# LATAH LEGACY

THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE LATAH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Partial contents...
THE OUTDOOR LIFE IN LATAH COUNTY
WILD DAVEY -- A LOCAL MYSTERY
THE UNCOVERED WAGON (conclusion)

Cover photo: Ione, Lulu and Bernadine Adair at the lower Elk River Falls, 1914

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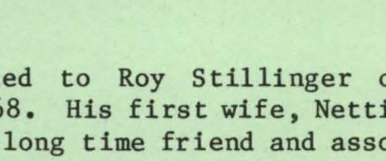
(cont. from page 32)

Leora was highly interested in her grandchildren's education, and provided board and room for those who attended the university.

Leora was married to Roy Stillinger on December 25, 1968. His first wife, Nettie Mae, had been a long time friend and associate in the activities of the American Legon. With this family, she acquired a new family and enjoyed many visits and activities with them. They kept the relationship after Roy's death in 1972, and her circle of sharing increased as his grandchildren married. Each granddaughter or bride would receive a loving handmade afghan or hooked rug as a wedding present. Thus, throughout her married life, Leora was a sharing, caring person, and will always be remembered for her many gifts to relatives, friends, and the community.



Leora Diamond
Stillinger

# THE OUTDOOR LIFE IN LATAH COUNTY

by Mary Reed

## Introduction

"There are no words that can tell of the hidden spirit of the wilderness, that can reveal its mystery, its melancholy, and its charms. There is delight in the hardy life of the open, in long rides rifles in hand, in the thrill of the fight with dangerous game."[1]

When Theodore Roosevelt wrote this exhortation, the wilderness experience was far removed from most Americans. Wilderness was associated with the frontier, the pioneer past, and Roosevelt and others looked longingly back to a time when hardship and danger molded character. This nostalgia and appreciation of American wildlands climaxed in the 1890s as a national phenomenon--the wilderness cult. It was accepted that the frontier experience of Daniel Boone and the mountain men had created the unique American "rugged individualist." And Roosevelt promoted the strenuous life as a means of recapturing these fundamental frontier virtues.

Fascination with wilderness captivated not only those living in overcrowded cities, but also people like John Muir and Gifford Pinchot who campaigned for the preservation and conservation of western forests and wild lands. In 1872 President Grant signed an act designating two million acres in northwestern Wyoming as the nation's first national park, Yellowstone. Later Muir, during wilderness excursions into Yosemite, began writing and lecturing on preserving wilderness areas in California. With Roosevelt's backing, the government expanded its stewardship of national resources, in large part due to the influence of Pinchot, Chief Forester of the new Forest Service.

Those who travelled to unspoiled wilderness areas and the new National Parks were usually those with the means and time for lengthy journeys by rail, stage, horseback or pack train. In some places like Yellowstone, handsome lodges accommodated these elite guests. There were, of course, few automobiles and certainly no highways into these isolated areas, and few people had sufficient leisure time to make a long trip to the western playgrounds. Roosevelt preferred Montana, the Dakotas, and Wyoming for his wilderness hunting trips; the E. A. Harrimans rode in a special car along their railroad, the Union Pacific, to reach their Railroad Ranch in southeastern Idaho. While Roosevelt thrilled in the "vigorous manliness" of the chase, the "long days of toil and hardship resolutely endured,"[2] the Harriman family and guests rode and hunted around the confines of their summer hideaway staffed by their personal servants and ranchhands. For these monied people, the western wilderness experience was an episode, a temporary experience from which they would return to the comfort and amenities of their homes and cities.

What, then, of the people whose experiences in the wilderness were constant? People who lived in or near the wilderness but did not necessarily see it as a way of proving their manliness? At the same time that easterners sought or admired the strenuous life, early residents of areas like Latah County were preoccupied with making homes and livings for themselves. Nature was literally at their doors and an intimate part of their daily routines. The same year the government created Yellowstone Park, the county's first permanent settlers were taking up homesteads, building lean-tos and cabins, removing trees, plowing sod and plotting small towns. These homesteaders, businessmen and adventurers probably thought little about emulating Daniel Boone and much about getting gardens and crops in, making cabins warm for winter, and some-how hanging on until times were better. They were living what others in the more "civilized" areas of the country read about in dime novels, except life was much more difficult and dull than adventurous.

Nationally, it was a time of great contrast and change. In the general scheme of westward migration, Latah County was settled relatively late. Although homestead life in many ways resembled the earlier frontier periods of the Boones and Crocketts, homesteaders had access to regular contact to the outside world with a mail service, wagon roads, steamships on the Columbia River system, and, by the mid-1880s, transcontinental railroads that reached many Latah County towns. It was not very many years later that the first cars appeared, even though roads might be impassable most of the time. Above all, it was the speed of change that marked the relationship of Latah County residents with the out-of-doors. In this telescoping of the frontier, the homesteading experience collided with the rapid development of the county into a quiet and civilized place, not very different from other towns and rural areas throughout the United States. As Emmett Utt remembered, "Oh, it has been some country. . . . Everything changed so much though. You can't hardly imagine a country changing as much as this one has in one's lifetime around here."[3]

## Isolation and Early Travel

While many easterners longed to escape into the wilderness, those traveling in Idaho and Latah County in the 1870s and 1880s suffered inconveniences and some danger. Charles Munson came into Idaho on horseback over the Bitterroots through the Lolo Pass in August 1882. He and a friend followed an Indian trail, stopping to dig a few exploratory holes for gold, then moving on. Running out of everything but tea and salt, they headed down a mountain draw, expecting to come upon a cabin in a couple of days. Instead, it took them two weeks to find help, after spending six weeks since seeing another human being. At Clarkia they killed a young deer, and added camas, berries, wild onions, and greens to their feast.

Two years later, after unsuccessful ventures in Spokane and Lewiston, Munson determined to try his luck in Moscow, "a little place, about 30 miles back." Moscow was a town almost country itself, which Munson described as containing a few houses and sheds with plenty of grass and vacant lots to picket a horse.[4]

Moscow had enjoyed mail service since 1872 via a pony route between Lewiston and the Paradise City (Moscow) post office. At the time Munson rode up the Lewiston grade in the August sun, stages and wagons also made the laborious trip. The road rises from 600 to 2,500 feet in four miles, and travellers unaccustomed to the ascent were often frightened by the sheer drop and steep curves. The road's dangerous reputation was enhanced by stories such as the one recounted in the 1903 history of North Idaho. Two residents of Genesee, newly arrived from the east, were advised to treat the stage driver kindly so he would drive carefully on the steep descent into Lewiston. They generously gave the driver two bottles of whiskey which he immediately began consuming. At the crest of the hill he took a long, final swig, rose in his seat, and whipped up the horses who began the plunge down the canyon. "No amount of entreaty or persuasion could induce him to slacken speed. Dangerous curves were rounded in a flash, the hack bounding over rocks and swinging dangerously close to the edge of the almost perpendicular walls falling down from the roadbed. . . . There was not a moment's pause until the ferry over the Clearwater was reached at the bottom."[5]

Another memorable road confronting early residents was the one from Cedar Ridge to Kendrick, one-way with frequent turn outs. Here, according to Anna Smith Mitchell, the driver would pull over and stop, listen for another wagon and, if one was coming, wait for it to pass. The trip was a "momentous occasion," and undertaken only when necessary. Before the journey down the grade, Anna's father soaked the wagon wheels in the creek to swell the spokes and make them fit tightly. He greased the axles, inspected the brake blocks, and filled the wagon bed with hay and oats for the horses.[6]

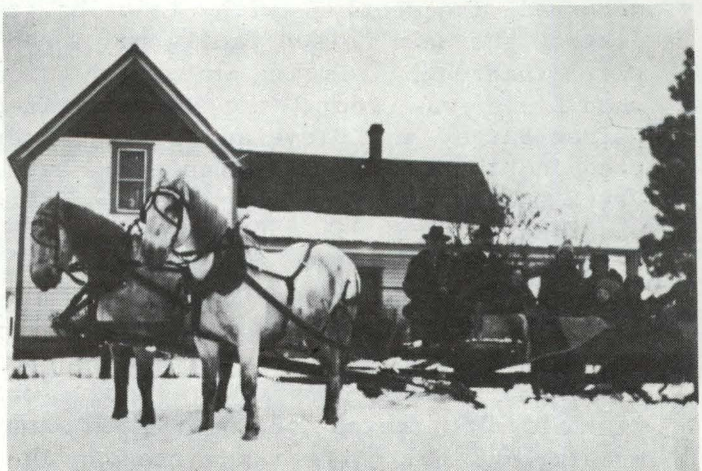
Most travel in the early days was more tedious than exciting or dangerous, with winter storms and mud being the greatest hindrance. Almost every pioneer reminiscence recounts the struggle with mud roads and efforts made to get to town or visit neighbors. Troy pioneer Carl Olson recalled the mud. "That was the worst. You know how big a wagon wheel is? And the hub was about that far from the ground, and we had a lot of places where we had mud that went clean up to the axle in the spring. So it was a heck of a job to get to town in the spring. . . . The tires were narrow and the wheels, they'd cut and cut and cut and the water would stay in them. We were nine miles from town. . . . We couldn't make it in a day." In fact, Carl didn't see a town until he was 10 years old--"I didn't know what a town was, 'cause we only had 3 horses on the place. . . . 10, 12 kids, 3 horses."

In many places there were no roads. Carl remarked that "from Troy east was no road whatever, no road anywhere, not even a trail! . . . Nobody lived there, y'see, it was wild country. But y'see, when they kept moving in . . . they went between the trees, wherever they could with their loads. And some of them, they'd fool around a couple of years before they had any road at all. They'd carry [supplies] on their backs, see." Some people used horses to pack in supplies, but the earliest travel was by foot. Edward Swenson remembered the first Scandinavians into Park, Jurgesen and Goldstrom, who carried all their supplies in, including two small stoves.[7]

Horses were the common means of transportation, but not in the stereotyped fashion of western movies. Families like Emmett Utt's simply kept horses as a practical matter, and no one thought "a heck of a lot about it." When Emmett was a boy, his father sent him on errands from Potlatch to Palouse on his little "cayuse" Buster. He rode at a slow gallup, there and back in an afternoon. He noted in an interview that today's horses couldn't make the trip without being played out. When Emmett's dad went to Moscow, he rode a saddle horse over the mountains and back in a day trip.[8]

Horseback was Emmett's and other children's way of getting to and from school. In the summertime the Utts turned their horses out on rangeland in the hills in back of the farm. Horses were used for more than riding, of course, and children like Emmett often learned to drive buggies. His was a small, single-horse affair which in winter would be converted to a sleigh by transferring the body to a cutter. Older boys liked to use the one-seater buggy with a folding top for courting trips in the country. Most conveyances were more practical and included heavy-duty and light spring wagons for trips to town and back. Those who could aford it bought two-seater surreys, some with fringes on top.[9]

Wintertime had a major advantage for travel because muddy roads froze and became snow covered. Like other Americans before the automobile age, Latah County residents used sleds and sleighs for business and fun. Winter on the farm was more



