
LATAH LEGACY

THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE LATAH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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THE DIARY OF HELEN KANE
LOST IN THE WOODS
THE UNCOVERED WAGON
THE MIDGET



Moscow, Main Street, 1911
Can anyone identify the occasion?

1985

Fall

\$1.50



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THE DIARY OF HELEN KANE

by LaDawn Hughett

Editor's Note: This fictional diary is based upon historical records and was the winning entry in the Historical Society's first annual high school local history essay contest. The author is a Junior at Moscow High School and has lived in Moscow eleven years. Photographs illustrating the article were chosen by LaDawn from the Society's unidentified photograph collection. In addition to having her essay published in the Legacy, LaDawn was made an honorary member of the Society and received a \$100 savings bond. Funds to sponsor this year's contest were donated by Keith Petersen. We hope the essay contest sparked an interest in local history among Latah County high school students, and we are pleased to publish this article. We believe it is representative of the type of high quality, innovative writing high school students are capable of, and hope it is just the first of many winning entries we can publish as our contest grows in the coming years. The diary begins in 1872 when Helen Kane, a young girl of 15, moves to Paradise City, and continues until 1901 when the story ends with a surprise conclusion.

August 1872--We have finally arrived in Paradise City. Just as Mr. Tomer told Papa, the land is fertile and has lots of grassland. Papa has staked his claim on 160 acres of land as specified by the government's Homestead Act of 1862.

April 1873--Mr. Neff, one of my favorite neighbors, has started a post office for Paradise City. The family went into town today and Mama said I could go and take our letters for Grandma and Grandpa to the Post Office. Mr. Neff's post office is at his home. He puts all the mail in a shoe box on a shelf and then John Denny is supposed to come once a week to pick up the mail.



Helen Kane

October 1876--Many things have happened here in Moscow since I last wrote. I say "Moscow" now because that is the new name for our small community. Mr. Neff suggested the name in honor of a good friend who lived back in Moscow, Pennsylvania.

We also have a new dentist, Dr. McCallie. Mama is going to take me in right away seein' as I haven't been to one since we moved here almost four years ago.

February 1877--It's almost Valentine's Day and my family and I have been very busy with bright paper and scissors. There's a young man, Harold Kane, who's new in town and I am just crazy about him. I think he likes me, too, at least that's what Annie said (she asked him). I've made a beautiful valentine for him but I don't think I have enough courage to send it.

June 1877--This year has been a year of terrible illness. The diptheria has come and more than half of the children have died. I haven't gotten sick yet and I pray every night to stay well.

A doctor, Mr. H. B. Blake, was persuaded to come after hearing of the terrible deaths of so many children. Annie was taken, a terrible thing for me to bear, since she was my best friend. Mama says to pray to God and everything will be all right. I'm just thankful my dear Harold was not taken, he came over this evening and it was a great comfort to be with him for a while.

May 1878--We now have a store, Moscow that is, the McGuire-McConnell store; it is a general store in the front part with machinery and wagons for sale in back of the building.

Last night we had the neighbors over to help raise a barn Papa has been wanting to build for Harold and me. It is to be on land staked out for my fiance and me as a wedding gift. My Harold is a hard worker, one who will make something of himself one day I am sure.

January 1879--Harold and I have been married for just under a year now and are doing very well. Our house is very small but cozy and Harold and I enjoy spending long evenings together in front of a flaming fire. I am expecting soon and we spend the nights thinking of names for the new one.

This is my first baby and I am scared, but Mama will be near when the time comes. I must be brave and I'm looking forward to this new addition to our sweet home.

March 1880--Just a quick note, I feel guilty for not writing, but paper is so scarce and expensive, I must use each sheet sparingly. Also, there are many responsibilities and my wonderful daughter to care for. Tomorrow I must go to the mill and get flour for this week's bread making.

January 1881--This morning our family attended Church ceremonies. We were all glad for a break in our daily routine and grateful for the feeling of spiritual renewal. After services, we came home to a good dinner that I had prepared. We ate in the dining room with my best china and it was a good time to sit down with the family and be together.

October 1883--Moscow surprises me to no end these days. It now has its own newspaper, The Moscow Mirror, as truly a reputable paper as I have ever seen. I learned of it today when I was in town shopping for some material for a new dress. I'll use the left over pieces for a dress for my daughter.



Helen Kane's baby daughter



Homestead

June 1884--I have been living in Moscow ever since I was 15 years old and the changes that have come about are most astounding!

My children go to a fine school, a two-room building with really good teachers, Mrs. R. Hodgins and Mrs. Edmundson.

Harold and I went downtown the other day to have our picture taken, the first ever for me. It was the most amazing thing to see myself all shrunken down onto a small piece of paper.

We have a bank in Moscow, a building made of brick and a drug store, first owned by Frank White but he sold it to Roland Hodgins. It's a very nice store and it sells many things; linament, vaseline, castor oil, shaving mugs, razors and it is the main source in the community for school supplies and books.

Moscow also has a couple of social clubs, the Ancient Order of United Workmen and the Knights of Pythias.

January 1885--I just sent the children off to school, all bundled up, the girls in long underwear, stockings, shoes, overshoes, bloomers, their heavy undershirts, heavy wool dresses, long coats and mittens. The boys are bundled up just as much and we all had a good laugh trying to find each other's hands and faces in our winter attire. This morning was especially cold so Harold drove them in to school, seeing as he had business in town today anyway.

August 1885--Today there was a big celebration in town because Moscow is finally connected to the outside world by a railroad. After the huge steam engine arrived, the womenfolk brought out the food they had prepared for the big potluck dinner. Everyone said my pumpkin pie was the best that they had ever tasted. I love these days when we all get together and have a chance to talk and remember the "good old times."

June 1889--I am so proud of our grand city of Moscow! A true University is to be



The McConnell-Maguire building in the 1890s; note hitching rack at left.

built here. We are the county seat for Latah County and we have a courthouse in which to do our important business. I think that when the kids are all grown and on their own, I will take some courses at the University, a good way to keep me busy and learn new things. It may be unusual, but someday I hope that I can do this, although Harold does not think it is too good an idea for a lady.

February 1892--Moscow is a thriving city now. We have another railroad, our own water system, a volunteer fire department (of which my husband is a member), another bank (The First National), and we have not only a small school but we have a high school in the making for the education of our children.

September 1893--The most terrible thing has happened to Moscow. It's been raining and the crops are utterly ruined. I fear for my family, although we are better off than many others since we have been putting up food supplies and saving ever since we got married. I am so grateful for my husband's good sense. As for others in town, it is a real trial. Banks are closed, farmers are losing their land, and the once thriving McGuire-McConnell store has failed, being just one among many to lose everything. I pray to God every night for his mercy and help for my family and our town.

November 1895--Business is still bad and I'm not sure how much longer we can go on living as well as we have been. I save and conserve every way that I can--so we will last out this terrible time of uncertainty.

June 1897--Gradually, over the last three years, Moscow has begun to recover. We refer to the last few years as the "Panic of 1893." People were out of jobs, they had no money and it had become a common practice for farmers who lost their property to rent it until they could afford to buy it back.

March 1898--On top of all our worries, the children have got a bad case of the mumps. Their poor little faces are swollen and pitiful to look at. The doctor says it should go away in four to ten days and it shouldn't be too serious unless it lasts longer than that. It's hard on us as we've already had colds and the stomach flu. I remember when I was young, I seemed to be sick a lot but as I got older I was not sick as often. If this is true for my children, they shouldn't be ill for too much longer. They are growing up so fast it is hard to believe. My two young ones are not so young any more. My oldest daughter is getting an "eye for the boys" and her little brother is getting so big and strong he can hardly be called a "little" brother any more.

July 1899--I knew that Moscow would bounce back sooner or later. It is almost back to its old self again. I suppose that when a person lives in the same town for as long as I have, watching it grow, become mature and prosper, they come to love and be proud of it. I know that I sure am.

