific railroad through Troy and the Palouse country to Lewiston. A year later, Vollmer built the first business establishment, a general store, in the vicinity. It was considered fitting, therefore, that the village should be named Vollmer.

J. W. Seat homesteaded the original townsite of 160 acres.² In 1890, four Moscow men, knowing that the railroad would need a supply point at this distance from Moscow, purchased from Seat the quarter section of land on which the town is now situated. In the fall of the same year a

townsite company was formed and the town was laid out. With the coming of the railroad, the town began to grow. After the timber was cleared away for the little settlement, large stumps remained in the middle of Main Street until about 1905. Large lumber piles from the sawmills stood on the street, and at one time there were two feet of sawdust on the main street. The only part of what is now Troy that was not then covered with big tamarack trees and swamps was that which is now the center of town.

The town of Vollmer was incorporated April 19, 1892, and the first school was built in 1893. Vollmer, himself, did little of his business in the town because his interests were mainly centered in Lewiston. In 1897, the townspeople voiced an objection to the name of the town, and at an election held that fall the people chose to change the name to Troy. The polling was 29 votes for Troy and 9 for Vollmer. "By 1903, Troy was a prosperous little town, with a population of 500. Its industries were thriving."³

Chronological History and Description

Even in the very early days the town supported a weekly newspaper. The pioneer paper was the Vollmer Vidette, which was established in 1891 by T. E. Edmondson.⁴ This paper ran only a few months, however. The first paper of consequence, The Vollmer News, later known as the Troy News, was established in 1895 by Charles Moody.⁵ The paper carried the name Vollmer News until the name of the town was changed to Troy in 1897. During the early 1900's, the Troy News was located near the railroad tracks behind what is now the Inland

Hotel. The building was built on stilts like many of the early stores, except that the News had a large pond beneath its office. This situation gave rise to a few derogatory remarks and names among the town's younger generation.

Ben Nelson was evidently the first owner after Moody. Miss Ina Peterson's history states that Nelson sold the paper to Joe W. Schlosser, who sold to B. C. Johnson, and that during the time Johnson had the News, he moved the office to the north end of Main Street where the paper was published until it was discontinued in 1955. (This order of editors, however, does not jibe with other sources.) F. E. Wilch was the editor and proprietor in 1904-05. Wilch published the paper for 14 months before selling to B. M. Schick, who came from Palouse, Wash. Schick took over Jan. 27, 1905.

During a period of two months, January-February 1905, the Troy Weekly News had three editors. But even better than that, Schick only published the paper for two issues and then sold to P. L. Orcutt. During January and February of 1905, then, Wilch, Schick, and Orcutt had the paper in that order. There is evidence that Schick had planned to print the paper for longer than just two issues, for in his first issue he published the following in his salutatory: "It will be the policy of the News to at all times advocate the things which will further the interests of Troy and its citizens, and to that end would like to ask continuance of the liberal patronage accorded the paper in the past." Signed: B. M. Schick.⁶

Orcutt's first issue was published Feb. 10, 1905. In his first number, Orcutt printed a salutatory that was very similar to the one the paper carried only two issues previously. He told the Troy people about his qualifications, the fact that he had resided in the Inland Empire all his life; and stated the policy he intended to carry out. He said, "In politics the News will be Republican, but in the discussion of matters not political we shall try to be guided by a spirit of fairness, realizing that there is always

room for honest differences of opinion."⁷ This is the only time in the history of the paper that any definite political stand can be traced for one party or the other. Other than this one editor's policy, the paper has always been independent, saying what it pleased about either party.

Orcutt then goes on in his first editorial column in an informal, rambling fashion. Each idea, and there were comments on several topics, was separated by a dash. In setting his column, he evidently thought of something else he wanted to say about his management, so he introduced a new idea and proceeded to write about cooperation, patronage, and ended with a pat on the backs of the Troy people. He said, "We will say, for fear some may think the recent numerous changes in editors at the News has assumed the proportions of an epidemic, that the paper is now not for sale. With your permission, citizens of Troy, we would like to become a permanent fixture in this thriving little town."⁸ During this time Troy was evidently well known around the country, for he says: "And since our fruits, grains, and grasses are carrying off first honors at the great international fairs it will not be long ere the whole world will recognize the truth. It is hoped Latah County will have a creditable exhibit at Portland during the coming fair. It will be a good investment."⁹

The News was typically an eight page weekly at this time. Half of the paper, or pages 2, 3, 6, and 7, were ready print. The ready print contained news from everywhere in the world, including Russia; and national advertising, including patent medicines. The masthead sported the authoritative subtitle, "Official Village Paper." One regular house ad revealed that the paper had an added attraction. The ad stated that two good papers, the Troy Weekly News and Farm and Fireside, could both be obtained for the price of one. Both were for \$1.00. The Farm and Fireside could possibly have been a magazine type supplement that was probably distributed with the ready printed newsprint.