The Vogel team and sled, winter 1916

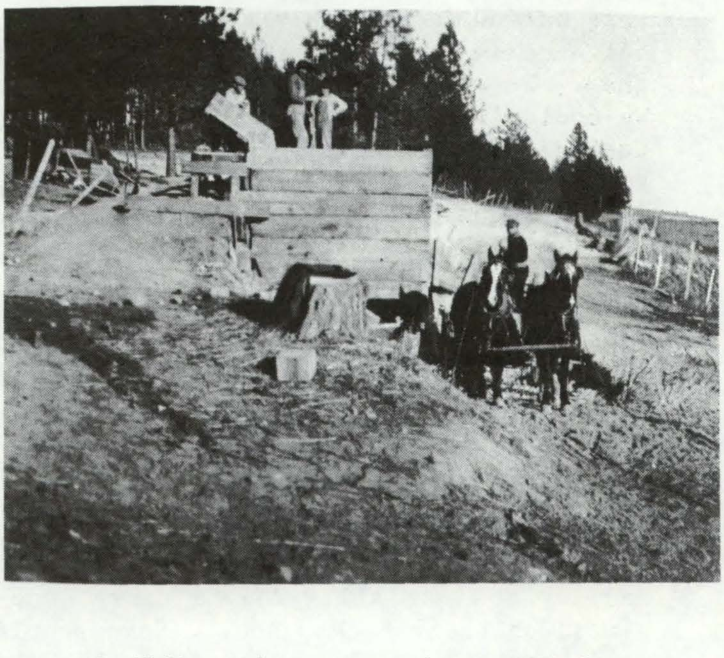
relaxed than during planting and harvesting seasons, and the snow enticed town people out into the country for sleighrides and visits to rural neighbors or towns across the border. Clarice Moody Sampson and her Moscow high school friends would hire a sleigh from a livery stable or a wagon from a farmer who would put a hayrack on runners and fill the box with straw. Covered with warm blankets, the group sometimes spent an entire evening going to Pullman to enjoy a meal of oyster stew. Other times they visited friends in the country, taking a cake or some other refreshments and being treated to hot cocoa in return. On one occasion they rode a sleigh to Genesee to attend a football game between the two high school teams.[10]

Sleighing was also a time for young people to meet each other and court. Anna Smith Mitchell recalled the moonlight nights with the merry sounds of bells. "Nearly every family and young man in the neighborhood had a set of sleighbells," and people could identify the parties by the particular sound their bells made.[11]

Unfortunately, sleigh rides and buggy rides could be dangerous, with runaway teams and turned-over buggies on the steep Palouse hills. Although accidents occurred frequently with injuries or deaths, the Nels Nelson family had a happier experience. During a sleigh ride when Elsie was four, the two spirited horses Barney and Cleveland tripped over the double cutter, rolling the baby, Fritz, under a barbed wire fence. Fritz was unharmed in the soft snow, and the family was soon on its way.[12]

Horses provided other forms of recreation, such as races. Edward Swenson and his young friends made a race ground out of a level stretch of road, and Ruby Wheeler and her sister and friends liked to "tear through the woods, racing their horses." Accidents happened here, too. Ruby's sister's horse fell down, giving its rider a concussion that left her unconscious for three or four days. Another horsewoman of note was Dora Hill, who as a young woman was said to be fearless in breaking the wildest of her father's colts.[13]

Primitive conditions in most of the country were short lived, as homesteaders cooperated to build roads connecting their farms with major roads and neighboring farmsites. When building the road from Park Valley to Troy, the farmers first selected two representatives. They asked Troy merchants to give them a discount on provisions needed while working on the road across the Potlatch canyon. The grocers agreed to furnish food and dynamite in order to ensure the road would be built to Troy instead of to Kendrick. The work crews used horses and plows, sawed and dragged away trees, and at places used picks and shovels.[14]



Building the new road near Viola, showing the rock crusher and gravel loaded into wagon.

## Bovill - A Sports Retreat

While Latah County residents in 1899 struggled through mud to get to town, an English Lord migrated west, first to a Colorado cattle ranch, then Nebraska, and then into northern Idaho. He was following a path other Europeans had blazed, caught up in the opportunities and romance of the American West he had read about.

Hugh Bovill was the youngest of 16 children of Sir William Bovill. According to English law, only the oldest male could inherit the family estate, making it necessary for other children to seek careers, or successful marriages, elsewhere. After one brief visit to the United States, Hugh worked for a time on the family tea plantation in Ceylon. Then he returned and began a 7,500 acre horse ranch with another Englishman, Lord Ogilvie, in Colorado. Still restless, he moved to Nebraska and began another stock ranch in the Sand Hills next to the Sioux Indian reservation. While there he met his future wife, an English lady Charlotte Robinson who lived in a sod shanty on her own homestead ranch. They married in 1894, and soon had two daughters.[15]

The Bovill Hotel after completion

Hugh's first contact with Idaho had been on a cattle drive when cowboying in Colorado. Because the Nebraska rangeland was becoming crowded, he decided to scout for new, unpopulated land. He rode the train into Moscow and rented horses to explore the country. When he reached Warren's cabin near Bovill, he decided that this was the right location. Hugh negotiated a deal of 580 acres that contained a fenced meadow and hay. In 1900 he moved his family and their household goods to Moscow by train. After spending December in Moscow, the Bovills completed the land purchase in January 1901, and moved into the Warren cabin. At first they established a ranch with cattle and horses brought from Nebraska.

There were two factors that changed the Bovill's cattle ranching. One was the demand by sportsmen for facilities near these rich hunting and fishing areas. The second was the arrival of prospective homesteaders and timber cruisers who needed lodgings on their way into the white pine forests. The homesteaders were interested in proving up on their claims and then selling out to the timber companies. In order to fulfill the homestead requirements they built cabins, planted gardens, and spent time summer and winter in the forests pretending that they were establishing homes and farms in the white pine country. Both the settlers and cruisers had money, and the Bovills accommodated them by expanding their cabin into a year-round hotel. Charlotte Bovill remembered that although the homesteaders built cabins on their claims, many preferred living at the more comfortable hotel and enjoying the company of others. Hugh also opened a store, and in 1907 became the postmaster of the new town of Bovill. Despite its remoteness, the resort was popular. During one summer season, 50 to 75 sportsmen stayed there, fishing the nearby streams or hiring a guide to take them into the woods.

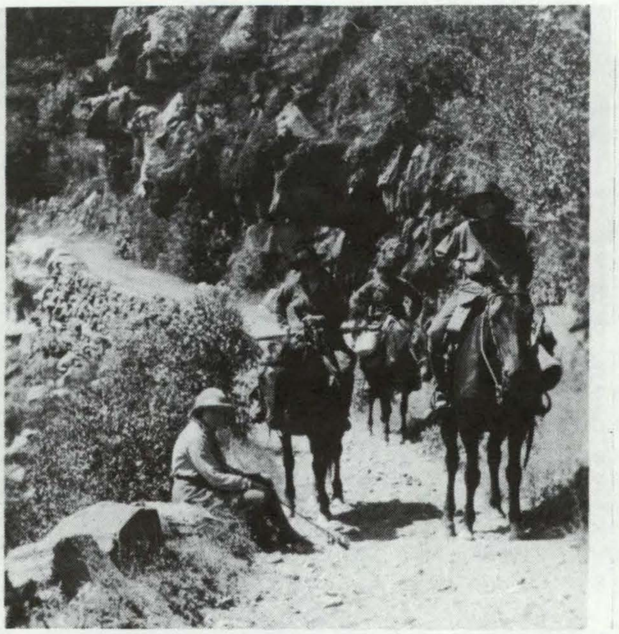
Although the Bovill Hotel was the best known and most comfortable tourist facility, there were other places where vacationers could stay or stop over. Stores at crossroads would often have supplies and primitive accommodations for travelers and sports enthusiasts. One of these was Trumbull's homestead cabin and store at Elk Creek, a popular spot for hunting and fishing parties. The store was a log structure with a false front on the upper story. The cabins and food were considerably more rustic than the Bovill Hotel, with bunks and tents for guests--sportsmen and miners. However, the fishing was fantastic. The state of Idaho had planted Eastern Brook Trout in Elk Creek which had few fish due to the falls that blocked migrations. Because of its remoteness, the Trumbull resort was never as successful as its counterpart in Bovill.

Early residents of Latah County enjoyed excursions into Bovill and Elk River. Edward Swenson and his family used two pack horses and three saddle horses to get into the forests around Bovill. One time his eastern relatives joined the Swensons for a hunting trip to country near St. Maries. Willa Cummings Carlson from American Ridge near Troy often watched vacationers getting ready to pack in on hunting trips. Two of the men she remembered were from Chicago and had "plenty of money to buy a good camping outfit." They hired about 12 horses and, like other easterners, packed in with two or three local people. Their wives were not as enthusiastic, and stayed behind in Moscow to enjoy a summer in the "country." To someone from Chicago, Moscow seemed rather primitive. One man bribed his wife with a diamond ring if she would stick it out for the two months he would be gone. The woman stated she would not settle for anything under $250.[16]

Trumbull homestead in Elk River, later a retreat for sportsmen and renowned for its excellent fishing

## Rifle, Rod and Campfire

Despite differences between the eastern vacationer and Latah County residents, all shared a common enthusiasm for hunting and fishing. With local residents, however, it was more a question of provisions for the table than trophies or entertainment. Deer, elk and game birds were abundant and close at hand. Venison was an important part of many people's diet. Moreover, many deer were shot out of season. In the spring when food supplies ran low, venison would be a welcome supplement to a monotonous diet. This game was often shared with families, especially during hard times. There were no game wardens, and people understood why it was necessary to hunt out of season. "Everybody was in the same boat, you see," Naomi Parker recalled of hunting in the 1930s. "Everybody needed meat, you know. . . .Out of these five deer, we never kept any of that ourselves. . . . We knew this family didn't have much; we'd take a part of it . . . and everybody had a pound of something, or . . . a jar of something . . . one'd make a cake or a couple made sandwiches . . . and just go to the house and say, 'Well, we came to see how you are.' And that was it. And leave the box of stuff."[17]



Iva Dewey Gelwick and friends on a two-week camping trip to the Selwicks, ca. 1936

For families like Carl Olson's who migrated from Sweden and spent the first year in a Troy lean-to, hunting and fishing were essential for survival. "There's a big creek run below our place, that we used to fish in all the time. And then when we got enough money to get a gun, then we'd shoot a lot of grouse to eat. . . . We was hunting all the time . . . fishing all the time. No game warden to fool with you. You'd shoot all you could. My brother shot three birds with one shot one time. . . . And then catch all the fish we could. Nobody to look at your basket like they do now. So that helped quite a bit." The absence of game wardens had its negative effects. Professional hunters helped deplete the deer herds as they could sell carcasses for $5 in Moscow. "So the deer was cleaned out pretty good when I grew up, there wasn't hardly any. But there's a lot of deer here now, though, again," recalled Carl Olson.[18]

Another reason for the dependence on wild game was the absence of beef cattle in the early days. It took years to build up beef herds, and in the meantime people ate venison, grouse and partridge, and in the spring speared salmon. Edward Swenson remembered that very seldom did anyone buy meat, and venison could be traded for other kinds of meat at the Troy meat market: "There was no season on game; you could kill as many as you wanted."[19]

For those growing up in Latah County, the outdoor life of fishing and hunting was a familiar one. In addition, many enjoyed an independence and self-reliance that was accepted as part of normal life in the area. When Swenson was about 12, he began hunting with his brothers and other older boys. "So we would go back there on horseback, go back there and hunt. There was one place on what was called the Long Meadow where there was four big spruce trees in a kind of a group. And there were big trees, and it was always cool and nice around those trees, so we formed a camp there, built a small fire to do our cooking with. And so that was called 'the camp,' everybody knew where that was. So when they'd go up there to fish or so, why they'd bring their camp tools along and put up by those trees. So we had a nice place to camp, stay overnight when it wasn't storming. . . . We'd stay in there for a couple of days or so, you know, each time. . . . Have our frying pans and stuff along and have trout meals a day or two, and bring home some. So that was our vacation, you might call it, for the first few years. . . ."[20]

Besides enjoying the camp, the Swenson boys became familiar with the hills and valleys. Edward recalled that the first years it was easier to find deer, but after being hunted they became wilder. And until the settlers brought in dogs, there were bear and cougars in the area. One night he found a cougar around the woodshed where meat was stored.[21]

Hunting was not just a man's sport. Naomi Boll Parker recalled her mother's experiences on their Bovill homestead. Although her mother never hunted elk or deer like Naomi and her brothers, she enjoyed shooting grouse and pheasants and fishing with her children. Naomi, who liked to hunt large game, explained the difference between her mother and herself. Mrs. Boll had been educated to be a lady, and when she moved to the Bovill

The Olson family displaying their rifle collection, ca. 1909 area had to learn new skills like baking bread and preserving fruits. Although she adjusted to life on the homestead, it was Naomi and her brothers Wallace and Kenneth who found their way of life natural and routine because, as Naomi commented, "We grew up in it." In fact, one reason Mrs. Boll learned to hunt was to relieve the tedium of homestead life, a life her children found exciting and challenging. Another Bovill woman, Minnie Miller, hunted grouse but only in her spare moments. When she heard the dog bark, she would leave her work, pick up the 22 rifle, and run out to where he had treed a grouse.[22]