Early summer 1901--Today has been a very dreadful day in our town (and exciting at the same time!). Good Dr. Watkins has been murdered. Bill Steffen, who lived with his mother about one mile east of Moscow, was a hateful man. He was particularly rude to people who disagreed with him. He was even mean to his own poor mother and at times it is said that he beats her. Watkins, our family doctor and a much respected man around town, met Bill just the other day and was admonishing him

to treat his mother better. Steffen felt insulted and became determined to kill not only Dr. Watkins but all others that he hated also. The following day, Steffen had a pistol when he met Dr. Watkins. Bill just aimed at and shot the poor doctor dead and then rode off in a very irritable mood. When Collins, our sheriff, got word of the murder, he formed a posse to go after Steffen. Steffen was boarded up at home when the posse found him. I was watching the shootout at a distance (with a fairly large and curious crowd), although good sense tells me that I should have been hiding. The bullets flew and after much shooting Mrs. Steffen came running out yelling "He's dead! He's dead!" The posse ran in to find Bill on the second floor with blood all around him from a fatal self-inflicted bullet wound. Well, they just dragged him out and put him in the ice wagon owned by the undertaker and drove away.

Today's excitement is just too much for a person of my age. I am feeling very tired and a bit faint so I think that I will go lie down and rest.

That evening, Helen Kane, long-time Moscow resident, peacefully passed way in her sleep.

Bibliographical Note: Background material for this article came from the following sources: Ann N. Driscoll, They Came to a Ridge (Moscow, 1970); Dora O. Fleenor, Palouse Country Yesteryears (Moscow, 1978); Elsie Nelson, Today Is Ours (Moscow, 1972); Lillian W. Otness, "Chronology of Moscow History, 1871-1970," manuscript in Latah County Historical Society Archives; Ione Adair, Latah County Historical Society oral history interview; and Clarice Moody Sampson, Latah County Historical Society oral history interview.

LOST IN THE WOODS

by Dorothy Clanton

Editor's Note: The history of the Hoodoo Mountains and the Palouse region have long been intertwined. Palouse area residents frequently worked in Hoodoo mines, and Palouse City boomed in the late 1800s as a trading center for the mining district. This fall, the Whitman and Latah County historical societies will jointly publish with the Washington State University Press a history of the Hoodoo mining region written by former Society curator Richard Waldbauer. Those interested in learning more about the Hoodoos are invited to contact the Society about details of this book. As this article points out, the Hoodoos have also been, at times, a place of mystery and tragedy.

The Hoodoo Mountains, whose very name conjures up in our minds a certain sense of mystery, has lived up to this image from 1860 and the early mining days in the area, down through all the years since. Lalia Boone¹ felt the name probably was given to the area by early miners who, for one reason or another, did not find the riches they had anticipated, and called it by the name "hoodoo" from other areas they had prospected and found disappointing. John Miller² felt the mountains derived their name from Hoodoo Gulch, the location of the first important gold discovery in Latah County in 1860. Lola Clyde felt the name came from the legendary story of the Lost Wheelbarrow Mine. Perhaps each of these was a contributing factor. But the fact remains that through the years, this dense, mountainous area has been the setting for both prospecting legends and the disappearance of several people, whose stories are shrouded with an aura of mystery and unanswered questions.

One of these concerns Allan Lamphere, a sixty-eight year old pioneer Palouse banker and businessman. On November 20, 1953, Mr. Lamphere left his home in Palouse, Washington, to drive to Moscow,

Idaho, to pick up his wife, who had been visiting their daughter, Mrs. Joseph McCown, there. Winter had already started creeping into the Palouse area, bringing with it a light covering of early snow and the clinging, misty type of fog that lends an eeriness to even familiar objects and landmarks.

His family waited for his arrival throughout the afternoon, and when he hadn't appeared by late evening, notified the Latah County Sheriff, George "Hap" Moody. For the next three days a search was made by both the family and the Sheriff's office, but their efforts were hampered by the absence of any leads, since no one had seen him.

On November 24th, they received their first clue to his whereabouts. A Moscow City patrolman, James Fyfe, received a telephone call from two men who had been hunting in the Hoodoo Mountain area east of Harvard, Idaho, on the morning of the 21st. They said that, upon reading an account of the missing man, they had recalled seeing a car answering the description of Mr. Lamphere's several miles beyond the East Fork of the Palouse River, toward the headwaters of Emerald Creek.³ They said they had seen tracks in the light snow of a man going up the road from the car, and that about two miles from the summit, the tracks had left the road and headed right, toward the headwaters of Emerald Creek.

Sheriff Moody, his Deputy, J. F. Jordan, Joe McCown (Mr. Lamphere's son-in-law), Patrolman James Fyfe, and Clark Nelson went into the area as far as the Palouse's East Fork, while a forest service crew went into the area from the Princeton Ranger Station. The two groups met and located the car, which had evidently been driven into a ditch, and had one rear tire burned down from an attempt to get it back on the road. However, nearly two

feet of snow had fallen since Saturday, the day following Mr. Lamphere's disappearance, and they could find no trace of the car's occupant. This area is some thirty miles from his intended destination, Moscow, Idaho, and in a completely opposite direction.

Following the news of the discovery of the car, several hundred searchers from Palouse, Princeton, Harvard, and Moscow joined Sheriff Moody and his group along with the forest service crew in combing the area in and around where the automobile was found. Their efforts were hampered by the deep snow and the forested, brushy terrain. Mrs. Lamphere, Allan Lamphere's wife, offered a \$1,000 reward for anyone finding her husband, which was an added incentive to many people to join in the search. During the next six days men went into the area on foot, horseback, and even snowshoes, fanning out over the whole area in a vain attempt to locate him.

On November 30th, however, the organized search was called off, although several people still searched in the area during the next few days. Then, on December 2nd, there was a new lead. Two young Genesee hunters notified Sheriff Moody that they had seen a man answering Mr. Lamphere's description walking along a forest service road on Saturday morning, November 21st (the day following his disappearance) at around 4:30 a.m. From their description, Sheriff Moody was convinced the man they had seen was indeed Mr. Lamphere. According to the hunters, the man they saw was walking slowly along the road about three miles west of the main Bovill-Clarkia highway. There was a bright moon that night, which, according to the hunters, made it possible for them to see the man clearly. Their description of his top coat, walk, and other characteristics made his identification as Mr. Lamphere fairly certain. They said the man continued walking toward the West Fork of the Potlatch River without saying anything, and without stopping at a hunter's campfire near which he passed.

The lead was, unfortunately, ten days late

in coming. Had this information come to light at the time it happened, it would have undoubtedly made a great difference in the search's outcome. However, Sheriff Moody, Joe Parker, and Joe McCown went back into the area to try again to find Mr. Lamphere. Once more, their efforts proved fruitless. During the following month, Sheriff Moody and Jones McCown (Joe's brother) went into the area often, on skis or snowshoes, or on horseback, but, as the weeks wore on, hope dwindled.

There are no words to describe the sadness and depth of mental anguish that accompanies this sort of ordeal. The loss of a loved one is a heartrending experience, and entails coming to grips, emotionally, with the adamant quality of death, with the emptiness in the part of your life that person filled, but, at least, with death there is finality. With this, and others like it, there is only anguish, coupled with highs and lows of hope, then despair, as the weeks turn to months, and then to years, as they did for the Lamphere family.

Through the next five years, hunters who found themselves in the area where Mr. Lamphere was last seen, people picking huckleberries, or fishermen were all on the lookout for any clues. Then, on November 1, 1958, Albert Olson, a retired miner, was hunting six miles west of Bovill around the foot of Beal's Butte, a mile southeast of Cougar Mountain.⁴ He stumbled on a human skull and two other bones. He called Sheriff Moody, who, with the coroner, went up and brought the bones to Moscow. Dr. R. W. Honsinger, the dentist who had made a removable bridge-work for Mr. Lamphere, confirmed the skull as that of Allan Lamphere. There are, and will always remain, however, many unanswered questions. The area where the skull and bones were located is ten miles from where the car was found, and nearly forty miles from his Moscow, Idaho, destination. What took him to the area where the car was found? Why didn't he stop at the hunter's campfire? Only the sentinel pines of the Hoodoo forest could ever tell the whole story, and they remain silent. However, at least now, for the family,

there was finality, and the marker in the Palouse Cemetery simply reads "Lost, Nov. 20, 1953."