From the beginning, Orcutt started a campaign to increase the number of subscriptions, improve the printing plant and generally make the paper well known. He ordered new rollers, a paper cutter and a quantity of type, "making the News second to no paper in Latah County, either in appearance or in the quantity and quality of news."¹⁰ He launched a drive for subscriptions, offering cash and free subscriptions to persons soliciting for the paper. The person handing in the first ten orders was offered a nice present in addition. Orcutt was willing to pay anyone who would help him reach his goal of 1,000 subscribers. When he took over the paper in February, it had 250 subscribers. By July Orcutt had 500, by January, 1906, he had 600, and he finally reached 650 11 months after he purchased the paper.

When the new type arrived, Orcutt's paper could have passed as being machine set. The type was clean, smaller and had a finer face, but a few tell-tale quads that worked up occasionally gave away the fact that it was still hand set. During 1905, the paper typically had two columns of ads on the right side of the front page, and one column on the left. This left two columns and sometimes some space across the top for news. The headlines were one column, centered, and set in type that was not much larger than the body type itself. Two examples of heads were: "Here's a New One," and "We Don't Believe It." The front page stories were more nearly editorial comments or human interest personal items. Orcutt usually had at least three columns of editorials on the fourth page. Some were long, full-dress editorials, but most were paragraph comments on a wide variety of topics, with an occasional charge against the Democrats to keep the people conscious that he was a Republican. The rest of the paper was made up of country correspondence and legal and display advertising.

Orcutt was sensitive in many matters and usually told the people so in his editorials. In one issue he harped at the University of Idaho for insisting that its catalog be printed in a particular kind of type, which was then found in only one

office in the area. Above that, the school specified that this type had to be set by hand. The one office that had the desired type face happened to not possess a type setting machine either. He charged the school with making the job as long and expensive as possible, and subsequently as being opposed to modern advances in machinery. He wrote, "We wonder if the same policy is carried out when it comes to matters pertaining to the education of the young men and women of the state?"¹¹

His type of newspapering and editorial comment drew remarks from people in the form of letters, which he sometimes printed on the front page. One such letter said:

You are certainly to be congratulated for the fearless and able manner in which you express your convictions with reference to matters of public concern. . . . It is the almighty dollar that the average editor writes for and not for the good of the people. . . . Your editorials at times, seem harsh, and cutting but that is to be admired rather than condemned. If the statements therein contained are true the world ought to know it and if they are false an honest man will pass them by unnoticed. . . . you ought to be congratulated upon the fact that you have manly courage to freely speak and write upon all subjects with the end in view of promoting justice.¹²

Sometime in 1906, Orcutt was responsible for coining two phrases that were associated with his paper and the town. Because of the town's thriving business at that time, he dubbed it the "Biggest Little Town on Earth." The other phrase was against a Moscow daily, "If you see it in the Journal it's a lie."¹³ Orcutt minced no words, as shown below.

If you see it in the Moscow Journal it's a ten to one shot it's a lie. The News can prove this if proof is necessary. This sheet has sunk to the level where the most insignificant rumor is transformed and given to the public as legitimate news.

If C. J. Munson thinks the Troy News is not free to say just what it feels it ought to say the gentleman is about the worst deceived man in the entire state. When he went about Moscow last week telling the story of how the News had been repudiated by the citizens of Troy he deliberately falsified.¹⁴

In answering a letter from another citizen, Orcutt printed his reply in the paper. "Dear Sir: Your letter of the 12th at hand and your denial read with a feeling that has not increased my opinion of your good sense and some other qualities highly prized by all truthful men."¹⁵ According to values today, Orcutt gave a lot of editorial comment and entertainment for \$1.00 per year.

Besides being Republican, the paper's policy was to build the town of Troy through publicity and to issue a paper that the local people would not be ashamed of. "Our only regret," Orcutt wrote in an editorial, "is that we haven't the ability to make the Troy News hotter than Hades that we might roast to a beautiful brown those entitled to consideration at our hands."¹⁶ He wanted his paper to be conducted as a great country journal that could boast the largest subscription list of any paper around.

In March, 1906, the paper added "Official Paper of Latah County" to its front page. The News had a contract with the county for its printing and to furnish all the office supplies for the county's administration. Orcutt was clearly fighting to get Troy as the county seat, as the location had not been permanently settled then. Moscow and Troy were somewhat equal in competition, and new towns were springing up east of Troy. His goals to gain the county seat and to have the county fair at Troy were never realized. It is also doubtful that he reached his goal of 1,000 subscribers. Orcutt was more successful, however, in his drives to clean up the town's immoral and illegal practices.