Another woman hunter was Charlotte Bovill. According to her daughter, Charlotte asked Hugh to buy her a rifle and fishing equipment. She quickly became a skilled hunter who could shoot from horseback. Because of her prowess, Hugh nicknamed her Annie Oakley.[23]

Fishing was a more relaxing sport, and there were plenty of good fishing streams in and near Latah County. Still, trips were often arduous. The journey from Park to Elk River, for example, took two days by horse team and wagon carrying camping equipment and food. Many trips meant an overnight stop. Emmett Utt remarked, "Imagine people going fishing if they had to do that nowadays. Take a four-horse team and a wagon and load up all your grub and stuff, blankets, and start out by gosh for Elk River." When they arrived, the good fishing made it worthwhile. "You could really catch the fish . . . you wouldn't hardly believe it. I helped my mother fish up there on that pond. She had two poles. She had me taking the fish off the hook and rebaiting it while she fished the other'n, and about the time I'd get it baited she'd come up with another fish. That just kept me going, taking the fish off and baiting the hook. T'ain't that way no more."[24]

Ione Adair from Moscow enjoyed fishing with her father, Dr. William Adair. "I always went with my father fishing. And we always caught all of our fish that we needed. And Daddy and Dr. Hatfield fished for years up and down that old Elk River stream. They knew every hole, and I think they knew all the trout by name!" When the Adairs went fishing, it was by auto, so they left early in the morning, arriving at Elk River at daybreak. They put on their waders, and each took a fishing hole. They used angle worms and grasshoppers for bait, but if it was early morning, they would have to "spank" the grasshoppers to get them moving. Dr. Adair raised his fishing worms in mulch. The equipment was simple: collapsing poles that were easy to carry through the brush, and for Ione, an ordinary 10-cent spinning reel from Tri-State. "Just anything to wind your line up on and keep it from getting tangled." Doctor Adair used a real spinning reel, but Ione remembered that she caught just as many fish. Their first fishing trip to Elk River was for the 4th of July celebration. Ione and her sisters Marjory and Lulu were spending the summer with Mrs. McBride at her cabin on Breakfast Creek. Mr. Trumbull sent over an invitation for the women to join the celebration at his place and gave them permission to fish in the creek. Ione recalled that they were the first people he allowed to fish there.[25]

Before autos and good roads made fishing and hunting trips easy, camping was a necessary part of these sports. However, then like now, camping was a pleasurable outdoor experience by itself. There were numerous places in Latah County to camp. An early photograph shows a happy group of young women at Horse Ranch, three miles south of Bovill. This site had been a waystation for miners, freighters, and others who transferred baggage and supplies to pack trains to get to the Ruby Creek mines or other isolated places. It was also where Indians dug camas roots in the spring.[26]

Apparently it was not unusual for women or girls to enjoy the freedom of the woods by themselves. Ruby Canfield Wheeler, who grew up in Harvard, went with friends on three- and four-day camping trips to pick huckleberries. Her father would take them in and help put up the tent and fix up the camping site. One night a cougar frightened them, and the next night the girls made Ruby sleep by the tent door with an axe. "Now, if you hear a noise, hit it with the axe. . . ." In looking back at those days, she remarked, "It's pretty lonesome when you're up there, a bunch of women all by yourselves."[27]

Girls camping at Horse Ranch after huckleberrying at Elk River, ca. 1918

Many outdoor experiences of local women revolved around a homestead cabin of family or friends where they vacationed in the woods without undue worry or fear of strangers. Carol Ryrie Brink, a niece of one of these women homesteaders (Elsie Watkins Pfeil), described her aunt's experiences as an attempt to make an independent life for herself. But the episode yielded another benefit. Her aunt, a "delicate, fearful, sickly young woman" when she first entered the woods, became self-confident and reliant after four or five years that included escaping the 1910 fire that ravaged northern Idaho.[28]

Carol and three high school friends spent a summer on the homestead in 1911, the four town girls learning to ford streams on horseback, climb mountains, and listen for bears in the huckleberry patches. Carol had spent her childhood riding a pony into the countryside around Moscow, but these excursions were rather tame to living in a cabin in the white pine forests of Clearwater County. In contrast, the four Adair sisters--Ione, Lulu, Marjorie, and Bernadine--were well accustomed to camping and other outdoor pursuits. Their father, Dr. William Adair, took his family every summer to their homestead near Bovill, leaving them while he returned to his medical practice in Moscow. He insisted that the girls learn to ride astride a horse instead of side saddle, and to hunt and fish. The results were three very independent women, and even Mrs. Adair, who cared little for the inconveniences of homestead life, became an excellent shot. Ione remembered how she and her sisters loved life in this cabin near Collins, wearing overalls instead of dresses, being able to run around and do as they pleased. Ione even sported a special .38 revolver and cartridge belt on her hip.[29]

When Ione decided to take up her own homestead claim after she graduated from high school, her parents agreed that it was the thing to do. She taught two years at the Collins school, earning around $40 a month, to get enough money. The claim was located 28 miles from Avery, and she built her cabin within calling distance of May Calkins'. She spent at least one winter on the claim, packing in with other women. Ione was fortunate in having a horse during those years; other women homesteaders had to walk.[30]

For those who did not want to camp or travel far, there were picnic sites everywhere. People living in Moscow enjoyed favorite nearby spots on or near Moscow Mountain. One of the best known was around Idler's Rest, originally the site of summer homes owned by several Moscow residents. The houses carried such names as Dingley Dell, Tarryawhile, Dewdrop Inn, Linger Longer, Camp Kenjockety, as well as Idler's Rest. There were many visitors to these cabins. Dora Otter Fleener remembered her 4th of July excursion to the Dobson's Monteray. The cabin was well furnished and outside were flower beds bordered with rock. Mr. Dobson owned a pair of matched horses and a surrey with a fringed top. Claiming he had the fastest horses in the county, he timed the trip to the cabin to the minute. Sometimes a whole group of young people with their chaperone would make a camping excursion to the mountain.[31]

Elsie Nelson's father Nels also owned a lot on the mountain, but it took them several hours to get there. Their picnics were often elaborate affairs, perhaps with a wash boiler filled with chicken or rolls, and a freezer to make ice cream. Picnics in the country were important social events. The Nelson family hosted Sunday School picnics on their property, and the Otters attended one at the Evergreen School house near Twin Buttes. "The horses were tied at the hitching rack or a tree, and the table was set up in a grassy patch in the shade of a big apple tree." After lunch, "we younguns scattered like wild things over the mountains. There was much walking to be done to reach the peaks."[32]

Clubs like the Kendrick Booster Club held regular picnics. One popular site for the town's group picnics was at Atwater Lake, between Big Bear Creek and Big Bear Ridge, five miles north of Kendrick. In 1916 a two-day celebration for July 4th was planned, and the Kendrick Gazette announced that camping would be free and there would be lunch stands set up on the grounds. The campground management rented tents to campers who did not want to bring their own equipment. Unfortunately, July 3 was cold and rainy, and the celebration was held only on the 4th. The Gazette remarked that a large crowd attended, and the festivities were "safe and sane." A ballyho band from Kendrick, a patriotic address, boat, tub and swimming races, and a baseball game between Kendrick and Bear Ridge filled most of the day. In the late afternoon the crowd enjoyed a "bowery dance" with music by the Kendrick orchestra playing under electric lights. There was another reason for organizing picnics. Getting together with neighbors and friends became a valued occasion when homesteads were far apart, roads few, and families preoccupied with the arduous tasks of farming, housekeeping, and children.[33]

While the first settlers toiled on farms and adjusted to primitive conditions, their children found the wilderness around them a natural playground. Elsie Nelson describes walking as the number one pastime. "We would walk the two and a half miles to town to get the Sunday paper. . . . When the mud in the roadway was deep, we walked along the ledge of grass by the barbed wire fence. In winter it was fun to walk on the crunchy snowdrifts. . . . Many of us can remember walking to town with Dad or Mother at the age of four." Kids would take lunches on their hikes, and if they were lucky, they might find Indian arrowheads. The Otters had a favorite hiking excursion to Moscow Mountain where they drove part way and then walked to the top. "Then the mountains were beautiful to behold, clothed in dense greenery. . . . In our walk up the mountainside we had lots of time to observe the straight and tall evergreens, which stood just thick enough to prevent brush from growing between them. . . . We also saw lady slippers, violets and trilliums. We often pulled off the yellowish pink trumpet shaped blooms and sucked the drop of honey from them." Sometimes they climbed to the highest point where no trees grew, "just a rather smooth rocky space with a few outcroppings of rock."[34]

Walking was also a necessary and accepted part of life. If Emmett Utt wanted something in Potlatch or needed a haircut when he was a boy, "I'd just go for the heck of it. Strike off, and I'd run half way to Princeton, take the railroad track and [walk] to Palouse or Potlatch. Walk back home and never think nothing about it. By gosh you know it was good exercise." Later on he acquired a bicycle and as soon as the roads dried out he would ride toward Bovill and then on to Elk River over the Neva Mountain. On other days he and his friends would bike to Palouse, Garfield, Moscow and back to Park in a day on their single speed bikes.[35]

## The Automobile--Revolution in Lifestyle

Before the automobile, long trips into the country and wilderness areas like the National Parks were done by those with money and leisure time, or hardy men and women who enjoyed roughing it in the style of Theodore Roosevelt. However, most people made short excursions to nearby recreation areas, and those who lived in outlaying rural areas accepted their living conditions as necessary and often pleasurable. Nonetheless, the out-of-doors kept them isolated and made lengthy trips difficult and infrequent. Although it was possible in the early years to travel by wagon to Lewiston and Spokane, ventures to the eastern part of Latah County meant a long journey by horseback and an even more difficult one by team and wagon. In those times there were few signs of civilization. Only a small number of cabins and cleared fields could be seen along the road to Bovill and Elk River. Emmett Utt recalled that "Bovill was just setting out there in the jungles, timber all around it. When you'd leave Bovill to go to Elk River, you left civilization."[36]

The primitive roads that existed earned Latah County the reputation of having the muddiest roads in Idaho. In 1893 Charles Munson, a member of the Republican delegation meeting in Boise, overheard this conversation: "Says one, 'Have you seen the Latah delegation?' The other one said, 'What do they look like?' 'They all wear rubbers,' said the first one. I looked down at my feet, and sure enough, I had on rubbers. I knew then that Latah County was the muddiest in the state, and Mr. French and I prepared to introduce a bill to get some more money to improve our roads."[37]

The automobile radically changed travel, but the changes were not abrupt. At first only the upper classes could afford a car, and these autos were not always reliable or practical. In 1900 there were only 13,824 automobiles registered in the United States, and these were used mostly in cities or only during good weather when the roads were dry. The greatest obstacle to the enjoyment of automobile travel was the lack of good roads. Muddy, rutted roads were a constant problem in rural areas, and corduroy surfaces had to be built over the swampiest portions. The corduroy surface was a layer of poles and small logs laid crosswise over the road bed. Although wagons and automobiles bounced on the logs, at least the tires did not sink into the mire.[38]

Between Bovill and Hog Meadows, 1917

The mass production of the moderately priced Ford proved a great incentive for state governments to assume responsibility for developing a network of roads, and later highways. The first roads had been a cooperative effort among neighbors, and later counties raised funds through assessment. By 1930 the availability of affordable cars, surfaced, all weather roads, garages, tourist camps, and equally important, leisure time, paid vacations and a higher standard of living created a revolution in lifestyles.[39]