³The Daily Idahonian, Moscow, Idaho, Nov. 24, 1953.

⁴The Palouse Republic, Palouse, Washington, Nov. 7, 1958.

NOTES

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¹From A to Z in Latah County, Idaho, Lalia Phipps Boone, 1983, page 46.

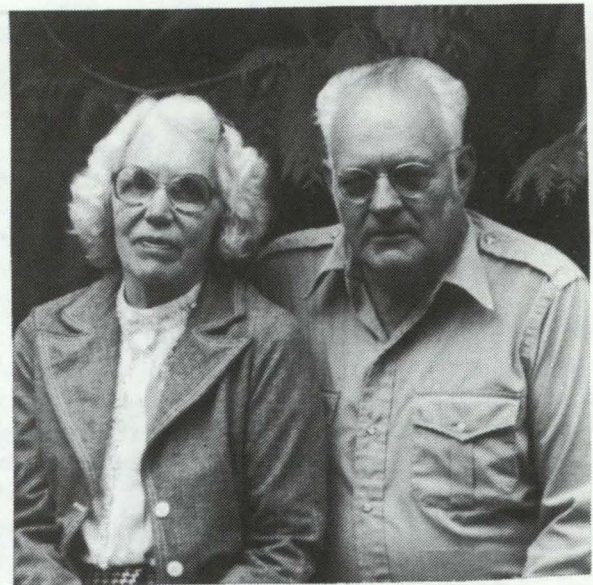
²The Trees Grew Tall, John Miller, p. 19.

DOROTHY CLANTON is a member of the Society's Publications Committee and recently stepped down as chair of that committee after many years of service.

LATAH VIGNETTE

John Talbott (1915-1985)

We were standing on the loading platform of the Potlatch mill in the summer of 1983. I had come along to help hold the photo floodlights for what was to be the last record of this magnificent old plant. The bright summer day was dimmed by the thought that soon wrecking and salvage crews would be here to dismantle the mill. Yet the gloom was dispersed by learning about the features of these buildings: the enormous wooden fire walls, mosaic floors, and huge support beams. And when my ear caught a strange musical hum on the edge of the platform, our photographer--boyish in his curiosity and patient in his explanation--described the Aeolian effect of the wind.



John and Jeanette Talbott

It was my first prolonged talk with John Talbott, and the scenario of the lumber yard, sawmill and drying sheds were appropriate for one whose career had been devoted to wood. As a recent biography observes, "John Talbott's mission in life has been to reduce waste. Whether it occurs in forest products, energy, living space or human life, he crusades against it; and he is often victorious."

to attend the University of Idaho. After finishing two years of preparatory school they were married September 18, 1900.

John's father and mother, Clarence and Eunice Westall Talbott, lived and met in western Washington. In 1898 they came by wagon to Moscow with Eunice's father, N. B. Westall, walking most of the way,

Several factors prevented their graduating from the University. In March 1903 the family which now included a 22-month-old son moved to the Nez Perce prairie near Craigmont, Idaho. Having purchased school land in 1904 Clarence began building his own house which later sheltered

at various times grandparents, friends, and numerous cousins. John was born January 15, 1915, the next to the youngest of seven children. One of his school-mates was the Nez Perce artist-musician Joe Daniels. Another who lived near and often played at the Talbott's home was Isaac Hill whose Indian name was "Its-cau." One time he asked John's mother to make his shining black hair into curls like those he admired on John's blonde head.

The family enjoyed building and hand work. His father and grandfather had home workshops with tools for wood and metal, a cousin designed and constructed houses, and his mother fashioned toys out of household scraps. Clarence supplemented the farm income by building barns, houses and bridges in the Nez Perce prairie area. He also built the Culdesac grade to Chesley which is still there, though now improved.

From his mother John learned to read by the age of four, and the next year he entered the one-room Hart school. Like other rural families, the Talbotts moved to town, in this case Moscow, for better schooling for the children. Advancing rapidly in his studies, John entered the University of Idaho in 1931 when he was only 16. Impatient with the slow pace of his classes he temporarily dropped his formal studies, leaving in 1938 to marry Jeanette Fleener whose own family history is rooted in the Palouse.

In the following years he developed and refined many skills working as painter, refrigeration mechanic, photographer, millwright, darkroom technician, and patent draftsman. During World War II he worked as surveyor on the Trans-Isthmian Highway in Panama, as a carpenter building tract houses in Spokane, and as an aircraft instrument repairman at the Spokane Army Air Depot at Galena, now Fairchild.

Although his career was involved in the mechanical world, one incident reveals that John's priorities remained in the living one. During World War II, he had

a job of surveying lots and setting stakes to mark where the bulldozer and backhoe crew should excavate for the basements of tract houses. He had just brought his stakes, rod, level, and string lines to the field and was setting up his work when suddenly from nearby under his feet a meadowlark sprang up and flew away. Close examination revealed a nest with four eggs. John quietly picked up his equipment and tiptoed on down to the next lot where he continued working. A few days later the excavator arrived at the lot and asked, "Why no stakes?" "Well, there seems to be some kind of a mix-up about the ownership of that lot, but when we get the title cleared I'll go back and stake it out," was John's answer. After a week or so of observation, the nest was empty and construction resumed as planned.

After the war his interest in construction continued in building grain elevators and later designing and building cabinets and houses with his brothers. In 1955 John began working as a carpenter for the Wood Technology Section at Washington State University. George Marra, then director, recognized his talent for problem solving, his scientific inquisitiveness, and his high standards of craftsmanship and encouraged John to continue working toward a degree. In 1956 he began taking classes that eventually led to a B.S. in chemistry in 1960. He completed his formal education in 1977 with a master's degree in wood technology at the University of Idaho.

Interest in wood conservation led him to designing and constructing experimental houses. In describing an innovative wood floor system John remarked, "A house is one whole, interrelated system; I can't see just a heating, lighting or ventilating system. . . . We can build a house with half as much wood; we can build more and better houses with fewer trees." Following his conservation goals, John developed a glazing system to eliminate window frames, also eliminating air leaks and the need for repainting and maintenance. He also challenged the concept

that wood should not be in contact with the ground. He designed an experimental garage in Pullman and houses in Moscow, Cherrylane, and Ohio that used preserved wood as the foundation.

In his professional field his work included improved particleboard and resins, innovative floor systems, wood foundation systems, frameless glazing systems, space saving cabinetry, and electrically aligned particleboard. Occasionally someone will still recall John's dramatic comparison of capacity of cabinets. Using two with the same outside dimensions he filled his efficient design with bags of puffed rice. Then before the audience's astonished eyes he would remove the bags and attempt to put them in the conventional cabinet ending with the cabinet stuffed full and a great overflow of puffed rice bags heaped on the floor.

Although John retired from WSU in 1977, he continued his research work and designing houses. He also designed efficient food dryers and kitchen cabinets. He took flying lessons, was a part owner of a plane, and enjoyed nature photography.

Various people who knew John have different perspectives. He was an active member and President of the Pioneer Association, and served as its representative on our Board of Trustees. As a lover of nature who spent hours watching clouds during his boyhood, John helped to preserve Skyline Drive as a state park. With his good friend Tom Wahl and other members of the Skyline Drive Associates, he spent hours helping to promote, develop, and maintain the park. He also worked on the ski facilities, helping build a warming shack and platform for the towline motor.

For many of us connected with the Latah County Historical Society, he was a conscientious and good-natured board member and willing to help with many tasks. He photo-documented the Potlatch mill and a pioneer cabin, and then made us a copy stand for our camera. He was our consultant on agricultural technology, cameras and photography, an active volunteer, and

a friend whom we would have hoped to have known much longer. Because he was so modest about his own achievements, many of us were surprised to learn of his numerous contributions to wood technology and leadership in that field. However, his exhibit of wildflower photographs at the McConnell Mansion a few years ago expressed the unique combination of artistic eye, craftsmanship, and wonder that characterizes the essence of the true scientist. The preservation of the meadowlark nest and the photographs of wildflowers are a fine complement to his fascination with design and carpentry. Above all is the memory of a man with great patience, curiosity, and a love for his fellow man.