The paper's editors following Orcutt are known, but the length of time each had the paper is not known. Ayer's Dictionary of Newspapers and Periodicals showed that Joe W. Schlosser was editing and publishing the paper in 1913. J. C. Peterson, another early editor, evidently started working in the News office quite early in the paper's history and later took over the paper. This was the first time Peterson edited the paper, for his name appears three times in the chronological list of owners. He then left the Troy paper and moved to Deary where he published the Latah County Press during the early 1920's. G. H. Rice had the Troy News in 1921.¹⁷ B. F. Haas evidently followed Rice in the list of editors, and Wilbur A. Johns followed Haas. While Johns was editor, Mrs. C. M. Grove worked with him in the office until she bought the paper. Mrs. Grove described Johns as an "extremely uncommunicative sort of person."¹⁸ After she bought the News, Mrs. Grove and her daughter both ran the paper for less than a year before selling to J. C. Peterson. At this time there was a small real estate office in one front window of the paper's office. Peterson came back to the Troy News in 1926 and continued until 1932, when he had to lease the paper out for a year because of his health. Peterson returned again in 1933 and brought the name, Latah County Press, with him. This time he had the paper until 1937, when he retired from the newspaper business.

The Troy News under Peterson from 1926 to 1932 (his second editorship) had very good news coverage for a weekly of its size. National news gained some attention on page one. One of the most prominent stories of this time was the kidnapping of Colonel Lindbergh's son, Charles. International news was sometimes mentioned on the editorial page. Peterson had a very good coverage of news within the state. Important stories were on school legislation, Senator Borah's activities, Gov. C. Ben Ross, and talk of the construction of the Lolo Pass Highway, which is nearing completion in 1959. Local news gained first prominence, although state



Troy, Idaho. Parade, Armistice Day, 1918.

issues ran a close second. Locally, Peterson gave much space to Troy schools under a two column head, "News From Troy Schools," that ran in a regular position at the top center of page one. Other important local stories were on potato markets, grain, cattle and farming in general, elections, community activities, and University of Idaho news. Regular columns were "News Want Ads," "Troy Churches," and "Local News Items." Making regular appearances in the two bottom corners of the front page were two, two-column, six-inch fillers that were probably received from a mat service. Topics in these fillers ranged from hints on homemaking and recipes to news for brides. The paper's body type was all hand set, probably 10-point, with leads between

each line of type. All available space on the editorial page was filled in each issue. Most editorials were paragraph editorials that averaged four or five column inches in length. Peterson covered a wide variety of topics, with the number shaded a bit more toward discussions on state, national and timeless issues than local topics. Legal news continued to take up a large part of the paper. A regular house ad during the latter part of the editor's second tenure was for "Genuine parchment Butter Wrappers, stock and best, guaranteed ink, at the News Office."

When Peterson had to leave the paper in June, 1932, because of poor health, he ran the following news item on the front page:

Beginning with the issue of June 9, the Troy News will be under the management of F. G. Nutt, who will take the paper over under a lease agreement. Mr. Nutt has been connected with the News for the past two years and is, therefore, familiar with the field which it serves. He should be able to handle the situation in a manner satisfactory to the paper's patrons.

I lay aside my editorial duties with profound regret. The old paper has been pretty dear to me, in one way or another, during the forty years of its existence. It was in the News office that I started my career as a newspaperman -- such as I am. And, after a long lapse of years, coming back to it and resuming the responsibilities of its conduct and policies was a real pleasure. I have enjoyed the past six years in the old home town, and the contact with old time friends, more than any other period of my career. I feel that the arrangement with Mr. Nutt is only temporary, and that some time in the future, if health permits, I will return to the job.

Mr. Nutt will have the management of the paper only. I shall remain in the office, and will take care of the job printing department. I hope to have your continued patronage, the same as I hope that all will continue to patronize the News under its new manager. Signed: J. C. Peterson.¹⁹

In his first issue, June 9, 1932, F. G. Nutt started using ready print, a practice that had been absent under Peterson's editorship. Among other things, the ready print started a continued story, "The House of the Three Ganders," that ran for several months. This use of ready print clearly crowded the paper, for Nutt did away with the two filler articles at the bottom of page one and started putting want ads, local personals, church news, obituaries, legals and some display ads on the front page that had been devoted almost entirely to news under Peterson. Nutt started using ears in the two top

corners of the paper. These ears were "In The Heart of the Famous Bean Growing District," and "In the Heart of the Finest Clay Deposits in the Northwest."

Nutt had a more local, older style of news writing than did his predecessor. The two following stories illustrate the type of incidents that made news, his style of writing, and errors that frequently occurred.

Lost Valuable Cow

One day last week a valuable cow owned by Oscar Asplund, was strangled to death. The cow was picketed out at the tourist park. The cow got tangled up in the rope and in the struggle to get free threw herself and rolled over a time or two. This being on a side-hill, it was all the more difficult to free herself. The rope kept drawing tighter until she finally strangled to death.²⁰

Fire Takes Nilson Home

Tuesday afternoon flames of fire was [sic] seen to be issuing from the small frame house owned by Mils M Nilson, near the battery station.