The first cars appeared in Latah County in the 1910s, with 20 cars registered in 1912. In the 1920s the state began improving roads, often using the same roadbeds as the county roads, but with better grades and sometimes a gravel surface. Families packed the automobile with tents and suitcases, and tied the camping box to the running board for a trip to a favorite camping spot. They also could enjoy vacation trips by auto through the Northwest and farther afield. Albums began to fill with snapshots of the automobile vacation in Yellowstone, Canada, and other faraway places. Still, in the 1920s an automobile trip could mean frequent stops to let the engine cool or to fix a flat. In fact, a trip to Lewiston without a flat was something to brag about. The owner of an automobile also had to be a mechanic. Tools such as a hammer, pliers, screwdriver, tire pump, pressure gauge, talcum powder, jack, water bag, patching kit, and other paraphernalia were essential for any trip. Before cars had trunks, the tools were stored in a box on the running board, and the waterbag hung on the crank. Patching a tire took "considerable time and intestinal fortitude." First, the tire, axle and wheel were jacked up and the rim removed. Then the driver struggled to get the tire off the rim. Next, you had to find the hole, the easiest method being to submerge the tire in water. A device like a nutmeg grater was used to roughen the area around the hole so the patch would stick. Cement secured the patch, and talcum powder was liberally sprinkled between the tube and the casing. It was then time to start pumping up the mended tire with a tire pump. The tube was only partially inflated, then poked inside the casing. The casing was mounted on the rim, bolted on the wheel, and the pumping continued until the pressure gauge registered the right amount, 80 to 100 pounds.[40]

Another common annoyance was getting stuck in the mud. After placing brush and sticks under the tires and becoming plastered with mud, most often the hapless driver walked to the nearest farmhouse and asked to be pulled out by a team of horses.[41]

## Organizing the Wilderness Experience: Indians and the Youth Scouting Movement

If most people in Latah County accepted the outdoors life as part of the daily routines and experiences, those in crowded urban areas had a different perspective. Like Teddy Roosevelt, many considered the wilderness and the out-of-doors as containing regenerative values. It was in nature that people could be revitalized and morally uplifted. This became particularly important for the nation's youth, especially boys who many feared were influenced by the temptations of modern life. The combination of these two ideas--the rugged individual in the great American west and rejuvenating and improving moral character through contact with nature--came together in the Boy Scout movement which began in 1910. Along with other youth organizations, the Boy Scouts originated in the cities.

In recreating the natural life of self-reliance and harmony with nature, youth leaders looked to the American Indian. Indian woodcrafts became an integral part of many youth activities as the native Americans symbolized important outdoor values and skills. One of the spokesmen for Indian skills and values was Charles Eastman, himself an Indian, who wrote Indian Scout Talks in 1914 as a guide for Boy Scouts and Camp Fire Girls. He described his early training as an Indian youth and the tests of his manhood and self-reliance. He praised the value of finding harmony in nature by becoming true in thought, free in action, and clean in body, mind, and spirit.[42]

The superiority of outdoor life and skills learned from the Indian were popular themes in youth magazines. Whereas eastern or urban children perceived Indian culture as exotic or very different from their own lives, many western rural children had first hand experience with Indians. Because the frontier changed so rapidly in Latah County, encounters with Indians lasted only a few years. Although the Nez Perce had no permanent settlements in Latah County, they migrated every spring into the area to dig camas roots, pick huckleberries, and catch and dry salmon. Many white residents were familiar with these migrations, watching the Indians ride and walk along trails past their cabins. Many of the first settlers feared the Indians, passing along tales of scalping and raids to their children. This unfortunately created some unnecessary misunderstandings. Emmett Utt was one of these children. One day he was riding his short-legged mare along the road into the back country. Turning a bend he came face to face with a group of Indians. His hair standing on end, he turned his pony around and "just about beat her rump off!" Some of the Indians yelled and ran their horses behind him for a way. Later Emmett realized they probably had enjoyed a laugh about scaring a white kid. He also remembered how people at that time thought Indians were something wild like a wolf or coyote. And he quickly understood as a boy that the homesteads were changing and destroying the Nez Perce way of life. For example, his grandfather had a meadow of timothy hay where camas also grew. The Indians came one summer and camped in the barnlot, begging him to let them harvest the camas. But his grandfather did not want them trampling his hay and refused, although he let them camp there and use the water. Emmett knew the implications of this. "I was a little kid, but I felt awful sorry for them."[43]

Nez Perce camping near Bovill, ca. 1910

While youth leaders in cities studied Indian lore, people like the Bovills counted Indians as their friends. When the Potlatch Lumber Company began logging around Bovill, their Indian friend Mox Mox came to say goodby and told them their way of life was fast disappearing. In other households, Indians were commonly seen on their migrations to and from the higher mountains and in their camping places. These were often near a house or barn because of the proximity to water or camas. Sometimes they visited the homesteaders' cabins. Edward Swenson's mother told him to ask a group of Indians to move their horses out of the Swenson's oat field. Edward had heard the familiar stories about wild Indians, but he went anyway, and the Indians immediately moved. Then his mother said that because the Indians were so nice to Edward,he was go to and ask them to come in and have a meal. Five or six came to the house. "And mother set the table out so they could eat at the table, but they put the table back where it was, and they set down on the floor in a circle and had their dinner."[44]

In the fall the Indians returned from the mountains, stopping by the Swenson farm to buy deer hides to make moccasins and other items. The usual rate was 50 cents, but sometimes Mr. Swenson would insist on 75 cents for a particularly nice hide. Edward also knew times were changing for the Indians. "Course then afterwards we fenced the land in so they had to follow the roads back in." Still, whenever the Swensons had deer hides, they would get in touch with the Indians at their camp about a quarter of a mile from the house.[45]

Latah County youth may have had a unique perspective on Indian culture gained from their parents and grandparents, but the scouting movement was as popular here as elsewhere. Harry Sampson, a civic-minded Moscow resident, formed a troop from a Presbyterian Sunday school class in 1920.

Jimmy Costello and Leo Guilfoy with Bovill
Boy Scouts at Camp Grizzly (grizzle), 1922

Harry organized an athletic club that met every week. Then he began taking the boys on hikes. Soon he was asked to change the club to a regular Boy Scout troop which quickly grew to 32 boys. With support from the church and parents, the troop developed a campsite out on Moscow Mountain. Every year between Christmas and New Year's the troop would take skiis, toboggans, and camping equipment and stay for three days. And the troop continued to grow. "I was just overloaded with boys. I took boys in from other troops. We had 48 boys out there. We went out in dry weather, went out in cars, some boys hiked out, and when we were up there it snowed." The campsite had a cabin built by a banker years ago as a summer resort. The troop put in bunks and bed springs, and an overflow of 12 boys built a lean-to outside. At first meals were a problem as some boys didn't like some of the food. They soon learned they had to eat it or starve, and they found out they liked it.[46]

Harry's troop followed the regular scouting rules and program, learning skills like building fires, swimming, and cooking. He also emphasized character building. One test every boy had to pass was a fourteen-mile hike, during which time he had to make observations, perform a good turn, and write a 200-word theme. Harry later helped organize five other troops, and Moscow became a part of the Lewiston Scout Council. He served as a scout leader for 30 years.[47]

There are two other organized camps for Boy Scouts in this area. One was built at Laird Park in the 1920s and is known as Camp Grizzly. However, this is a variation of the original name of Camp Grizzle, a famous mining camp named for a local hermit, John Griswold. The second one is located on Skyline Drive adjoining Mary Minerva McCroskey Park in Latah and Benewah counties. Virgil McCroskey, the donor of the park, also gave 200 acres in 1943 to the Inland Empire Boy Scout Council. He later exchanged the parcel for 400 acres of virgin pine and cedar he named the Cathedral in the Pines. Camp McCroskey quickly became a popular wilderness outing site for scouts from throughout the Inland Empire.[48]

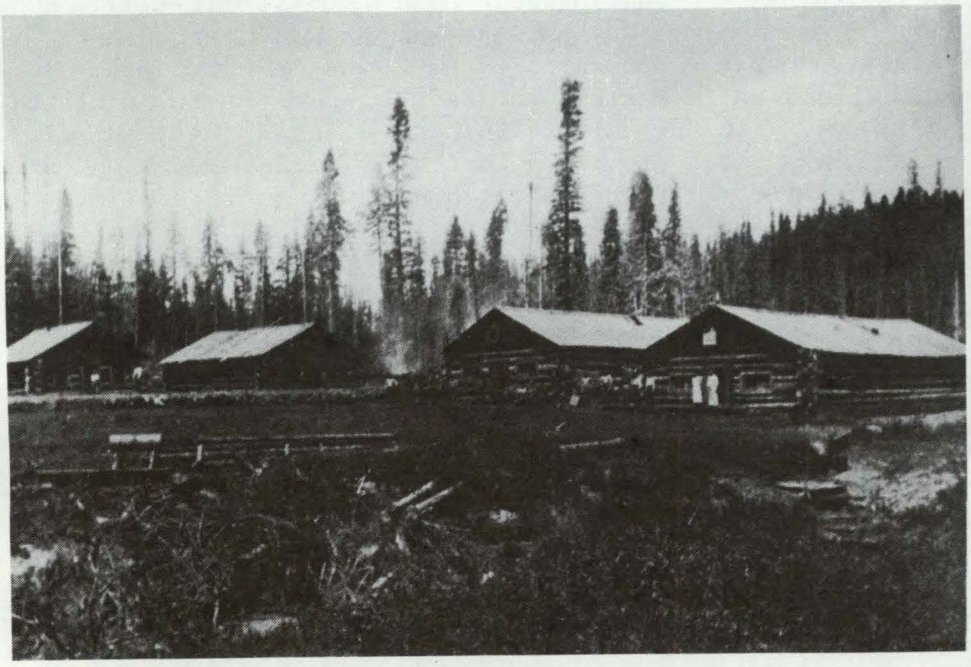
## Exploiting and Conserving the Wilderness

Harry Sampson's Boy Scout excursions were a means of organizing, teaching, and enhancing the wilderness experience. In fact, scouting was a counterbalance to the effect of the automobile. Vacationers now sped swiftly along paved roads, watching the scenery slip past, but in many ways they were less intimately involved in the natural surroundings than their ancestors. Vacation destinations were in popular recreation sites like Lake Coeur d'Alene where people located summer homes. No longer was there a need to pack a wagon or even strap a camping box, text and tire repair tools to the running board.

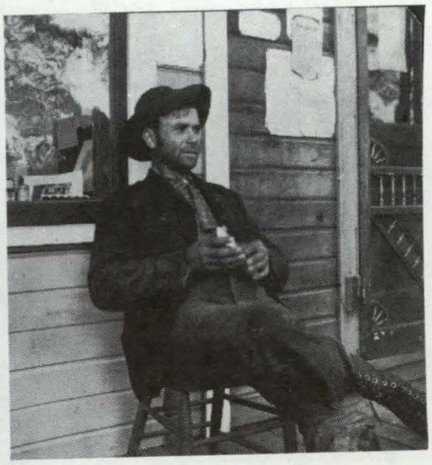
Those who had lived through the transitional years from wilderness and homesteading to modern towns connected by paved roads realized that all change brings both good and ill. The Bovills were among the first to be affected by the changes in their paradise. They had come west in search of an unspoiled Eden. When the Potlatch Lumber Company purchased land around their resort, they reluctantly agreed to grant the company a right of way along the river, apparently on the advice of their lawyer who warned them against fighting the powerful lumber interest. He also counseled that the new industry would be a great benefit to the entire county. William Deary himself came to meet the Bovills and assure them the company did not want to spoil the land, but wanted only to move the logs to their Potlatch mill. But more was planned, a railroad with freight, passenger and mail service. One benefit was a proper town with the official name of Bovill; another was a third enlargement of the hotel with a separate office and cottages for the engineers, bathrooms with indoor plumbing, a larger kitchen, and a generator to supply electricity. Gwendolyn Bovill hoped enough people would move to the town to make a school possible for her daughters. However, the less desirable result was a growth of 14 logging camps around Warren Meadows. Although the engineers fit in with the Bovill's cultured life, the railroad crews and loggers were a different sort, and bawdy houses and saloons appeared. A second rail spur was planned from St. Maries to Bovill, and again Potlatch convinced them to grant a right of way, promising that this would encourage the town's development. Their friend Fosbery Forbes surveyed and laid out the townsite, and Hugh and Charlotte donated a large area in front of their hotel for a park. Hugh became the official postmaster in 1907, and in 1910 the line was completed to St. Maries. This was a momentous occasion with representatives of the Weyerhaeusers, Mr. and Mrs. Deary, Senator and Mrs. Borah, and other notables present at a ceremony. That evening Halley's comet streaked across the sky, perhaps portending the end of a brief and pleasant interlude in Latah County's history.