Information for this vignette was taken from the following:

Karen Hardin Elwood, John W. Talbott, A Biography and Bibliography, College of Engineering Circular 54. Pullman: Washington State University, June 1979.

C. E. Talbott, Memories of Clarence Elzy Talbott, 1875-1900.

Both books are in the Latah County Historical Society's library.

Also, thanks to Jeanette and Loyal Talbott who supplied additional information and anecdotes.

* * * *

While this issue was in progress, the society received word of the death of Mrs. Leora Stillinger. An appropriate tribute will appear in the next issue.

THE UNCOVERED WAGON

by Alma Lauder Keeling

PART 8 (Chap. 26-28)

CHAPTER 26: THE WILLIAM C. LAUDER FAMILY

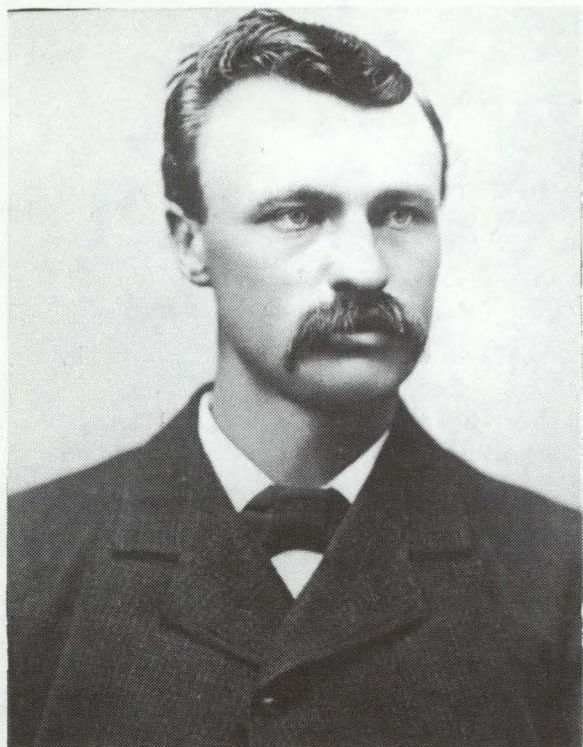
I have already told of the tragic dynamite death of my Father's older brother, Will, as he was blasting out rock for the new Methodist Church in Moscow. But I was interested in finding a brief biographical sketch of him in "History of North Idaho," published in 1903, the year of his death. It reads:

WILLIAM C. LAUDER

The representative and well known citizen whose name is at the head of this article is one of Moscow's leading builders and stone contractors, being a man of great experience and skill in this line of business, while personally he is marked by a public spirit and a progressiveness that have done much for the up-building of Latah County.

The birth of William C. Lauder occurred in Hornellsville, Steuben County, New York, on November 11, 1855, he being the son of William and Mary Lauder. The father was a lumberman and farmer. When the son had arrived at the age of fourteen he went with his father to Reidsville, North Carolina, and there assisted the latter in the culture and manufacture of tobacco, remaining engrossed in this industry until 1881. Then he came west and went to work for the O. R. and N. Company as superintendent on the grade, remaining in that capacity until 1883. Two years later he superintended the putting in of the entire road from Old Mission to Wardner, Idaho, the same being the first railroad in that section and made for the Coeur d'Alene Railway and Navigation Company. From this he retired to Colfax, Washington, and engaged in stone contracting and the manufacture of brick until 1892, which is the date of his advent to Moscow. He does a general contract and building business, and is also on the street commission of Moscow. While in North Carolina Mr. Lauder served in the United States revenue force. The marriage of Mr. Lauder and Miss Emma Briggs, a native of Pennsylvania, was solemnized on December 25, 1876. They have one child, Margaret, now attending the University of Idaho. Mr. Lauder is an enterprising and industrious man, with excellent executive force and marked by keen foresight and good judgment, while his business success stamps him a wise and capable man, and he is entitled to and freely received the respect and confidence of his fellows.

Uncle Will's only daughter, my cousin, Margaret Eleanor (Nellie to her family), was only a teenager when her Father left them. She later was graduated from the University of Idaho with two degrees, one in education, and one in music. Lacking now a man in the family to whom they could turn for advice and counsel, her Uncle Wylie became the right-hand man for his brother's widow and her daughter. It meant as much to him to help in this capacity as it did to them to have a reliable man to lean upon.



William Cameron Lauder, 1855-1903

Dad's older brother. Brought Dad to Colfax to help build the railroad line to Moscow. William supervised this section of the construction for the RR.



Margaret Lauder Gerlough, 1884-1971

Only child of William and Emma Lauder. She was ten years older than I, and always my "big sister." She was a University of Idaho graduate.

After her graduation from the University, Margaret taught school for several years at Ellensburg and elsewhere before she became my own high school English teacher in Moscow High School. Perhaps because we were related and she wanted to show no favoritism, she leaned a little more heavily in the other direction! I always thought of her as an "old maid," slightly on the stern order! I mentioned this to my Mother once and her eyes twinkled, "How old do you think she is?"

"Oh, I don't know. Thirty, I guess--or more."
"And how old are you?" Mother continued.

"You ought to know!" I retorted, slightly indignant. I wondered if her mind was failing already!

"Well, she is just ten years older than you, so you can figure that out!" She was only twenty-four at the time. But to a fourteen-year-old she was an old, old maid!

Margaret was an accomplished musician, having taken her piano and organ work and received her music degree under Professor Cogswell, the university's first head of the Music Department. I well remember the small white cottage on the campus, near the Spanish-American War Memorial, which was the headquarters for instrumental and vocal music at the time. Margaret was at one time the paid organist at the Episcopal Church in Moscow for a number of years.

In summertime during school vacation, I took piano lessons from her on the sweet-toned old black piano which my Father had bought for Mother after scarlet fever had wiped out her little family in 1891. I did learn the hard way to play "Red Wing," a popular song of that day, and "Life's Railway to Heaven," besides a few simple hymns. But it was evident that I could not take lessons in the summer and drop practicing all winter and still turn out to be a pianist! Not being at all strong, I could not keep up my school work, about which I was super-conscientious, and my music lessons at the same time. So one of them had to go. Dad had a fine bass voice and Mother a sweet soprano, so it was a real regret to me that I did not learn to play the piano for them to sing by. But Mother had done the same thing before me! Her talents turned more to painting, and I now prize the big gold-framed oil paintings and the watercolors which I grew up with all my life, most of which were painted before I was born.

Since I have no heirs, I would gladly leave these to the Pioneer Museum, since they were painted by one of Moscow's earliest pioneers, but I see little uncluttered wall space big enough for them there. Perhaps when our dream of an annex to the Governor's Mansion materializes, there will be room for them. These paintings were done under the direction of a very fine artist herself, Mrs. J. C. Elder, wife of one of Moscow's early attorneys. They are not "daubs" like much so-called modern art, but beautiful realistic scenery, such as Mt. Hood at sunset in all its glowing colors. They say that "hope springs eternal in the human breast,," and I guess that is so, since I have never yet given up hope that someday I, too, may be able to paint--pictures, that is, not walls and woodwork, as I do now in my rental setup! I even hope yet to be able to play the piano for my own amusement! Daddy once said he guessed I would just have to wait until I got to heaven and play on a harp! Fine! I love harp music!

My recently deceased cousin, Margaret Lauder, daughter of my Father's only brother, Will Lauder, married another of my high school teachers, Ludwig Sherman Gerlough, who did his best to teach my unmathematical mind freshman algebra. The results were minimal although I did manage somehow to pass. I teased him about his non-success in this once when I was visiting them in their beautiful San Francisco home overlooking the Golden Gate. He grinned and said, "Maybe it was the teacher." I am sure I don't know. I do know that mathematics was not his line either as he was an ardent history fan. Soon after that year of teaching in Moscow High School, he was honored by being one of the first Rhodes Scholars to be sent to Oxford by the University of Idaho. From then until his retirement many years later he was a teacher of history in San Francisco's oldest high school. Now he was no longer "teacher" to me, but "cousin." The Gerloughs have two wonderful children, Dan and Eleanor, with all kinds of degrees of their own--fine folks of whom their parents have every reason to be proud. I am sure Uncle Will would have been had he lived to see it.