. . . When the towu [sic] fire department got in action and began to throw water, the fire had gained such headway that the inside and most of the outside was destroyed or damaged to such an extent that it is practically worthless.

. . . Some of the furnishings, consisting of a stove, radio, rug, chairs, etc., was [sic] carried out and saved.²¹

The paper supported elections and voting, relief associations and the Red Cross to an extent that a basic policy is noticed concerning these. Anything else the paper supported received only nominal recognition. Concerning politics, the paper was full of political ads, but there was no formal editorial comment. Rather, the editorializing was done in the news stories and is detectable in the way the

heads and stories were slanted. The paper's policy was stated as being independent, but one headline after the fall election of 1932, the year of F. D. Roosevelt's election and the great Democratic landslide, stated: "Country Is Now Safe For Democracy."²²

When Nutt changed volumes on Nov. 24, 1932, he ran a short history of the paper on the front page.

With this issue the Troy Weekly News starts on its 40th year. The newspaper was founded in the fall of 1893 by G. H. Moody. At that time the town was named Vollmer, but a short time thereafter the name of the town was changed to Troy.

Since then the News has continued to carry on, in times good and bad. Fourteen men and one woman have guided the destinies of the publication. Each one has told, in his or her inimitable manner, the happenings of Troy and vicinity. They have recorded the good, as well as the bad deeds of the inhabitants, with the accent mostly on the good. . . .

Although the editors are now pretty well along in years, all but three have managed to survive, although one of them says he feels about the same as dead, so hard has the depression hit him.

The names of the editors and their present addresses are, as far as we can learn, as follows:

C S Moody (deceased)
 J C Peterson, Troy
 J M Hoffman, Redmond, Wash
 B S Nelson, Clarkston
 F H Wilch, Spokane
 P L Orcutt (deceased)
 J W Schlosser, Calusa, Calif.
 B C Johnson (deceased)
 G H Rice, address not known
 B M Schick, Dayton, Wash.
 B F Haas, Oregon City, Ore.
 W A Johns, Moore, Montana
 Mrs. C M Grove, Moscow
 F G Nutt, Troy²³

He lists only 13 men and 1 woman, contrary to what he said in the first part of the story. It must be remembered that the addresses given in the story were current in 1932, not 1959. The list is partially in chronological order. As far as is ascertainable, the correct order to the present, with known dates, is as follows:

T. E. Edmondson	1891
C. S. Moody	1895
B. S. Nelson	
J. W. Schlosser ²⁴	
B. C. Johnson	
F. E. Wilch	1904
B. M. Schick	1905
P. L. Orcutt	1905
J. W. Schlosser	1913
J. C. Peterson	
G. H. Rice	1921
B. F. Haas	
W. A. Johns	
Mrs. C. M. Grove	1926
J. C. Peterson	1926
F. G. Nutt	1932
J. C. Peterson	1933
C. C. Smith	1937
H. D. Phelps	1944
Ellis and Dorothy Anderson	1953
E. M. Poe	1954
Charles Stellmon	1957

These are the editors and/or publishers with the dates that each first took the paper. J. E. Hoffman is the only one that cannot be located in the history of the paper with a reasonably correct date. Hoffman should probably be inserted in the list in one of the spaces following either Johnson, Orcutt or Schlosser, as the editors during the times as represented by these spaces are not known.

(To be continued)

BOOK REVIEW

Gleanings from Big Bear Ridge. Gerald Ingle. Moscow, Id.: Latah County Historical Society (110 S. Adams, 83843). 1982. 193 pp. Illustrated. Cloth. \$12.95; \$10.36 for LCHS members. Add \$1.00 for mail order copies.

This book is primarily the product of one man's devotion to an idea: that the history of the area in which he spent his life should be preserved. After Gerald Ingle retired from public life--20 years as a county commissioner, 28 years as a school board member, service on countless boards and committees, and membership in numerous organizations--he devoted three years to collecting information about his home community, Big Bear Ridge. Work on publication of his manuscript was well under way at the time of his death in 1982 and was carried to fruition by his wife, Grace, and sister, Alcie Nethken. It is not only a memorial to his lifetime of service in the community but demonstrates that one need not be a trained historian to make a significant contribution to the preservation of local history.

Big Bear Ridge is the area of Latah County that runs northeast of Kendrick for about eight miles, extending nearly to Deary. It lies between Pine Creek and Big Bear Creek and embraces arable rolling land bordered by canyon lands. When the first settlers came, it was covered with timber and brush which had to be cleared before farming could begin. It is now traversed by State Highway 3. The first settlers arrived on the ridge in the late 1870s, and by 1890 most of the land had been claimed, either by homesteading or pre-emption.