Businessmen, lumbermen, and lawyers replaced the vacationers. But more painful to the Bovills was the despoiling of the virgin timber. Hugh and Charlotte had looked with horror on the crude slash made by the W. I. and M. Railroad along its line from Potlatch. The subsequent logging, as recounted by Gwendolyn Bovill, was a scene of devastation, of scrub trees, fir and cedar left among the slashings. These were burned, sometimes fire spreading out of control, and then the donkey engine moved on. Finally Potlatch obtained rights to the balance of the Bovills' land for a sawmill.
Again their lawyer advised them that a lawsuit would be futile. Gwendolyn described her mother's return to the town after a trip to Spokane: "For the first time she saw clearly how hideous the town was, surrounded by a graveyard with unburied charred skeletons still standing . . . a hell on earth."

The family sold out, leaving $150,000 worth of property behind them. They concluded that they had been betrayed by those they had considered their friends and whom they had treated as honored guests. The Bovills moved to Coeur d'Alene, then Montana, Oregon and California, but remembered their days in Bovill when "everyone had such good times



Camp Six of the Potlatch Lumber Company near Helmer



Unidentified timber
cruiser in Bovill

and was happy and contented. . . . We didn't think of the hardships that we went through as hardships, but as just another day in our lives."[49]

Other Latah County residents noted with regret the inevitable changes as timber was harvested. Carl Olson blamed logging for drying up the streams. Little Bear Creek had once run year round: "There was fish in it all the time." Without trees to catch and shade the snow banks, the warm Chinook winds blew away or melted the snow. The lack of tree cover also meant soil erosion, a change from the days when the water was clear as crystal to runoffs of muddy water. In addition, Carl attributed strong winds around Troy to the absence of trees. In the early days Troy settlers had told their Minnesota friends that "you can throw your hat on the roof, and it will lay there all year."[50]

Emmett Utt lamented the changes clearcut logging made on his favorite fishing stream, Glover Creek. In the old days the canyon was completely forested, and in places the sun never hit the ground. When Emmett returned in the early 1970s, it had been logged. "And there . . . wasn't hardly a tree standing on the hills . . . there just wasn't anything left there." Instead of being able to only hear the creek, you could see it filled with criss-crossed logs, "trashy and hot--why the fish couldn't live in that water."[57]

Latah County was fortunate in having people who took active measures to protect the county's natural resources from fire and exploitation. Foremost among them was Charles Munson, the western adventurer who matured into a solid citizen and became Idaho's first State Land Commissioner and dedicated steward of its public lands. During Munson's first venture into the giant white pine country along Indian trails, he encountered a forest fire. He later described it in his autobiography: "A burnt-over forest is one of the most ghastly scenes: everything gone, everything laid waste." Carrying this impression with him, Munson accepted the post of Idaho State Land Commissioner from newly elected Governor Frank Gooding. Gooding appointed him at a time when the Land Board was allowing private locators to file on the best lands, leaving only the poorest sections to the state as its endowment for schools and public-institutions. Accepting the position on the condition he could appoint his own men, Munson and his crew cruised

Idaho public lands, giving the state prior rights and saving over three million acres for the public's interests.[52]

Munson's second contribution came about as he and Theodore Fohl, a timber cruiser for Weyerhaeuser, observed a devastating lightning storm and fire. The rock on which they sat was a five-day hike from the nearest large town, and if any fire fighters had arrived, they could not have saved much. The problem of distance was complicated by elaborate patterns of land ownership--private, railroad, state and federal governments. The solution was the cooperative fire-fighting organization, the Clearwater Timber Protective Association. Along with the Potlatch Timber Protective Association, it became the nation's first cooperative system for fighting forest fires, and was subsequently adopted by all states having timber resources.[53]

Since the 1870s, towns have grown up and increased in size. The automobile and paved roads have revolutionized the way we travel, vacation and even shop. Yet the outdoor resources of Latah County remain as varied, beautiful and rejuvenating for mind and body as they did for our early homesteaders and residents. In enumerating the resources of our county, we often overlook the opportunity for solitude and recreation just minutes away: the spectacular views from Skyline Drive; the dirt road across Moscow Mountain that leads us back in time; and the monumental cedars at the Cedar Grove Camp. There are, of course, innumerable other spots to explore for an afternoon picnic, hike or leisurely drive.

Believing that an understanding of the history and cultural context of these sites adds to our enjoyment, I suggest two companions that can enhance our outdoor experiences. The first is a tour guide written by Lillian Otness and published by the Latah County Historical Society, A Great Good Country: A Guide to Historic Moscow and Latah County. The second, a valuable companion and intriguing in its own right, is by Lalia Phipps Boone, From A to Z in Latah County: A Place Name Dictionary. Armed with these two books, the traveller, hiker and picnicker can gain a better appreciation of the rich variety of natural and historic sites which may easily be covered in a few hours.

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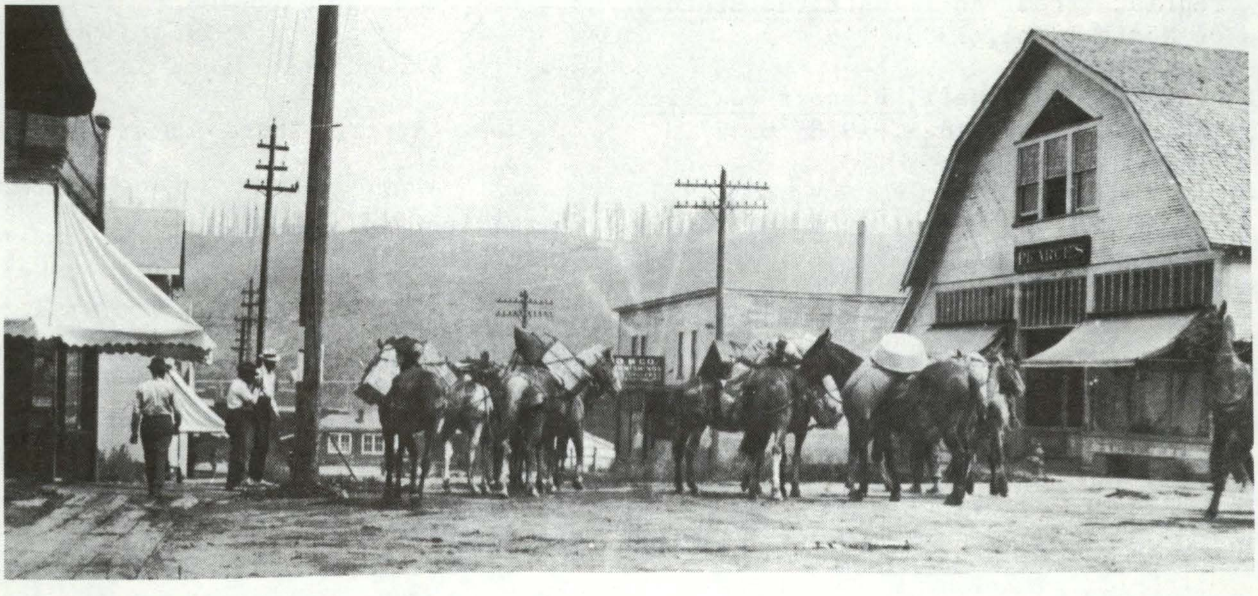
This article is intended to complement a new exhibit at the Latah County Historical Society, "The Outdoor Life in Latah County." It has an interesting array of photographs and artifacts, and will be in the museum through summer 1986.



Pack train for the Clearwater Timber Protective Association in Elk River. Mabel Morris photograph

Copies of photographs in the article and exhibit, and indeed any in our collection, are available for purchase in different sizes of enlargements. Please contact us if you are interested in obtaining one or more, or if you would like copies of A Great Good County and From A to Z in Latah County.

The author, Dr. Mary Reed, is director of the Latah County Historical Society and co-authored with Keith Petersen the booklet on the Palouse early conservationist, Virgil C. McCroskey, Giver of Mountains.

## NOTES

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3. Emmett Utt, Second Interview, 1973, p. 1.
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6. Anna Smith Mitchell, Pioneer Families of Cedar Creek Ridge, 1978, p. 27.
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10. Clarice Sampson Moody, First Interview, 1974, p. 14.
11. Mitchell, p. 27.
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13. Ruby Wheeler, Interview, 1974, pp. 5-6; Dora Otter Fleener, Palouse Country Yesteryears, 1978, p. 159.
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17. Naomi Boll Parker, Interview, 1976, pp. 50-51.
18. Carl Olson, First Interview, 1973, pp. 9-10.
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20. Swenson, p. 31.
21. Swenson, pp. 31-33.
22. Parker, pp. 11, 48-49; Miller, pp. 66-67.
23. Lawrence, pp. 105-106.
24. Utt, Second Interview, p. 2.
25. Ione Adair, Third Interview, 1976, pp. 2-4.
26. Miller, pp. 61-62.
27. Wheeler, pp. 4-5.
28. Carol Ryrie Brink, Interview, 1975, p. 22. Brink used her aunt's homesteading experiences as a basis for her novel, Strangers in the Forest, 1959.

29. Brink wrote about these experiences in Four Girls on a Homestead, 1977. Adair, First Interview, 1976, pp. 1-3, and Second Interview, 1976, p. 49.

30. Adair, Second Interview, p. 49.

31. Fleener, p. 61.

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35. Utt, Third Interview, pp. 46-47.

36. Utt, Second Interview, p. 1.

37. Munson, p. 138.

38. Miller, p. 60.

39. Donald Meinig, The Great Columbia Plain, 1968, pp. 476-77.

40. Otto Schupfer, Second Interview, 1976, p. 16; description of fixing a flat tire from Fleener, pp. 133-34.

41. Fleener, p. 13.

42. Charles Eastman, Indian Scout Talks, 1914, p. 3.

43. Utt, Second Interview, pp. 15-18.

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50. Olson, First Interview, pp. 9-12.

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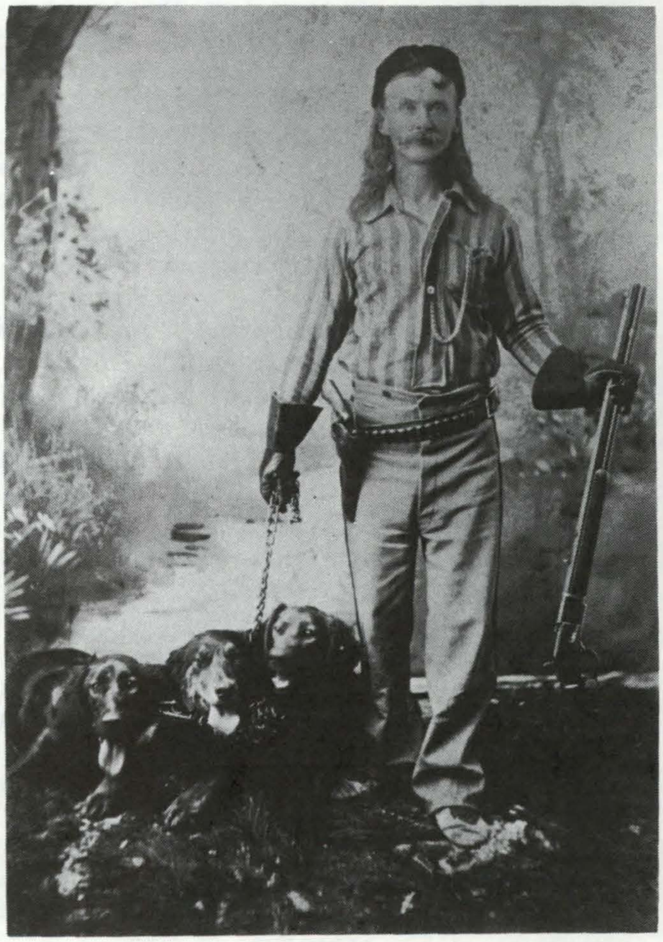
52. Munson, pp. 81, 161.