My own Father of the "Lauder Clan" lost three of his five children in early childhood before they had a chance to prove themselves. Dad and Mother had every reason to be proud of their wonderful son, Ralph, but alas, his enterprising career as a stockman on an Oregon Homestead was cut short when he was drowned at twenty-four, and only I was left! Dad certainly had nothing to be proud of in his youngest, but, would you believe it?--he was! Not for any scholastic attainments on my part, for I was never able to scrape up enough credits to earn that coveted sheepskin! For many years when I attended Commencement at the University, I would feel my heart skipping a beat when that "War March of the Priests" would strike up. Next to not having a family, my greatest disappointment in life was not to be able to wear that cap and gown! But what Daddy was proud of in his only child was that such abilities as she had were totally dedicated to the work of the Christian ministry. To him that was important work!

On my frequent visits home that first year after my marriage to a minister, Dad often sat in the car with me when we went to the post office to get our mail, and just talked. He was especially interested in the seven young people's Christian Endeavor Societies I had organized in our three-point field in the Kamiah Valley. And often during my years there, until his unexpected death, when I would tear open a letter from home, out would drop a ten dollar bill! I remember once when I had been telling him about what I was doing, or trying to do, with these youngsters, as we sat in the car, he reached over and patted my hand in his conservative Scotch way and said, "Honey, your old Daddy is proud of you!" That commendation from one I loved so dearly meant more to me than if he had handed me a check for \$100 to ease the financial burden weighing so heavily upon us then. But regardless of whether he had anything to be proud of in his only child, she had every reason in the world to be proud of him! I still say he was the best Father in the world, and I should know! I lived with him a long time!

CHAPTER 27: WILL, ABE, AND MARY OF THE UNCOVERED WAGON

Besides Mary, there were two other children in that trek from Ogden to Walla Walla whom I never knew. Will was 14 and Abe 10 in 1871. According to the grave stones in our cemetery lot, Will died when only 27 and Abe at 28, long before I was born. All I know about sister Mary is that she married a man named George Pomeroy and died of what was then called "consumption" or "the Great White Plague." (Why "white," I never could figure out, unless so much hemorrhaging from the lungs left them deathly pale in their last days of life.) TB in those days was as dreaded as cancer is now, and usually as fatal. There were no Red Cross mobile units waiting on the street corner then, inviting you--even urging you--to come in and get a chest X-ray! If x-ray machines were in use elsewhere in big hospitals of the East, their cost was prohibitive for any small-town doctor. So tuberculosis could have eaten one lung away and been engaged on the other before its presence was suspected. When the diagnosis was sure, there was nothing that could be done about it anyway except put the patient to bed and "stuff" him with food! If his life was prolonged for a while, it was only temporary. So Mother's beautiful sister, Mary, had to leave this world the hard way at only 25. Bert Pomeroy, whom my folks often mentioned, must have been her son, -- my cousin, I have an interesting picture of him in Mother's photo album, a typical dude--derby, cane, leather gloves in hand, and a collar high enough to choke him!

I cannot say if young Abraham (named for Abraham Lincoln) was ever married, as I don't remember my Mother ever talking about him. All I know about Will is that he had two sons--my own first cousins, Charley and Francis. The first time I ever met Charley was when I was a very young child, probably just after we moved into the brick house when I was five. The one definite thing I do remember about that visit was when we were all sitting in the big kitchen and Charley tried to break through his little cousin's shell by urging her to come across the room and sit on his lap. No sale! I was not in the habit of sitting on strange men's laps, cousin or no! The next time I saw Charley was when I was in high school, when he came to visit us from wherever he lived. I took his picture with his arm around his "Aunt Minnie" out on the sidewalk in front of the cement block house where I now live. Mother looked like she was really enjoying it! He was a handsome man--dark-haired and brown-eyed like the Taylors.

Francis, Charley's younger brother, I should have known much better. But I never really got acquainted with him the many times I saw him at Dad's uptown store and office--where the lovely Walgreen Pharmacy now is. Francis was not the outgoing per-

sonality that his brother was, and I doubt if he said more than a few words to me the many times I saw him there. The main attraction which brought him to Moscow from his home in Orofino was my Father's bookkeeper, Miss Edith Sparks. I guess that at 35 Francis had decided it was time he was settling down with a wife. So Edith was about to become my cousin by marriage when a tragic accident cut that romance short. Knowing Francis as I did--or didn't--I used to wonder how he ever got up the nerve to ask any woman to marry him! He was just plain shy around women. But now, having made the plunge, he was preparing to build a home for his bride and move out of his bachelor cabin. He was blasting out stumps on his ranch in Orofino, when, climbing through a barbed wire fence with some sticks of dynamite in his overalls pockets, the sticks caught on the fence and exploded, blowing him to little bits! The neighbors, who heard the terrific blast and saw the explosion, found, yards away, only a bit of scalp with its black hair and one foot in a boot that they thought was worth picking up to bury! A stone in our cemetery lot here in Moscow marks his grave.

Edith, several years later, married another bachelor, L. G. Petersen now deceased--our long-time Republican Latah County Probate Judge. At this writing she is along in her 90's and living with her widowed sister, Laura, in San Diego. Laura was trained as a nurse here in Moscow under Dr. Gritman. Some years ago their younger brother, Grant Sparks (recently deceased), came to Moscow and carted Edith off to San Diego almost against her will. Moscow was "home" to her! I know that Edith never forgot the tragedy that ended her "about to become" my cousin-by-marriage.

CHAPTER 28: MOTHER'S MEMORY BOX

Although my Mother was a woman of deep feeling, sentimental at heart, she never poured this out on her family, especially her children. But an occasional offhand remark revealed much to me about past experiences which she seldom mentioned.

My Dad once told me that when Mother had begun to recover from her own spell of scarlet fever, following the deaths of her two children (only 20 days apart), she walked every day from our home on Van Buren to that cemetery on the hill, several miles away. And why? I knew without being told--to weep beside two little graves. She was first, last, and all the time a Mother.

Once when quietly speaking of those early days, she remarked almost causally, "Perhaps I had Ralph and you too soon after being so ill myself, but I thought I'd die if I could not hold a baby in my arms again.!" That little remark gave me an insight into the agony of those empty arms which I had only half-guessed before.

A few years ago when I was alone on that "family day--Thanksgiving" and was perhaps feeling a bit pensive, I was rummaging through some stored-away things in the cabinets beside the fireplace in the den. Here was a box I had no doubt seen before, but had long since forgotten. Tied with a string, on the lid of the box were the words in Mother's own handwriting: "Baby clothes." I took it to my cozy little studio apartment and looked at its contents. Here was a tiny, long baby dress about big enough for my china doll; and lovely little embroidered wool shawls; baby shirts, long wool skirts, and a pair of slightly scuffed tiny red leather shoes, which I knew must have been mine. My eyes filled with tears at the thought that these little shoes and baby clothes had been so precious to my Mother that she had carefully preserved them all these years! In the box of clothes was another small, velvet-covered box with a silver clasp, in which was a soft baby hairbrush, and paper patterns of baby hands and feet, all carefully marked: "Ray, six weeks old; Irma, six days old; Ralph, seven

weeks old; Alma, three weeks old." And with them a clipping from our local paper, The Star (which later combined with another weekly, The Mirror, to become The Daily Star-Mirror of my growing-up days.) Dated May, 1891, under 'Obituary," I read these words: "Lauder, at Moscow, Idaho: April 29, Ray Edwin, aged 2 years, 2 months, and 20 days; also on May 19, Irma May, aged 3 months and 13 days; both the beloved children of Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Lauder of this city. 'For of such is the kingdom of heaven.'"