Roughly the first third of Gleanings from Big Bear Ridge is devoted to the history of community activities of general interest. The earliest mail service to the ridge was a pretty informal arrangement. Mail was delivered to Juliaetta by horseback twice a week and was picked up there

by whoever happened to have the opportunity. Brought to the ridge, it would be left at someone's home or at church on Sunday. In 1885 a post office called Taney was established. Rodney Drury, the postmaster, distributed from his home the mail that was brought there by horseback. His application listed the population to be supplied as 400.

In 1907 the Taney post office was terminated, and a rural route from Kendrick established for Big Bear Ridge. Mail came to be delivered by automobile in the 1920s, but Everett Fraser, who carried the mail for 38 years beginning in 1922, used a horse-drawn wagon or sleigh in bad weather until sometime in the '40s. Ingle's chapter in mail service contains highly interesting material and reflects not only the development of roads in the area but the warm relations and interdependence between mail carriers and the people they served.

As in most communities, the early settlers of Big Bear Ridge wanted schools for their children. The first school was held in a log building, but in 1893 Taney School District #38 built the first frame schoolhouse. Over the following years the number of schools on the ridge grew to five. The modern reader should be aware of the reason for having this many schools in the relatively small area. In all early settlements of the county, schools were often only one or two miles apart, so that the pupils could get to them on foot. In 1936 temporary consolidation with the Kendrick District began, and by 1947 the consolidation of all Big Bear Ridge schools into the present Kendrick District #238 was complete.

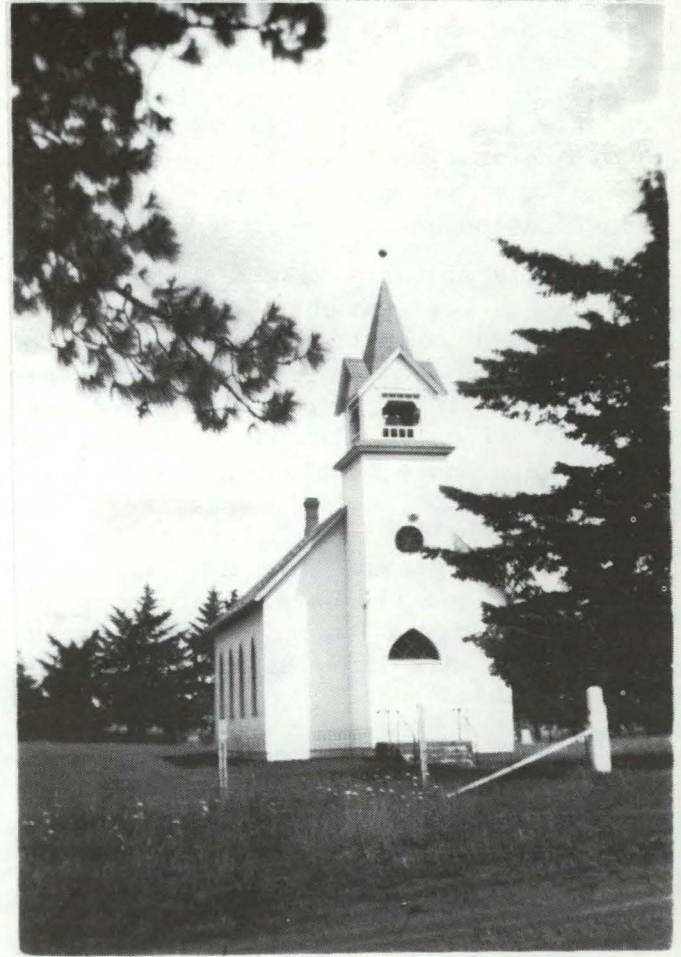
The chapter on Big Bear Ridge schools relates their history in detail, with photographs, and lists the names of many teachers who served the five schools during that period of over 50 years. A number of the teachers were from Big Bear

Ridge families, but many names will be recognized as well known in other parts of the county.

The story of telephone service on the ridge begins with the account of the first meeting of the Taney Telephone Company in 1906. This was a cooperative venture whose stated purpose was to build and operate a telephone line from Kendrick to Deary. Shares were sold at \$5.00 each. It is a complex story of dealing with two different telephone exchanges in Kendrick, of the usual difficulties in constructing and maintaining lines, and of adapting to changing technology when the original wall-crank phones became outmoded and had to be replaced by dial phones. At the present time, when good telephone service is taken for granted, it is illuminating to read of the difficulties experienced in operating a local line of this kind for 74 years. One can only admire the determination and cooperative spirit which could keep such a project going until it was sold to the Potlatch Telephone Company in 1980.

The opening section of Gleanings also relates the history of the two churches built on the ridge--the United Brethren Church, now rebuilt near the Wild Rose Cemetery, and the Bethany Lutheran Memorial Chapel, which is on the National Register of Historic Places, and describes the building of the Big Bear Ridge Community Hall.