53. Munson, pp. 167-68.



David C. Coventry, also known as Wild Davey, a local character

# WILD DAVEY -- A LOCAL MYSTERY

by Mary Reed

While Latah County motored--or sputtered--its way into the modern age, it did not leave behind or forget its western heritage. Many residents enjoyed speculating about a local Moscow character known as Wild Davey. A studio portrait taken around 1900 shows him with shoulder length hair, long moustache, fur hat, leather gauntlets and moccasins, and a gunbelt with a holstered revolver and cartridges. He is holding a rifle in one hand and a chain, to which three large hunting dogs are secured, in the other. According to local residents, Wild Davey lived beyond Troy in the mountains, for a time on the Drury property, and hunted coyotes and cougars with his pack of dogs. He is also reputed to have worked for harvest crews and at one time broke horses for the Fleener family. His real name probably was David C. Coventry.

Wild Davey's strange appearance and eccentric lifestyle sparked stories such as his having so many dogs he was forced to eat a few. His reputation and dress frightened people, especially women. Some would take their children to a neighbor's for company and protection when their husbands were away on a harvesting crew. He often was greeted with suspicion, and on one occasion received a pan of dishwater on his head from a nervous housewife. Wild Davey's habit of telling wild stories earned him a second nickname, Windjammer, and it also led some to confuse him with another western character. This was Captain William F. Drannan who was reputed to have served as a scout for wagon trains and knew famous adventurers like Kit Carson. Drannan was the author of two popular books based on his experiences, Thirty-One Years on the Plains and in the Mountains and Chief of Scouts, Piloting Emigrants Across the Plains Fifty Years Ago. There are three accounts of how these books came about. One says that Mr. and Mrs. Henry Fleener helped Drannan write the stories, since he was illiterate, in exchange for half the profits. When the manuscript was completed, Drannan skipped town, and all the Fleeners received for their trouble was half a sack of flour.

Other accounts say that he dictated his books to Miss Aurelia Henry, a language teacher at the University of Idaho when he was a Moscow resident for a short time. During this period Drannan was supposed to have lived in a small cabin on Lynn Street which he papered with newspapers and magazines. On his way to the University he would stop by the Shields electric light plant to get warm and visit with Clarence Talbott. In fact Talbott was one of those who believed the two men were the same person. The third is that Drannan's wife wrote the books.

We are relatively certain that both David Coventry and William Drannan had illiteracy in common, and certainly they both possessed a wild, frontiersman appearance that excited imaginations about the bygone days of wagon trains and Indian raids. Even if the mystery surrounding the identity of these two men is never completely solved, people will still enjoy connecting the Wild West with the more mundane history of Moscow.

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Information on Coventry and Drannan was taken from the Latah County Historical Society's research library, a transcribed 1974 interview with Dora Fleener, Homer David's Moscow at the Turn of the Century and a conversation with Jeanette Talbott who heard about Wild Davey from both sides of her family.

# THE UNCOVERED WAGON

by Alma Lauder Keeling

Part 9 (Chap. 29-30, Epilogue)

## CHAPTER 29: MY MOTHER, THE LAST "LITTLE PIONEER" OF THE UNCOVERED WAGON

Libby and Mary and Will and Abe and Tom and Minnie and Ed and George--that was the order of the William and Priscilla Taylor family of eight children, two or three years apart. Priscilla had married at sixteen years of age so had quite a few years in which to produce a big familly. My Mother (Minnie) was the sixth to arrive, and the last to go!

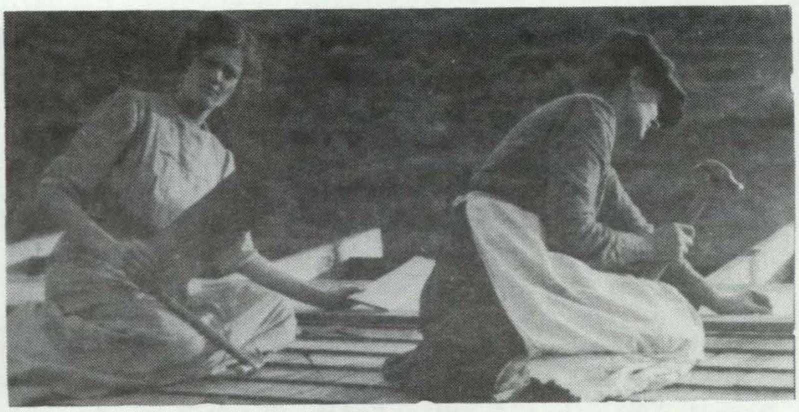
After the unexpected death of her husband of fifty years when she was seventy, she had lived alone in the big ten-room house, as I was married and gone. For a short time after Daddy's death the heart seemed to go out of her and she was interested in nothing. But she soon rallied, and within three months after his death she had sold his business and was making plans for her own future. In contrast to many older people nearing the sunset of life, she and Dad were always looking forward, not backward! Now that I am getting farther along, myself, I recall with more understanding a remark that Mother made to me one day, several years after Daddy's death. "Here I am," she said, "almost ready to die--and I feel I haven't begun to live yet!" How strange, I thought, that well along in her seventies she should feel that she "hadn't begun to live" yet! But she was, as I said, always looking forward. There was no such word in the vocabulary of my parents as "retired." And the words "Social Security" were foreign to them. The only "security" old people had in their generation was what they had earned for themselves in their working days. If they hadn't, it was just too bad!

Dad had been doing very well in a business way after he had been able to cease spending so much money on me in what seemed such a vain search for health; he told my husband once that he had spent more than $10,000 on me, but I never knew that! The winter preceding his death, he had remarked to Mother that if he had a good year ahead, meaning in building material sales, he would be able to get out of debt. That was a very good year indeed as building operations began to boom all over town. But he was not here to reap the reward. Now it was up to an inexperienced widow in her seventies to do the best she could alone from here on out.

Near his warehouse, on what is now the Troy Road, my Father owned a cement block factory where his two hired warehouse men were employed during the slack season making blocks which were shipped here and there. That was before the day it was discovered how to make them lighter. My own home in which I now live on South Deakin Avenue is made of these solid concrete blocks, one of which is all I can lift! In 1935 the city of Moscow was slowly climbing out of the "Great Depression" and pavement was going in all over town. Two streets scheduled to be paved were Spotswood, past Dad's block factory and his cement block house on the corner, and the Troy highway past his warehouses. (The warehouses later burned after Mother sold them.) The paving tax on this double deal was more than Dad felt he could handle, so he let the block factory go to the city. They made a bargain with him that if he would tear down the big building he could have the blocks. (This is where the Car Wash now stands.)

Tearing down that building was a monumental task, as every block had to be separated from its fellow blocks by hammer and chisel! But it was finally accomplished by his warehouse men, and out of these blocks Dad had planned to build another cement block house for rental purposes near the one already there on Spotswood. In fact, he was in the process of building a double garage to go with the two houses when he became ill. Even when he was so weak with pneumonia he asked me to call up his men and find out how the garage was progressing. (Bobby Burns was so right about those "best laid plans o' mice an' men.") Daddy never saw his garage finished! Now what was Mother to do with all those blocks?

"THE HOUSE THAT MINNIE BUILT!" Built of cement blocks soon after Dad's untimely death in 1935. Near my present home on Deakin Extension.



Mother and I had great fun roofing Ralph's big new barn on Thanksgiving Day, 1914. I had just graduated from Moscow High School. Wonderful Thanksgiving Dinner awaited us at Ralph's one-room cabin!

To build another house downtown, so far from her home, seemed unthinkable so she began visualizing a duplex on her own property near the University. This, she figured rightly, should be rentable always to faculty families, as it would be just across the street from the Campus. So, she began to plan! The whole project was a life-saver to her in her loneliness. She drew the floor plans herself for a lovely duplex, for Mother and Dad never knew how to build anything "cheap"! When the plans were finished, the carpenter was hired, the blocks were hauled up, and the building began. It was another monumental task, but she seemingly never hesitated over her ability to see it through! For a lone woman in her seventies, with no previous building experience, and with no close man friend to whom she could turn for advice, such an undertaking seems almost unthinkable! Even I, her only child, was not around for her to consult with, as I lived several hundred miles away then. But she never thought it necessary to ask me what I thought about it--she just told me, when I came home! That was Mother!

Underneath that retiring exterior of a little woman, who was tongue-tied in the presence of strangers, who couldn't think of a thing to say when she sat down to write one of her rare letters, who had never written a check in all her life (the bank had to show her how, when the time came), was the "Making" of an astute businesswoman who knew just what she was doing, where she was going, and how to get there! I marveled at this, as did all the friends who knew her. The carpenter, who had been a casual acquaintance when hired, became a good friend as they worked together. He laughingly said she sure was a good boss! She never missed a day on the job!

At heart, like her own father and her husband, Mother had always been a "builder." She never tired of thinking up little jobs for Dad to do on our place, and what he didn't have time to do, she did herself! With her own hands she built a fountain of petrified wood in the goldfish pond which Dad had made in the back yard under the trees. When that was done she built a little "wishing well" and a big star flower garden, laying the rocks herself in the cement Dad had furnished her. Together, they made cement "toadstool" seats for the backyard, with a stovepipe and old butter bowl for forms. To her, building was fun! But for a woman at her age to start building a big duplex was something else. She had always leaned on Dad's business ability and advice, but now it was up to her. The intrepid pioneer spirit, which had brought her Father as a teen-ager from Ireland and had cropped out again in him when a middle-aged man with eight children, was now becoming evident in his surviving child in her seventies! She was to me the shining example of that old adage I often heard her quote: "You can't tell by the looks of a frog how far he can jump." And of that other one she raised her children by: "Where there's a will, there's a way!" She had the will, so she found the way.

The cement block duplex was duly finished and rented to two faculty families as she had visualized. It was worthy of an expert builder's pride! Now, she could concentrate on things around her own home.

In the meantime, my husband and I had moved from Kamiah to St. Maries to a less demanding one-church field, but I was coming home every few weeks to do what I could for Mother. One evening when I drove in rather late, I found her in her housecoat on the lounge, and a younger friend, Alice Lundquist, with her. Alice announced that she was staying all night.

"Fine, Alice," I said, "but why, since I am here?" After a while I got it out of them!

That very day Mother had walked the half mile to town, had climbed the steep hill to the courthouse to pay her taxes, had walked down the hill again and up North Main Street, had climbed a long stair to our family doctor's office which was above Creighton's, had been shunted to another doctor's office down the street, and, after fluoroscopes and other examinations had been sent home in a taxi to bed! "For a little while," the doctors told her. It turned out to be two years! It is well we can't see too far into the future.

"A little something wrong with the heart," they had told her, "which will require a period of bed rest." Although always concerned about her family seeing a doctor when something seemed to be going wrong, Mother, herself, was the hardest one of all of us to get to a doctor! She was always going to be "all right soon." Now, she must have been sure something wasn't all right, or she never would have made that trip to the doctor's office. She was so right! She had called Alice to come and stay with her that night, and so I found them. Next morning I went down town to discuss the situation with the doctors and they told me frankly it was a serious matter. I called my husband at our home in St. Maries and told him the news, along with the prediction that I might not be home for some time. "Your Mother is your first obligation," he said. "We can get along here." I knew they could--and would. So I stayed.

In consultation with Mother, the doctors finally consented at my urging to call in a well known heart specialist from Spokane. But, they assured me, he would tell me the same that they had! However, he was sent for (to the tune of $100!) and made an extensive examination. I'll never forget that emotion-filled day when the great specialist called me out into the kitchen to give me his diagnosis and prognosis.

"Your Mother has a blood clot (coronary) in the heart," he said. "She may live six days or six weeks. She could even live six months if the clot absorbs, which is possible. But there is absolutely nothing anybody can do about it but keep her quiet in bed." I never knew until then how much I loved her!