But when I opened the little silver-colored round box beside the baby brush, the tears flowed. Here, wrapped in plain bits of paper tied with thread were wisps of baby hair, all individually marked: "Ray, 18 months"; "Irma's baby hair"--such a tiny wisp! "Ralph's baby hair, 18 months"; "Alma, a few days old"--another tiny wisp.

Mother once told me that little Ray was one of those rare children who never cried. She said he would just look at her with big tears rolling down his cheeks, but there were no tantrums or crying out loud. The sight of those silent tears was very unnerving to a mother!

Mother also told me how, when they would walk down town together and would meet some woman of her acquaintance on the street, he would tip his little cap--as all "gentlemen" did in those days when meeting a lady. (Now they don't wear any hat to tip!) He was only two years old.

But I think the little story about his asking her to sing "Old Black Joe" was one that moved me the most. When Ray was a baby that was a very popular song, and he loved it. She said he would often climb up into her lap and say, "Mama, sing Old Black Joe for me!" It was years before she could hear that song without her heart turning over!

I am sure that as deeply as any woman could who had never held a child of her own in her arms, or experienced such a loss, I entered that moment into the agony of my Mother's empty arms and understood a little better her semi-casual remark, "I thought I'd die if I couldn't hold a baby in my arms again!" (No apologies to Women's Lib. Some women are born mothers; others, alas, are not! But there are still many women in the world who feel that being a good home-maker, wife, and mother is the highest calling any woman can have!)

I shall never forget that lonely Thanksgiving Day when I seemed at least partially to understand for the first time my Mother's great loss, and cried over her little box of "precious memories."

MOSCOW, IDAHO, IN 1910

Population, 3,670 Latah County popula-
tion, 18,818 U of I enrollment, 302

GOODS AND SERVICES

(Source: R. L. Polk Business
Directory of Idaho, 1910-11)

General

City-owned water works
Volunteer fire department
Free public library
3 public school buildings
Electric light and power plant
Telephone service
3 railway lines
2 weekly newspapers
2 hospitals
University of Idaho
Parochial school
Business college

Professional services

14 lawyers
12 physicians
2 osteopaths
3 dentists
2 veterinarians
3 music teachers

Retail sales outlets

5 confectionaries
4 groceries
3 meat markets
2 bakeries
3 dairies
3 general stores
1 dry goods store
1 second hand store
4 drug stores
2 men's clothing stores
1 "ladies furnishings" store
2 millinery shops
2 jewelry stores
4 lumber yards
2 farm implement dealers
3 feed stores
2 harness shops
1 book store
1 bicycle shop
1 florist
1 piano store

1 paint store
1 automobile dealer

Services

3 banks
13 real estate agents
3 insurance agencies
2 abstract offices
1 collection agency
1 mining broker
4 grain dealers
4 hotels
1 rooming house
3 restaurants
5 barbers
4 dressmakers
2 tailors
2 shoemakers
1 laundry
2 theaters
1 billiard parlor
2 photographers
1 undertaker
1 monument works
2 draymen
4 construction contractors
3 plumbers
2 painters
2 electricians
1 carpenter
1 machine shop
2 blacksmiths
2 livery stables
1 horse dealer
1 well driller
4 fruit growers

Manufacturing

2 brick yards
1 foundry
1 harvester equipment shop

Miscellaneous

1 flour mill

THE MIDGET

by Jean Cummings Rudolph

True happiness in those Depression days in Moscow was having a nickel to spend at the Midget, and a penny would buy three or four wonderful things. On the front porch of a small wooden house, a glass case displayed salve for a child's aching sweet tooth such as jawbreakers, red and black licorice whips, gummy things in poisonous colors, wax figures filled with sticky liquid, and teepee-shaped creams covered with chocolate. If you were lucky enough to get one of these with a pink center instead of the usual white, you got a free one! That was heaven, and you could make it last the better part of an hour by taking very small bites, maybe just licking it, and savoring that melting sweetness as long as possible.

Most often I went to that magic place clutching a single Lincoln penny. Pennies were hard to come by and a whole nickel rare good fortune. I'm afraid my cash wasn't always acquired honestly. If mother left her purse open and there were pennies visible, who could resist the temptation? I swear I never swiped any nickels though, and I would hate to admit that my bossy, pestering older brother was right when he claimed the Midget got my Sunday School collection money.

It was handy though--right across Third Street from the Methodist Church, toward town, in what is now the Marketime parking lot. And close to the schools as well.

I wonder now if that "old" (everyone over 20 looked old then) couple made a living from those single sweaty pennies? Was there another means of support? No one can tell me the name of the owner now. Anyone who grew up in Moscow in the '30s who doesn't remember the Midget must have had unlimited candy at home. The rest of us started salivating when we thought of the delightful goodies that probably rotted our little teeth.

In summer we could really splurge because nearly everyone had cherry trees in their yards. We skinned up with a lard bucket and brought it down brimming with Bings or Royal Annes which we could sell for a nickel a bucket. There were hazards too--nuns with brooms chasing us away from the trees that grew behind the Convent wall. The smallest children had an advantage; you had to be light to reach the ripest ones on the end of the branch.

Then looking over the Midget case with five cents to spend was a feeling equal to inheriting a million dollars today. Prices were three for a penny, four for a penny, or two long-lasting jawbreakers that could stretch the bliss for hours and still leave you with four cents.

I wish I could recapture the feelings of wealth, delicious anticipation, and simple happiness we felt as children making choices at the Midget.

BOOK REVIEWS

Idaho's Vigilantes. Joyce Lindstrom, Ed. Moscow, Id., University Press of Idaho. 1984. 103 p. Illustrated. \$7.95.

The writer, Joyce Lindstrom, has taken stories from McConnell's Early History of Idaho and James Reynolds' newspaper accounts from the Idaho Tri-Weekly Statesman. The stories are about the criminal activity that occurred in the period of 1860 through 1865 in Lewiston, Idaho, Virginia City, Montana, and Southwestern Idaho, mainly in the Payette Valley, Boise Basin, and Boise City area. Vigilante committees were formed by citizen groups when the law enforcement proved to be faulty and particularly so when the perpetrators of the lawless gangs were in fact led by none other than elected sheriffs. Dave Updyke of Boise City and Henry Plummer of Virginia City, Montana, were two examples. Both met their demise when caught in unlawful acts by the vigilantes and tried and executed. McConnell's ranch was plagued by horse thieves who made regular raids on his stock. Law enforcement was not productive in stopping the thievery and finally, in desperation, McConnell called a meeting of Payette Valley farmers and formed a vigilante committee. McConnell was chosen as leader. In Boise city at the same time a group was also formed, with leaders Reynolds, Hyde, and McKee. Both groups began taking action. First the Bogus Gold Dust Operators were rounded up and given 48 hours to leave the country--which they gladly did. Then the various gangs were also informed of the same sentence. The famous Washoe gang was one of the most troublesome gangs that was included in the roundup. Dave Updyke and his assistant Jake Dixon were caught in a criminal act and both were tried and hanged. Their bodies were left hanging in plain sight with signs attached telling of their unsavory deeds and warning all other criminals to beware of the Vigilantes.

A general migration immediately took place as most of the remaining undesirable

element took the hint and left, some on foot, some by stage, and some on horseback. Peace and tranquility returned to the Boise Basin, Payette Valley, and Boise City. McConnell received notice that he had been appointed deputy US Marshall which he accepted. He resigned from the Payette Vigilante committee. He left for Boise City to assume his duties which now only consisted of mop up work as all the major work had been done by the vigilantes. This was early in 1865. Later in the year he resigned his commission and left Idaho. This is another story.

Two stories about the capture and execution of Dave Updyke, one by McConnell and one by James Reynolds, tell somewhat different information. It is interesting that two people who are considered authorities on this subject should report different stories. It leaves the reader with a question as to which story should be accepted as the true and correct one. McConnell's report will have to be read from his book, History of Early Idaho.

I am happy to recommend Joyce Lindstrom's volume on stories from early Idaho. People who are interested in such reading will appreciate having such a collection available in one publication.

