

# LATAH LEGACY

The Quarterly Journal of The Latah County Historical Society

Vol. 17, No. 2

Summer 1988



Elk River c. 1900

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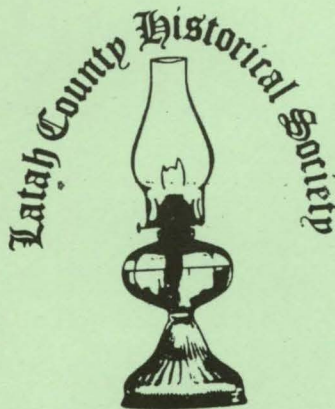
Elk River and Death Valley

Builders of Moscow

Palouse and the Hoodoo Mines

Moscow Schools in the 1890s





Published quarterly by the Latah County Historical Society, 110 S. Adams, Moscow, Idaho 83843. Subscriptions included in annual membership dues. Telephone (208) 882-1004. ISSN 0749-3282

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## Elk River and Death Valley — The Scotty Connection

By Herman W. Ronnenberg

His bedroom had no windows. There were small slits in the thick walls, each of which was covered on the outside by a heavy steel plate. The covering plates were made of two rounded out halves that formed a ridge where they joined directly in the center of the wall slits. The legend was that a bullet could be fired out the slit and it would hit the center ridge of the covering plate and split in half. The two bullet halves would then follow separate trajectories parallel to the outside of the wall. While a defender inside the bedroom could fire one bullet and potentially hit two would-be intruders, the metal covers over the wall slits would not admit a gun barrel or a bullet from the outside. It takes an extraordinary man to need an extraordinary defense system for his bedroom.

His bedroom in "Scotty's Castle" was not the only special thing about Death Valley Scotty. Scotty was a remarkable self-taught geologist-pro prospector who found secret riches. Scotty was a liar and a four-flusher who knew only how to prospect in the pockets of the rich and gullible. Scotty was an enigma; a man who never owned a thing of value but never lacked the funds to set up a round of drinks for the bar. Maybe all these evaluations of Scotty have a trace of truth to them.

Scotty walked into Elk River, Idaho on the first of November, 1926, from the Pierce area. Those who aren't familiar with the Elk River and Pierce areas may accept that simple statement, but to those who have been there such a rugged trip is an impressive feat.

Scotty was already a fabled symbol of the glory days of western mining. What better man to evaluate a gold mine in northern Idaho? Whether he knew mining, he certainly knew publicity. From 1890 to 1902 he traveled with the Buffalo Bill Wild West Show. His most famous exploit was when he used two souvenir gold nuggets his wife got from a Colorado mine to convince Julian M.

Gerard, New York banker, to grubstake him while he extracted more of the ore out of Death Valley.<sup>1</sup> In 1905, Walter E. Scott, again increased his personal fame by using someone else's money to charter a special train between Los Angeles and Chicago. The train broke the speed record and catapulted Scotty into national fame.

In the 1920s Scotty met up with millionaire Albert Johnson and they became fast friends, spending much time in a secluded canyon above the floor of Death Valley. In 1926, as Scotty made his visit to Elk River, work on "Scotty's Castle" there was just beginning. Scott never owned the castle, nor did he have any financial involvement. His basic inviolate rule was spend someone else's money.

When Scotty appeared in Elk River, Editor William T. Marineau of the Elk River News was duly impressed.<sup>2</sup> Scotty was to examine a mine on Ruby Creek by Neva Mountain (between Bovill and Elk River). Marineau had been touting the mine for weeks in the paper and the mine managers were about to ask the stockholders for more money to add a second shift.

Just where the information on Scotty came from is unclear, but it was a flowing bit of biography that Marineau published. Scotty had "found a fortune in gold" in Death Valley, spent \$300,000 on his celebrated chartered train ride to the east, made and spent about four million dollars in his life, and he was "73 years of age."<sup>3</sup> A news report a few weeks later said Scotty had come through the Idaho Panhandle in the 1860s and had returned around 1914 to look again when the heavy snow had thwarted his prospecting.<sup>4</sup>

Actually Scott was born in 1872 in Kentucky, making him 54, not 73 at that time, and also making the possibility of his visiting Idaho in the 1860s very unlikely. Scott came west in 1883, at age 11 to join his brothers as a cow-



boy and first saw Death Valley the following year when he was the waterboy on a crew surveying the California-Nevada border.<sup>5</sup>

Scotty said there was gold all over the Elk River and Pierce areas but not enough to mine and the area "had been shaken up, and the mineral leads were hard to follow at any distances."<sup>6</sup> November 9, Scotty returned from Neva, told Marineau he had followed the vein for several miles and been all through the mine. He said "it looks very good, and from all indications should prove a valuable property if work continues." He went on to praise the tunnel as the best he had seen in any part of the country for a small enterprise and to make a recommendation: "With one shift working it causes considerable overhead expense. Two shifts and three if it is possible should be working. The extra expense for operating two shifts is very little. This should have been done before."<sup>7</sup>

Scotty went back to Neva to look some more and also to visit the mine of "Jackson Mountain Brady" which was nearby at Neva but mostly undeveloped.