I had not come home prepared to stay more than a day or so, and a trip back to my own home at St. Maries seemed imperative if I were to be here with Mother for some time. So, after a few days, I made arrangements with Alice to come and stay with her again while I made a hurried trip to St. Maries. It was the long way around then over a twisting road along Lake Chatcolet, but my little Chevvy wasted no time getting there! It was a tense journey, and I almost trembled at the thought that I might come back again and find her gone. For had not the great specialist said she might live only six days?

Mother hadn't been too happy about my marrying and leaving them after they had had me with them all those years but I had promised her then that if ever she needed me I would be there. Now I was about to keep my promise! There was nothing else I could do but stay with her for she was in no financial condition to hire a nurse. But, even if she had been, I would have wanted to be with her anyway.

When Daddy had first left us, I had suggested rather hesitatingly that she come and live with me. But I knew the answer before I asked. She had a perfectly good home of her own; she didn't need anybody "looking after" her, and in her home she planned to stay! I knew that was best for all of us, even if some day I should have to come back home to take care of her. Now that time had come! But, contrary to the great specialist's discouraging prognosis, she was destined to live, not six days, six weeks, or six months, but two and one-half years!

During those two years in bed she told me once that if she had known it was going to be like this she never would have gone to bed in the first place! But she was the most cooperative, uncomplaining, undemanding patient an amateur nurse ever had. We grew closer to each other than we had ever been before, but, as usual, she worried not for herself but for me. It was indeed a long, hard strain and she could sense how weary I was becoming. I had finally been able to leave her with a lovely neighbor woman, the late Mrs. Gilbert Lyon, on Sunday mornings, drive to St. Maries in time to attend to my Sunday School duties, sing in the choir, and greet all the "brethren" at the door! I doubt if the church missed me too much--but my husband did! He always had the house in good order and some bachelor concoction like stew waiting for our Sunday dinner on the cool steps to the dirt cellar under the house. We still couldn't afford to buy a refrigerator--or even a washing machine! After picking up the laundry to be washed, I kissed my husband goodbye and headed for Moscow again. Mother told me that our neighbor, a devout Catholic, who so wonderfully filled the gap at that time, once said to her, "Mrs. Lauder, you are the only person I know that I would miss Sunday morning mass for!" Mother knew that was a thinly veiled compliment--and it was! Actually, this same little lady was the only person I knew that I would have treated my husband like that for! But he never complained, so I thanked God that I had married such a man, and I am sure Mother did, too.

After several months when she seemed destined to stick around for a while, I was finally able to contact a widow with a young son she needed a home for and was willing to play practical nurse in exchange for a nicer little cottage in my Mother's back yard and a nominal wage. Then I could stay over for a day each week at my own home in St. Maries and catch up on the loose ends. The last summer Mother spent in bed we hired a high school girl from out of town who had advertised wanting work for the summer. She didn't know much, but at least she was someone to stay with Mother when I was away. But she couldn't understand how to put a soup bone on to cook and Mother had to get out of bed to show her, the decision was made that she might as well stay up! Her strength returned, gradually, and for the next six months she had the time of her life! Weeding her neglected flower gardens, even painting the back porch, was recreation to her! Once more she was the little housewife making her delicious jams and jellies and conserves. Now this was life again! I have always been so grateful that she could have had that wonderful time up and around, after long, weary months in bed.

But we were in wartime again and these weekly 75-mile trips to St. Maries were eating up gas rationing allowances much too fast. So we had petitioned our synodical executive for a church closer to Moscow, if there were any such thing. At that time that was Dr. O. L. Walter of the Presbyterian Church in Moscow who assured us he knew of no such church now needing a pastor short of southern Idaho. That wasn't very helpful. But, somewhat as an afterthought, he said that if we were willing to go there he might find out if the little Sunday Schools at Bovill and Elk River might be willing to take us on as pastors for at least six months at "silver offering" salaries; at the same time assuring us that he was pretty sure neither one of them wanted the burden of supporting a pastor. He was so right--as we found out before we had been there very long! In fact, one of the main leaders in the Sunday School in the town where we lived told me frankly that just before we came a fire alarm sounded in the village and the word went out, "Presbyterian Church."

"Goody!" she said. "Now we won't have to have a preacher!" But, to her disappointment, the fire was only in the woodshed. I never told my husband that!

We were sent for a temporary period of only six months, until we could see how things would turn out for us at home. The Bovill church rented the only available unfurnished house in town with a bathroom (for forty dollars) from one of its own members who was leaving for the winter to be with her husband where he was working in Orofino. For our "salary" we were to receive the silver offerings at the morning services four times a month! After the services we usually grabbed a small lunch and a cup of coffee and made it over some very precarious winter roads to Elk River to be there for their afternoon Sunday School at two o'clock. That was one of the worst winters that part of the country had experienced in many years, and I often drove over roads where the snowplow had piled up the snow six feet high on both sides of the road. We couldn't even see over! Only once did we get stuck--just as we were driving into Elk River--and then there were men available to dig us out and send us on our way. It was a great winter! Often, when we got back to Bovill around ten p.m., after the evening service at Elk River, we would find that the snow plows there had piled up snow and ice two feet high against our garage doors! So we waded through it to the shovels and both of us shoveled the doors open.

However, I made the trip to Moscow over some also very precarious roads all that winter, and was so thankful I could! Mother seemed to be doing very well up and around, but of course she needed me often. Our six months were now drawing to a close, and we had no intention of staying any longer! But there was nothing in sight after we would leave there, so we wrote to the district superintendent of the Methodist Church, whom we knew slightly, asking if there might happen to be an opening in his denomination within approximately thirty-five miles of Moscow. There was the vague possibility, we thought, because so many of the younger pastors had gone in the chaplaincy during the war. ("Denominations" meant nothing to my husband, anyway.) The district superintendent wrote back that he knew of no such opening but would know better after June Conference just ahead, and would let us know.

I'll never forget the eagerness with which I tore open that letter from him after Conference, nor how literally sick I became on my way from the post office to our home. "No opening," the letter read, "within thirty-five miles of Moscow as you specified." I handed the letter to my husband and was thankful he didn't know how my stomach was churning!

"Well, that's that," he said calmly.

A pretty sad "that," I thought as I lay down on the daveno, mentally reaching out to know what our next step should be. After I calmed down a little I got up from the couch, picked up the car keys and said, rather unceremoniously, "I'm going to Moscow!" All my husband said was, "Okay." He knew I should follow my hunch, whatever it was. It was dusk when I got to Moscow and told Mother our predicament. The owner of the house where we had been staying had just written that she wanted to come back home with her new baby, and would we please move? No home, no church, no visible means of support! (Not that we had had much the past six months!) We didn't know it then, but my husband was on the last lap of his journey as a minister for forty years, and there were only a few years more left to us to be together. But the big concern to us was not the future, but right now!

I asked Mother if we might camp in the little 2-room cabin in her back yard until we knew what the next step should be.

"No," she said, "but you can have the garage-apartment for a few weeks. The girl who has rented it will not be here until school starts." Music to my ears! This was a nice little 3-room apartment over the double garage behind her big cement block duplex, and had everything. I drove back to Bovill the next day and started packing. One problem settled--at least temporarily.

I have always thought, and said, that arrangement was made in heaven! The doors which closed at Bovill to us and the Methodist Conference made it possible for a door to open again in Moscow for six wonderful weeks. I am sure I was never happier in my life than now when I was able to have my husband and my Mother both! And I knew Mother had not been so happy since before she was left alone.

The district superintendent had added as a postscript to his discouraging letter that if anything came up he would let us know. We knew full well that in the Methodist Church all pastors are either returned or sent to a new field at conference time, so there was not much chance of anything "coming up." However, sometime later, when we were in Moscow, he wrote to us that the pastor of the Methodist Church in Asotin, Washington, had finally made up his mind to go to the seminary that fall, and if we still wished to do so we might take over the work there in late August. Indeed we did!

I had noticed that Mother was a bit pensive during that last week or so we were with her, and I wondered why. I thought perhaps it was because she was facing the prospect of again being alone. She seemed indifferent, too, about the fruit and vegetable canning I was trying to do from her garden. But she knew better than I did that she would not be here long!

I had stayed all night with her a number of times during these six weeks, to just talk, as girls will, when the lights are out. But on this special night I had a very persistent urge to stay with her. I didn't know why--but I knew afterward! I had been kemtoning her little apartment, preparatory for the new renter, and things had gone a little bit wrong, so I didn't see much of her that day. She had baked a batch of cookies to send to us so I supposed she was as well as usual. That evening by the light of the porch lamp overhead she had been working in her flower garden by the front steps, doing something I had promised her I would do before we went away. Our little Czechoslovakian neighbor of twenty-five years across the street in the brick house, Mrs. Otto Turinsky, senior, saw her outside and came over to sit in the lawn chairs and chat with her a while. During the two years Mother was down in bed, that precious little woman had never missed a day coming to see her! At nine o'clock Mrs. Turinsky went home and Mother and I went to bed. After nursing a heart patient for two years, the slightest sound out of the ordinary would bring me to in a hurry. Now I heard it! As I sprang out of bed to her side I heard a strange "whistle" coming from her lungs that told me something was going wrong. As calmly as she would say it is a beautiful sunset, she looked up at me and said this was "it." Oh, no, it couldn't be! I dashed to the phone to call her doctor, and I knew he passed all the stop signs and exceeded all speed limits hurrying to her side! When he arrived ten minutes later she was too short of breath to speak, but only looked up at him with a half smile. She breathed her last a few minutes later with her head on faithful old Dr. Hatfield's knee. At three o'clock in the morning she was at the mortuary. "Heart failure," the death certificate read. I can think of no easier way to go! And she was not alone as she had told a friend she dreaded being when that time came. All she had left to love was with her then.

When I dragged myself across the street to tell Mrs. Turinsky the next morning, she could hardly believe it. "We had such a nice visit, last night," she said. I could hardly believe it myself, but she was gone!

When we left Bovill we had made arrangements with another little pastorless Sunday School in Troy (the Troy Christian) to hold temporary morning services for them "for the silver offerings." These had at least paid our gasoline over there and back, and had netted us enough over and above to buy some food. So we got along. (I am sure Mother must have sensed our financial problems, though we did not talk about them. She was always sending us some vegetables she had prepared, or some cookies, or my husband's favorite apple pie, which was also hers.) That last Sunday morning we went on to Troy as usual. After the service my husband told them his wife's Mother had died early that morning and this would be our last service with them, as we were moving to Asotin. He conducted Mother's funeral on Wednesday, and on Saturday we locked up her beloved home and moved to Asotin to begin our work there. (When we came back home five years later, I was soon to find my own way around alone from then on out. Within three months after our return to Moscow, my husband, too, stepped over the line of worlds as calmly as Mother had done. He left me, sitting in his swing rocker talking to me--in the middle of a two-syllable word! The peaceful going away of the last dearest loved ones I had on earth will always be a cherished memory to me, and has lifted, I hope, the natural fear of death from me.)

That day after we returned from our last service in Troy, I began looking in Mother's closet for the right clothes to take down to the Chapel to lay her away in. Here, in plain sight was a box, tied with a string, on which she had written, "Burial clothes." As I lifted the lid I saw her beautiful black lace dress which she had bought in London, neatly folded, and, beneath it, all she would be needing for her last outfit. Underneath it all was a long brown envelope on which she had written, "Burial expenses." When I tore open the envelope and started counting those ten dollar bills, I could hardly believe my eyes! Four hundred dollars! How she had ever saved that much from her small rentals which had been frozen at the lowest point during the war was almost more than I could understand! But that was her frugal pioneer spirit coming to the front again! She had not only been packed and ready for that last trip over on the hill, but she had set aside enough to buy her "ticket" there as well. I am sure she had reasoned that if she didn't, who could? She was so right!

As I looked back over Mother's long life of seventy-eight years, I realized that her life had held much of sorrow for her as well as much well deserved happiness.