--Ed Burke

ED BURKE retired from administrative duties with the Dept. of Agronomy at WSU. He has been a sometime contributor to the Latah Legacy, and is currently writing a book about Governor William B. McConnell.

ROB MOORE, author of the next review, is the editor of Palouse Journal and is a freelance writer. With Sam Schrage he began the Latah County Historical Society's oral history project in 1973 and he has written a play, Homestead Act, based upon that collection.

Idaho Folklife: Homesteads to Headstones. Louie W. Attebery, ed. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1985. 237 p. \$19.95. Paper. Available locally from Bookpeople of Moscow.

Idaho Folklife isn't a book you'd pick up for easy bedtime reading. Much of the material it contains is daunting for the browser. The authors of the individual pieces are painstaking scholars, historians, and folklorists who are careful not to rely on conjecture but to base their conclusions on research in the factual record. For a "buff" like myself, some of the articles are too specialized to be of real interest, but for the serious student of Idaho history and folklife, the book is an absolute necessity.

Edited by Louie W. Attebery, Idaho Folklife is organized into five sections, each of them titled with a "Folklife and . . ." heading: Folklife and Regionalism, Group Identity, Individual Style, Change, and Folk History. Each of these sections has a flavor and focus of its own; some sections are, to me, much more interesting and readable than others. Everybody's tastes differ, but I find the first section, Folklife and Regionalism, the most difficult. The opening article (after Attebery's introduction), "Hay Derricks of the Great Basin" (Austin Fife and James Fife), offers more than everything you wanted to know about hay derricks but were unsure how to ask. Greatly detailed descriptions of various types of hay derricks are categorized by the region in which they are found; the primary problem with the information is I can't imagine having a use for it. The same criticism (an idiosyncratic one, I'll admit) holds true for the next article, "A Lexical Survey of the Snake River Region" (Joan Hall): while the regional usage of "shivaree" versus "belling" gives a peek at nifty variances in colloquial speech, the counting and charting of their usages just ain't my cup of tea, so to speak. For the non-specialist reader, the book could have been organized more invitingly: don't hit us with the tough calculations and academic matter before we're softened up a bit with the stories.

And as far as stories go, there's some doozies in here, and not just "stories" in the sense of tall tales, but also stories of communities of people. The second section, Folklife and Group Identity, offers fine examples of the happy marriage between historical research and popular interest. The first article, "The Paradox of Mormon Folklore" (William Wilson), leads from definitions of Mormon folklore to examples of it, then on to some pretty good Mormon jokes you can tell at your next stake meeting. The next article, "New Sweden Pioneer Days" (Hal Cannon), traces the history of this community and its central celebration, then describes the current enactment of it. Cannon's writing offers historical analysis and interpretation in a graceful, amalgamated style; the emotional content of the event seems well within his grasp. "Many of the older people seem to be having the most fun as they hurry to set up their chairs in the shade on the edge of the activity," he writes. "These people know what this affair is all about, and they are totally animated in earnest reunion with old acquaintances. The young people generally mill around looking more concerned with the long wait for dinner than anything else." As in all good writing, acute observation is coupled with the writer's definite sense of something that needs saying. Cannon's conclusion is as clear and exciting a definition of "folk arts" and their importance as you're likely to read: talking about the New Sweden residents who play music and visit and cook covered dishes for the community meal, he writes: "Every ethnic group has its artists. The ethnic artist bases creation on the ingredients of tradition. And every artistic creation is a pioneering experience."

These same qualities make good reading of other articles in this section, notably "Orofino Lumberjack Days" (Charlene James-Duguid) and "Basque Celebrations in Eastern Oregon and Boise" (Sarah Munro). Both are well written and contain scads of great details about their respective fests, but lack some of the stylistic grace of "New Sweden."

The third section, *Folklife and Individual Style*, carries this sense of informed interest forward, with an increased focus on how individuals transmit and adopt folk traditions. Particularly interesting in this context are "Retention and Change in the Singing Tradition of a Northern Idaho Family" (Polly Stewart) and "Len Henry: North Idaho Munchausen" (Jan Brunvand). Both articles contain extensive bits of folk narrative (songs in the first instance, and tall tales in the second) interspersed with an interpretational framework. For the Latah County reader, both pieces also offer the additional interest of a more local setting: the Showalter/Bundy family is a pioneer Latah/Nez Perce County clan, and Len Henry stories, although primarily set in or near Lapwai, have also become part of the oral history record up in the Palouse. Either of those articles can be read just to enjoy the snippets of story and song they contain, or to try to understand them in the overall context of folklore studies.

The penultimate section, *Folklife and Change*, also contains an article of particular interest to local history buffs: "Medical Care in Latah County, 1870-1930" (Keith Petersen) uses primarily oral records to portray the health practices of Latah County (and, by implication, concurrent Western) pioneers. By this technique, far more than purely medical information is transmitted: the extensive use of direct quotes from early county residents paints a vivid and complex picture of the times they lived in, times of infant and child death, of influenza decimating whole communities, and of curious cures, both effective and useless. The focus on health practice acts as a method by which a slice can be taken from the whole community pie, a slice which can be examined and tasted to get an idea of the entire pie. I have to confess a bias towards these voices, though; I know some of these people, I can hear them speaking. Other articles in this section don't speak with as eloquent a voice, but they also have much to offer. While some might find "Motorcycles, Guitars, and Bucking Broncs: Twentieth-Century Gravestones in

Southeastern Idaho" (Carol Edison) surprising in the modernity of its subject, the stories told by the stones themselves are worthy of notice, and Edison's analysis puts the pictured stones in context.

The articles in the final section, *Folklife and Folk History*, attempt to bridge the gap between what is commonly perceived as "history" and what is usually considered "folklore." Both "The Story of Molly B'Dam" (Dennis Shaw) and "The Narrative of 'Chief Bigfoot'" (J. Sanford Rikoon) place well-selected folk tales in the context of the culture which produced them, as well as drawing intriguing conclusions about how folk tales are generated and maintained in a community. The appendix to Rikoon's article, which contains the complete text of "The Bigfooted Fiend" as printed in the Idaho Triweekly Statesman in 1878, is also a fascinating document for what it says about the culture that produced it and (we assume) believed it to be true. This theme of the re-writing of history is carried even further by "Folklore in Regional Literature: Carol Brink's Buffalo Coat" (Mary Reed), an examination of the relationship between Brink's novel and the historical events which triggered it. Whether or not you are familiar with Brink's writings, this exploration of the zone between fiction and history, of how a writer transforms the materials in his or her memory and imagination, is well worth reading.

Taken as a whole, Idaho Folklife definitely offers something for everybody. You might not be intrigued by all its articles, but if you have even a smidgen of historical curiosity, you're bound to be enlightened and entertained by at least some of its contents. The large format and plentiful illustrations make for increased appreciation and interest. With a good bibliography of Idaho folk life writings at the end of the book, Idaho Folklife will surely earn a place of honor in any Western historian's reference library.

--Rob Moore

Pioneer Jews: A New Life in the Far West. Harriet and Fred Rochlin. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1984. 243 p. Illustrated. Hardcover. \$17.95.

Pioneer Jews: A New Life in the Far West is not a study that will endure for the subject of Jews in the West. Harriet and Fred Rochlin recognize the need to describe and understand Jewish life in the American West, but they do not fulfill it.

The Rochlins state their purpose and define their time and space parameters in the introduction:

Committed to tracing the western Jewish pioneer experience to its roots, we decided to begin our study with the entry of the first Europeans--among them secret Jews--in the late sixteenth century and to end it in 1912, the year the last two western territories were granted statehood. As for geographical perimeters, we opted to cover the Far West--from the Rockies to the Pacific--plus west Texas and the Black Hills of South Dakota, all of which developed simultaneously. (p. ix)

This is a tall order. A great deal more work needs to be done locally before such a synthesis can be undertaken. It would work only if there were an overall perspective capable of containing the tremendous diversity. Such a perspective might reside in the concept of Jewish identity, both religious and ethnic. The Rochlins do not preface their work with a serious discussion of Jewish identity; they only allude to it:

Other questions arose, among them, who is a Jew? The offspring of Jewish parents or, at least, of a Jewish mother is the response according to traditional Jewish law. To record a full range of Jewish experience on the pluralistic western frontier, we decided to include as well the offspring of a Jewish father and a non-Jewish mother, and those pioneers who thought of themselves or who were thought of by others as wholly or partially Jewish. (p. ix)

This definition regrettably serves only as a large and crude net with which to capture notable individuals and claim them as Jews. Its inclusive quality could have been used to explore and understand the conflicts resulting from Jewish identity and mixed identity on the frontier.