Most of the opening section of this book was written by Gerald Ingle. The remainder of the book consists of family histories. Ingle's plan was to have these written by descendants of longtime Big Bear Ridge residents; in this he was only partially successful. Many of the family accounts have indeed been written by family members, but in a number of instances Ingle had to draw on his own recollections or rely on information furnished by the settlers' descendants. The family histories vary a good deal in approach. Some are strictly factual, while others manage to convey the flavor of life in an earlier era. There is a wealth of genealogical material here. Some accounts trace ancestors to the European



Bethany Lutheran Church (Gleanings).

country of their origin, and most of them mention places of residence before coming to Latah County. Exact dates of birth and death are not always given, but there are many clues helpful to persons doing genealogical research. Considerable information on the present whereabouts of those who have left the ridge is to be found here. Anyone who has lived in the area or who knows Big Bear Ridge people will find the family histories of great interest.

It would be a mistake to assume that this section of the book will interest only those acquainted with people who have lived on Big Bear Ridge. Persons interested in Latah County history can find a good deal here to broaden their understanding of how people lived between the

days of settlement and the present time. They can learn, for example, of the Norwegians who settled on the ridge and persuaded their countrymen to follow them, sometimes by putting ads in Minneapolis newspapers. The Norwegian Lutheran colony built a church and maintained an active congregation until 1964.

The family histories are rich in reminiscences and in accounts that have been handed down to later generations. They tell how and why early families traveled to Big Bear Ridge, how they acquired land, and what life was like. For entertainment there were house parties, basket socials, dances, picnics, coasting parties, sleigh rides, baseball games, "literaries," and Christmas programs. Not all was fun and games in the early days. Hardships were many. Money was scarce, winter weather severe, and new families sometimes would live in abandoned log cabins until they

could build homes for themselves. Land had to be cleared by primitive methods and grain harvested with a scythe. A water supply on the ridge was always a problem until people learned to drill wells 300 to 600 feet deep.

But always people helped each other. Families were large and close-knit, and children were expected to help with chores. Everyone trusted neighbors, and doors were never locked. With hard work the people of Big Bear Ridge developed successful farms and by cooperative effort and unselfish leadership built a community which their descendants remember with nostalgia. Many of them still live on the ridge, and those who have left are glad to revisit it.

Gerald Ingle and his family deserve the gratitude of all of Latah County for having preserved this record. This is the



Al McKee in the front wagon, Ben Hull in the back wagon. The Rodney Drury home in the background was once the Taney post office (Gleanings).

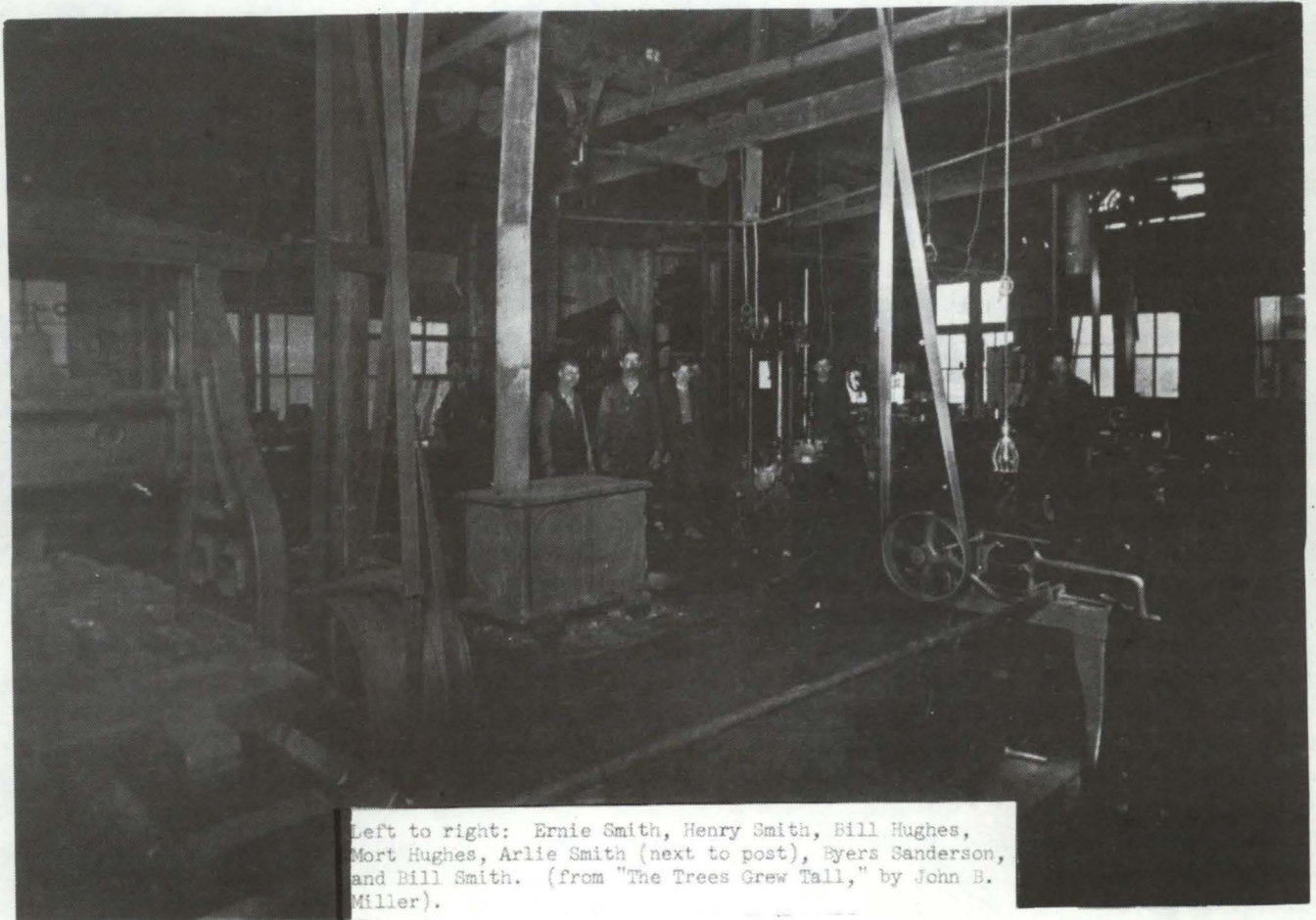
sort of book that could be compiled in almost every community if only a group can be found which is sufficiently interested to make the effort. The necessary information exists in the memories of old-timers and their descendants and should be recorded either in book form or in oral history interviews before it is too late.