As a little teen-ager she had stood helplessly by and watched her baby brother die; as a happy young married woman in her twenties she had seen her two darling children snatched from her by that terrible scourge of scarlet fever--adorable little Ray of two years, and tiny Irma May of only three months. Then, in spite of her tender ministrations, she had to watch her beloved brother, Tom, slip away; and, years later, after another little boy and girl had come to take the place of the ones she had lost, and life seemed once more to hold so much happiness for her, she had found herself numb with grief, sitting in the front parlor of her own home beside the open casket of her only son whom she loved so dearly and holding his hand during the funeral service that she heard not a word of. He had been drowned on his Oregon homestead where we had spent so many happy days together. We had him with us now for only a few hours before the funeral and Mother never left his side.

When she had seemed to recover from this great loss, and was happy again, she had stood by the bed of her loving and beloved husband of fifty years and watched him "just go to sleep," when the old heart would take no more. And now it was her turn to go.

I have always felt a personal sense of inadequacy when I compared myself to my Mother, for she could do so many more things than I could and do them twice as fast! But I have been grateful for that small portion of pioneer stamina and ability that has trickled down to me, a "second generation pioneer." This has helped another lone woman over many hard places and seemingly insurmountable barriers. And all this began for me when two wonderful persons said, "I do," in the front parlor of that old white clapboard home that has just disappeared to make way for progress. I shall never cease to be thankful for my heritage and the happy home my pioneer parents made for their children.

Goodnight, Mother! It was a long full day for you here!

I recently came across a clipping under the dateline of August 13, 1943, from Home News by Nan, the little mimeographed paper our long-time Pioneer Association secretary, Theodora Smith, published from her home. Under IN MEMORIAM is this short poem, and her comments:

> "Goodnight, sleep well!" we say to those we love, and feel no fear, Though lonely they must go the way to slumber's sweet oblivion. Sleep is so gentle, and dusk will break to dawn. Love will be waiting in the morning bright. Goodnight! Goodnight!"
>
> The above quotation would seem to fitly apply to the recent passing of beloved Moscow citizens in the past weeks--Mrs. J. Warren Brigham, Sam Owings, Mrs. W. A. Lauder--personalities which radiated forceful living, some through long years of pioneer days. Such personalities will always live on. Love will be waiting in the morning bright. Goodnight! Goodnight!
>
> How many vividly will remember Mrs. Lauder as the unassuming, slight little person, her little dog companion, Topsy, at her side, happy to receive a guest; her home stored with treasured memories, a bit lonely following the deaths of her husband, and their son, Ralph. The stay this summer of her daughter and son-in-

law, the Reverend and Mrs. G. P. Keeling, had been especially happy. From covered wagon days to modern hustle and bustle had been a long day.

Goodnight!

Note: Since the preceding was copied to these memoirs of my pioneer parents and grandparents, our Nan, too, has suddenly left us! She was a vivid personality, so interested in life, so thoughtful of other shut-ins like herself. In fact, I never would have thought of getting down in writing these things I can recall about my own facet of that history if it had not been for her urging. She once said to me, "Alma, you will not be here always, and all these facts you know about your own people will be buried with you. So get it down!" I was some time being persuaded, but finally got at it and found it rather fascinating. This is the result, and Nan is to blame! How much we owe her for her persistent, never-say-die personality, which resulted in pushing for the Latah County Pioneer Historical Museum; organizing and supervising "The Wagon Wheels," youth organization of pioneer descendants; and her indefatigable efforts to raise mooney to build an annex to the present McConnell House Museum to house the many pioneer relics she knew were just waiting for enough room there before being donated.

Nan steadfastly refused to be discouraged in all these projects, and her faith has paid off. She will be greatly missed! As she herself said, "Such personalities will always live on."

Goodnight, dear Theo, Goodnight!

## CHAPTER 30: CONCLUSION

My Mother and her family, though not the first, were indeed among the very first pioneers to arrive in what is now our Moscow. So I am glad to have recorded here their particular facet of pioneer history insofar as I can recall it from what has come down to me from them, and also to add a few of my own memories of them.

I close with a quotation from the voluminous book, History of North Idaho, which has been donated to our city library by one of the descendants of these early pioneers:

> The pioneers of the 70's in Genesee and Paradise Valley and in the Potlatch country can contemplate with pride the wonderful development of this great agricultural and fruit-raising county. They did not bring with them the capital that built the railroads, the business houses, the mills, the schools and churches, and the palatial homes of the present day. They brought with them few of the comforts and none of the luxuries by which we are now surrounded. They came to perform a most difficult and trying task--to open up and make habitable a new and untried country. The decade of the 70's was a period of experiment, fraught with dangers and fretted with poverty and crude applicances. But those who came at that time had the courage of the adventurer together with the determination of the builder. The prosperity of today is based on the pioneers of the seventies.

Willis Sweet in addressing the Pioneer Association in 1893 said: "Every age, every nation, every state is the creation of combined courage, hope, and sacrifice of its pioneers."

Alma Taylor-Lauder Keeling
Moscow, Idaho

## EPILOGUE

### A Teenager Looks at Life - An Un-named Poem

When I look down the long, long road
As the way of my life unfolds,
I long so to draw back the curtain
And see what the future holds!

But perhaps if I saw all the heartache,
The disappointment and the pain,
I might never erase from my memory
Those harrowing scenes again!

I know that God's way is better
Or He would not have planned it so,
And I'm glad that I live in the present
But the future I may not know!

(Note: This poem was written when I was in high school at M.H.S., but a half century later I still say, "Well said, Alma. You were so right back there!" A.L.K.)

Upon publication in 1975, Alma inserted the following acknowledgements:

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And last, but by no means least, to my second cousin on the Lauder side, Alexander G. Rose III, for duplicating this book for me as a contribution to family and pioneer history, while a busy professor of English in Baltimore University.

## LETTERS

How exciting it was to see my article, "The Diary of Helen Kane," published in the Fall issue of the Latah Legacy! I appreciate so much all that you have done for me through the Historical Society Essay Contest. The $100 Savings Bond was greatly appreciated and I have used the experience on applications for colleges and scholarships. I think this will be a positive influence when my applications are being considered. This has been a really pleasant experience for me, especially because of all the positive comments I have received about my article. Last Wednesday I received a letter of congratulations frrom a professor at Washington State University who I don't even know. It means a lot to me to know that others have read "The Diary of Helen Kane" and enjoyed the reading as much as I have enjoyed the writing. Thanks so much for all you have done!

Sincerely, s/LaDawn Hughett

# LEORA DIMOND STILLINGER

Recollections by her daughter
Charlotte Dimond Morrison

Leora Martin was born in Nebo, Illinois, October 20, 1901, to Andrew H. and Hannah Fidelia Vickery Martin. A few years later, the family, which included older sister Ruby, age 5, and younger brother Herbert, age 1 year, moved by train to Washington State, where they settled on a homestead in the Big Bend country near Mansfield. I remember Mother speaking of traveling to school on horseback, and of parties in the winter when they traveled cross-country over snow drifts that covered the fences to the host farm, and return the next day at daylight in time to take care of the chores.

In 1913, Grandfather Martin heard of good farming land near Corvallis, pulled up stakes, and took his family by wagon to the Columbia, then by boat to The Dalles, and overland to the Corvallis area. The weather was so wet, and poison oak such a menace, that Father Martin determined to return to Washington. The return trip was made in the following year in the same fashion, and they finally arrived at Palouse where Mr. Martin became Chief Martin of the local constabulary.

Leora graduated from Palouse High School in 1920, and that summer attended Cheney Normal School where she received a certificate entitling her to teach children in the public schools. She was able to find a job just west of Moscow at a school on the Old Pullman Road. She boarded with a farm family where lived other young adults, and which was a gathering place for young people of the area. She remembered her first plane ride here, as the brother of the lady living on the farm had a small, two-seater airplane that he used for barnstorming.

On this farm also, at one of the social gatherings, she met her future husband, Charles Dimond, a student at the University of Idaho. Charles also worked at Hodgins Drug Store in Moscow as a photographer assistant. The following year, Leora moved to another rural school south of Pullman, but not so far that Charles couldn't court her in his Model T. Romance blossomed, and on New Year's Eve, just after the store had closed, they knocked on Creighton's door, and were admitted in order to purchase some wedding clothes, which they put to use the very next day, January 1, 1922.

Leora finished teaching, and they settled into a house on the west side of East City Park, where they lived until 1948 when they moved into the house next door. The planned honeymoon to Yellowstone Park did not take place, as Charles's father became ill and died that summer.

I was born in May 1923, and Ruth Janet nine years later in 1932.

Mother was a very active housewife, and became an expert seamstress, making clothes for her mother, her sister, and Ruth and me. In the photos we recently scanned, we noted the daring Hollywood "beach style" pajamas that were the first slacks that girls were allowed to wear. She learned to drive, and took the automobile out on the country roads.

In 1934, I joined the Campfire Girls, and Leora became active in the adult council of Campfire Girls for many years.

Following the return of the veterans from World War I, they organized the Dudley Loomis Post of the American Legion, and also an auxiliary chapter, of which Leora was one time president. During her presidency, the university constructed the Memorial Gymnasium, and her auxiliary pin was placed in the cornerstone. She held almost every office in this group at one time or another, and some years she and Charley went to the annual state convention. They were also instrumental in planning and building the Legion Cabin on Howard Street.

During WWII, both the Army and the Navy had units stationed at the University of Idaho, and the Legion sponsored a U.S.O. at the cabin in which Ruth and I assisted. Leora was treasurer of the auxiliary for many years and was in that office when she passed away. During the war, she invited soldiers as guests for Sunday dinner, in which she shared her ration coupons.

In 1949 she lost Mr. Dimond after a heart attack. Ruth was still in high school, and Leora continued with her work. She had started at Hodgins Drug Store in the photo processing lab during WWII when most young men had gone to war. Her next job was at Moscow Furniture on Main Street where she was bookkeeper and office manager for 20 years. One of the exciting events during that job was when an excavating company working next door came too close and knocked a corner of the furniture building down.

I remember canning fruit and storing it on the pantry shelves. After the garden at 117 Monroe was discontinued, Aunt Ruby, who lived on the Linville Road (near Troy), developed a garden that she shared with the Dimonds. The ladies and children would shell the peas and pick the beans, and the ladies would then pack the jars that were then put in the boiler on the wood stove. When finished they were stored. We had many Sunday dinners of chicken or rabbit on Aunt Ruby's farm.

Hunter's ice cream parlor was on the east side of Main Street between Second and Third. One day, Mr. Hunter bought a package of peas from his ice room. He said that this was how we would process vegetables in the future. Later, the grocery near the corner of Sixth and Main had a large upstairs room in the rear of the store where one could rent lockers for vegetables and meat. We would get live chickens that Daddy would kill and help pluck, and we would cut them up and pack them in half-gallon pickle jars for the locker plant.

One of the activities of the Legion Auxiliary was to sell poppies around Memorial Day weekend. Leora set up her table in the bank and usually managed to sell the most.

During WWII, Leora learned to knit. She took lessons from the Red Cross which provided the wool for numerous sleeveless sweaters. Her daughters remember learning at the office on Main Street above the Paperhouse. Leora would even take her knitting to the movies and she made many for the soldiers, for her family and friends. Next she learned to knit afghans, and also to make latch-hook rugs. After the war, she provided afghans and rugs for Legion raffles, and later for the Ice Cream Social raffles by the Historical Society.

After I was married and Charley had died, Leora would take trips to Salt Lake City to visit, and to California to visit Ruth. My family moved to Washington, D.C., and Leora would alternate trips to that city or Oregon to visit Ruth, or with her sister to visit Canada. We all had one last trip to the ocean just before her 82nd birthday.

While she was married to Roy Stillinger, the McConnell House was deeded to Latah County. At this time, an organization was formed to work with the Pioneers and other interested groups. Leora always had an understanding of financial matters, and determined to keep the account books and assure that the organization got off to a firm financial footing. For many years, she was a member of the Board of Directors of the Latah County Historical Society, and attended every meeting during her final years. She also made many cakes for the Ice Cream Social even though she could not always attend, and frequently would be found in the kitchen supervising, or assisting with preparations by cutting the cakes and preparing the linens.

(cont. on inside front cover)

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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:

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| 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. Tuesday through Saturday. Visits to the museum or research archives are welcomed at other times and can be arranged by calling (208) 882-1004.