Furthermore, the Rochlins' definition is not reasonable. The fact that someone is thought of as a Jew does not make him or her a Jew. The criterion "those pioneers who thought of themselves . . . as . . . Jewish" is a sound one, but we are offered little evidence as to whether many of the individuals portrayed in the book did think of themselves as Jews (certainly a difficult thing to ascertain).

This book "committed to tracing the western Jewish pioneer experience to its roots" reads as a series of thumbnail biographies of the major figures of the period. I am disappointed. Any connection to Jewish ancestry seems to be rationale enough for including an individual--if he or she is an important individual. His/her practice of Judaism or relationship to a Jewish community is rarely discussed. A history of what some Jews did, no matter how influential they were, is not a Jewish history.

We need to know what happened to Jewish tradition among the Jews who settled in the West, what became of their faith and their ethnicity, how they preserved it and how they transformed it, even how and why they lost it. What sacrifices did they make?--for belief? for love? What was important to them? Why did they come? Who remained and who left?

Instead we have a descriptive history of entrepreneurs and politicians--not a history of the lives of the ordinary Jews who were the majority. Such an approach may even confirm long held stereotypes of Jews.

Each chapter strings biographies together around a central subject. Chapter 2, "Gold and Other Discoveries," catalogs the careers of Jews attracted to the

minefields, focusing on those like Adolph Sutro, Samuel Newhouse, and John B. Newman, who were extremely successful financially. Chapter 3, "Enterprising People," the first third of the heart of the book, sketches the careers of frontier Jewish merchants, many of whose tent stores soon became well-known department stores. In chapter 4, "Of One Flesh and Several Cultures," women finally appear in numbers--to fulfill the pioneer men's needs for brides, families, and, as chapter 5 is entitled, "Dynasties." All three of these central chapters (3-5) deal with those individuals and families which succeeded in business (mainly clothing and "dry goods") throughout the West.

To a great extent, chapter 6, "Elected, Appointed, Self-Appointed," continues this same thread (sometimes with the same families) as we learn which Jews held which political offices in which areas. Chapter 7, "Humdingers," seeks to encapsulate the biographies of "remarkable characters"--some idiosyncratic (like Emperor Norton), some influential (like Gertrude Stein, Alice B. Toklas, and Judah L. Magnes). Chapter 8, "A Matter of Faith," the most important chapter to me, attempts to deal with what was Jewish in these pioneer's lives, sketching the beginnings of several congregations and their temples or synagogues, but slipping once again into the biographies and careers of civic leaders and rabbis.

The book is handsomely printed and designed. It is full of valuable historic photographs which are carefully reproduced and well-identified for the most part. The bibliography is extensive and clearly organized--it will prove useful to future researchers. An index makes the book's materials accessible to anyone who is interested in a particular place, person, or other topic.

For Idahoans, unfortunately, this book does not contain a great deal. We find a brief mention of a Meyers Cohen who opened a store in Malad City in the early 1860s, a very early date indeed (p. 73). The competition between two Jewish mer-

chants in Genesee is chronicled on pp. 64-65 and a related photo appears on p. 100. We learn a little about Moses Alexander (pp. 89, 163) and the Falk family (pp. 112-114), but an error here makes the Idaho reader feel that the authors are basically reporting, uncritically, material with which they have no background familiarity:

David Falk arrived in Boise (then called Idaho City) with the wave of sixteen thousand gold seekers and suppliers who surged into the Boise Basin in 1863. (p. 112)

Idaho City and Boise are, and always have been, two distinct cities, about 45 miles apart. The error is only a technical detail, but it causes us to question the carefulness with which research was undertaken and examined.

There can be no doubt that this book responds to a need. However, I hope that westerners will not be satisfied with it. Let Pioneer Jews be the starting point for a true history of Jews in the West. Such a history would contain an introduction providing background on Jewish culture and religion and on the ethnic diversity (Sephardic, Eastern and Western Ashkenazic) of Jewish immigration to America. A true history of Jews in the West will not be a mere chronicling of the biographies of the rich and (relatively) famous, for such history reduces the events which encompassed many into the caricatured personalities of a few. If that is history, then history is trivial. But history is not trivial; it is of ultimate consequence. Indeed, how can a Jew, especially in the 20th century, believe otherwise?

Oral history could have a substantial impact on future writings about pioneer Jews and their descendants. We are little beyond living memory of the era the Rochlins wished to treat. Where the authors have conducted their own interviews or tapped into others' oral history projects, their narrative rings with immediacy and ambience. Still, there is all too little use of oral interviews and too much synthe-

sizing of journal and magazine articles on Jewish "firsts." Oral history, coupled with conventional research, can tell us what daily life was like for a significant western minority--how individuals coped with the demands of heritage when these conflicted with the new experience of the West. Oral interviews can also tell us how Jews were educated to be Jews, and what reputation notables like Moses Alexander had within their Jewish communities. We cannot learn such things from the official versions of "important" men's careers. Ultimately only such "soft" information will tell us what the "new life in the far west" really consisted of.

The Rochlins' book has raised questions of historiography. The writing of history--the interpretation of the past--does not take place in a vacuum. It is written by fresh-and-blood people living within the confines of history themselves. These people we call historians are strongly affected by the events of their own lives and times. Their contemporary experience both colors and allows for the new insights that come of their history writing.

One example of this phenomenon is the consciousness-raising which was the fruit of the anti-segregation and black power movements of the 1960s. It has profoundly affected not only American history but American history writing. It is perhaps the major source of the impulse toward ethnic history, minority studies, women's

studies, and even a great deal of oral and local history. These movements made us aware that history was more than the doings of presidents and generals. Ironically, Pioneer Jews is partly a product of this social and intellectual current. But it ends up being a history written along the lines of the old school, on an exotic topic, rather than the new "social history" such a topic leads us to hope for. Pioneer Jews misses the deeper reasons for the interest in such topics as Jews in the West.

The Rochlins' book is a useful reference and a starting point. It reminds me that it is not too late to speak to living people, the precious oral sources. Throughout the West, there are many people alive who can reconstruct Jewish life in their areas in the early 1900s and tell us stories they heard of the earlier days. Oral history is the tool for a deeper revelation.

--Steve Siporin

STEVE SIPORIN is the Folk Arts Coordinator of the Idaho Commission on the Arts. In addition to his ongoing study of folklife in Idaho and the Northwest, he has undertaken major research projects on Jews in Venice and has recently returned from a trip to Israel where he did extensive research on Venetian Jews who have emigrated to that country.

LATAH COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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In 1968 interested individuals organized the Latah County Historical Society to collect and preserve materials connected with the history of Latah County and to provide further knowledge of the history and tradition of the area. Every person, young or old, who is interested in the history of Latah County and who would like to assist in its preservation and interpretation is cordially invited to become a member. Subscription to this journal and a discount on books published by the Society are included in membership dues. Dues for the various classes of membership are as follows:

	Member	Friend	Contributor	Sustainer	Sponsor	Patron
Individual	\$ 7.50-15	\$16-30	\$ 31-75	\$ 76-150	\$151-499	\$500 up
Family	12.50-25	26-50	51-100	101-250	251-499	500 up
Business	25-50	51-100	101-250	251-350	351-499	500 up

Privileges are identical for all classes; the higher dues represent a much needed donation to help the Society's work. Dues are tax deductible.

The Society's services include conducting oral histories, publishing local history monographs, maintaining local history/genealogy research archives 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 archives are welcomed at other times and can be arranged by calling (208) 882-1004.