Gleanings is an attractive hardback book with a durable sewn binding. It is printed in large, readable type on paper of good quality and illustrated with many photographs, mostly of family homes and family groups. Illustrations include facsimile reproductions of old documents and newspaper articles, some of which

require a hand lens for easy reading. Lack of an index makes use of the book for reference rather difficult, but the family histories are arranged alphabetically. On the whole, Gleanings from Big Bear Ridge is an impressive addition to the record of Latah County.

Reviewed by Lillian Otness

Lillian Otness of Moscow is a life member of the Historical Society, is on the Board of Trustees, and is chairman of the oral history committee. She has recently completed the manuscript for A Great Good Country: A Guide to Historic Moscow and Latah County, which will be published by the Society this summer.



Left to right: Ernie Smith, Henry Smith, Bill Hughes, Mort Hughes, Arlie Smith (next to post), Byers Sanderson, and Bill Smith. (from "The Trees Grew Tall," by John B. Miller).

Potlatch Camp 8, the Machine Shop.

LETTERS

The editor is very pleased to be able to present a letter from John B. Miller, former Bovill resident and writer of that excellent history of Bovill and eastern Latah County, The Trees Grew Tall. Mr. Miller makes some helpful and interesting comments on the Potlatch Lumber Company article that appeared in the previous issue of the Legacy. Mr. Miller is now retired, and lives in California.

May 1, 1983

Latah County Historical Society
110 South Adams
Moscow, Idaho

Dear Sirs:

Reproducing historic works like the 1911 article about Potlatch Lumber Company operations near Bovill, by Arthur Stevens (Latah Legacy, 1982/83 Winter issue), is surely one of your important functions. The article is excellent.

I believe I can offer some pertinent information relative to some photographs which accompany the article.

According to information I obtained years ago from Chet Yangel of Bovill, the camp appearing in the cover photo is Camp 6 near Helmer. It looks about right as well, although a little primitive, in terms of my own memory.

There is an evident error of identity in the photograph appearing on page 18. At some time someone has mis-identified it, or perhaps an original identification has been illegibly written or has become faded. Almost conclusively, the subject is not Camp 5; it is Camp 8 (the shops) located one and one-half miles north of Bovill. It is so shown in my book, "The Trees Grew Tall," top left, p. 156.

I was not quite sure of this photo when I was assembling material for my book. Details were sufficiently different from Camp 8 as I knew it as to cast some doubt. Further, the presence of so much equipment standing on what would be the main railroad (the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul)-- not a usual practice-- was disturbing. However, a picture from the period before the 1914 Beal's Butte fire (as this would be) is well ahead of my memory which, so far as Camp 8 is concerned, was formed mainly in the period 1924-1932.

To reassure myself, I went to Beyers Sanderson, who worked there; Nell Smith, whose husband worked there; and Naomi Parker, whose father worked there. All said it was Camp 8. Beyers supplied an approximate date-- about 1912. Ernie Smith knew the place well, but could not help because his eyesight was bad.

A number of things are diagnostic if one looks closely at the photo and studies other evidence:

1) The dam and pond are seen beyond the buildings. The railroad bends around the hill in mid-distance at left, as it should, and in other ways the geometry of arrangement is right for Camp 8. Clearly the photo looks at the lower face of the dam, and therefore looks upstream.

I cannot be sure about a dam and pond at Camp 5. I have seen no trace of a dam there, nor heard of one. But a view upstream at Camp 5 would look into a valley head surrounded closely by hills, with the high Esmerald Creek divide as background.

The hill seen at left center probably lies on the divide between Purdue Creek and Nat Brown Creek. A ground-check on shape would serve to confirm this.

2) The main building is seen to include a shed-like structure (right side). This conforms in shape with the main Camp 8 shop. Certain small details of the building are different from the ones I knew.

If you inspect a clear photographic print of the picture, you will see in the end of the building two large, square doors with beveled corners. Branches of the railroad spur lead to these doors, and apparently into the building. One may conclude that the building was a major shop of a type unlikely at Camp 5.

According to what I have heard, the Camp 8 shop was built initially in a manner to take rolling stock inside for repair. However, the repair of railroad equipment was diverted to Potlatch, and the Camp 8 services were devoted to repair mainly of machinery out of the woods. Therefore, the inside tracks were removed, and the space utilized for the necessary metal lathes, planers, heavy duty metal-shaping machines and presses, forges, and facilities for making castings.

3) The window in the shed section (right corner of building) looks identical to a window in the corresponding inside corner of the shop (see "The Trees Grew Tall," top photo p. 104). Smaller windows toward the right on the inside view would probably lie within the area of the frame of what had been the door.

4) Along the left side of the tracks in the photo is a telegraph line, which carries (as seen in a good print) four separate wires. Telegraph lines followed the Milwaukee rail-line through camp 8 and, in fact, all main rail-lines, but were not found along the temporary logging railroads such as the one that led to Camp 5.

5) In his 1911 report, Stevens describes Camp 5 as a temporary camp, and says, "Cars are used here instead of permanent buildings." The dining room and commissary were "called the wanegan," which implies these facilities were also mobile. All of this fits the written accounts of the Beal's Butte fire, which say that the camp would have been wiped out had they not pulled it to safety with a Shay engine.

With reference to Camp 6, I discover that on the map in my book (p. 16-17) the camp, which is represented by the code number 24, is incorrectly located. It should be about a mile farther east, just on the east side of Corral Creek. This error is hard to understand, particularly since the number is superimposed on the railway name which, in turn, was positioned to keep it away from places of interest. (Transfer numbers were used. Could this one have scooted sideways and reattached itself?) The causes of error appear to range all the way from misinformation to pure accident. While there is always a degree of carelessness, they are the "gremlins" of publication and will forever be present!

On the Camp 5-Camp 8 question, much of my discussion above is argumentive by its very nature. However, the discussion illustrates through example how a great deal of information can sometimes be extracted through critical inspection of a photograph; also, how photographic information can be correlated with other known things to establish facts and proliferate knowledge.

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Mr. Burke has been a resident of Moscow since 1950. He has retired from the Department of Agronomy at Washington State University, and is currently working on a biography of William J. McConnell, one-time Moscow businessman and governor of the State of Idaho.

Anna Marie Oslund, born Anna Marie Anderson, taught school in Helmer in 1909/10, and again from 1914 to 1916. She taught in several other area schools including on the Colville Reservation, and eventually in Troy. She became a homemaker in 1920 when she married Alexander Oslund. Her husband died in 1929 and, after returning to college for some refresher courses, she began a second teaching career at Troy High School in 1932. She retired from teaching in 1961, but continued to work in the school library until 1971 when she finally retired at the age of 80. She passed away in 1979. During her long career, Mrs. Oslund was awarded many honors including Idaho Teacher of the Year and Idaho Mother of the Year. Her daughter, Mrs. Wilmer Cox, presently lives in Moscow. This paper was written in 1964, when Mrs. Oslund attended a class in folklore at the University.

Don E. Erickson is a Moscow native, graduating from high school in 1956. He attended the University of Idaho where he majored in Journalism. After graduation, he served three years as a Lieutenant in the Marine Corps, before embarking on a journalistic career with the South Bay Daily Breeze in Los Angeles. He is currently employed as a copy editor for the Los Angeles Times. Mr. Erickson is married, has two sons, and lives in Los Alamitos, California. The present article was written in 1959 for an undergraduate class in the History of Journalism.

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The Society's services include conducting oral histories, publishing local history monographs, maintaining a local history/genealogy research library and the county museum, as well as educational outreach. The Society wishes to acquire objects, documents, books, photographs, diaries, and other materials relating to the history of Latah County. These are added to the collections and made available to researchers while they are preserved for future generations.

The Society is housed in the William J. McConnell Mansion, 110 South Adams, Moscow. The museum is open from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday. Visits to the museum or research library are welcomed at other times and can be arranged by calling (208) 882-1004.