The Neva-Ruby Creek area had seen some mining activity since 1885. One of the mines was owned by J.P. Vollmer, early Idaho entrepreneur, and there was even a small stamp mill in the area. The company working there in 1926 was the Ruby Creek Mining Company which had been organized shortly after World War One. James Gilroy of Bovill was one of the mine owners.

Mr. Perd A. Hughes, the mine manager at Neva, had also had the mine inspected a month before Scotty's arrival by one Patrick Gibbons, geologist. Gibbons had also praised the mine and advised the local investors to keep the men working because ore would be reached soon. Once ore was struck, auxillary tunnels should be drilled too, he advised.<sup>8</sup>

By the end of December, 1926, Scotty was tired of the area and ready to head back to the warmth of Death Valley. One last newspaper article said Scotty was convinced there was hidden wealth in the mountain. It also

filled in some more of Scotty's prospecting background. In March of that very year he had made a strike that assayed \$442,485.50 to the ton. It was in Death Valley but "searchers have been unable to find it." Scotty had a car awaiting at Lewiston and he went south to disappear from Elk River's history.<sup>9</sup>

The riches of Neva Mountain proved elusive. Eventually a 170-foot shaft was sunk, with a total of 190 feet of underground workings leading from the shaft. Finally an untimbered tunnel 670 feet into the hillside was complete.<sup>10</sup> No strike was made then. It was the booming 1920s; the stock market crash was almost two years away, and it was a good time to put money into gold mines. If it was a poor time to earn dividends from those investments, so what? As Scotty's career proved, a small loss on a gold mine was a better than average return.

In 1941 Scotty was sued by Gerard over the grubstake money that had been swindled. The trial proved that Scotty had no mine in Death Valley. Legends, however, are impervious to facts.

The mine by Neva Mountain still was being worked, or prospected, or at least claimed in the 1980s. Maybe Scotty will prove right after all. If just a few more tunnels and a few more auxillary shafts are drilled, maybe gold will be found.

Scotty lived out his days until 1954 at Death Valley, sleeping in a bullet-proof bedroom built with another man's money and telling stories of the great gold mines he had found.

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<sup>1</sup> Shally, *Scotty's Castle*. p 7 & 8.  
<sup>2</sup> Elk River News, 11-5-1926, p. 1, c. 4.  
<sup>3</sup> Elk River News, 11-5-1926, p. 1, c. 4.  
<sup>4</sup> Elk River News, 12-31-1926, p. 1, c. 6.  
<sup>5</sup> Shally, *Scotty's Castle*, p. 7.  
<sup>6</sup> Elk River News, 11-5-1926, p. 1, c. 4.  
<sup>7</sup> Elk River News, 11-12-1926, p. 1, c. 3.  
<sup>8</sup> Elk River News, 10-1-1926, p. 1, c. 6.  
<sup>9</sup> Elk River News, 12-31-1926, p. 1, c. 6.  
<sup>10</sup> Miller, *Trees Grew Tall*. p. 28-31.

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*The following article appeared in the January 1, 1892, edition  
Of The Moscow Mirror, published in Moscow, Latah County, Idaho*

## The Builders of Moscow

### Her Leading Businessmen and Business Houses

How Diligently They Have Labored to Achieve Success and Build a City  
Of Which All Idaho May Be Justly Proud

The enterprising city of Moscow, the Venice of the north, is the county seat of Latah county, and is located in the center of a country which has as rich and fertile soil as the clouds of the morning and the evening have ever watered, and as productive as any the plow ever entered, or the foot of the agriculturist ever trod—a country “flowing in milk and honey,” a veritable paradise.

Moscow is the principal town of northern Idaho, and we have good reason to think the best town in the Gem of the Mountains. True, Boise possesses the capital, but the capital alone will not make a great city, much as it may help. Pocatello is another town in southern Idaho, and one which claims the largest population, but traveling men say that the towns in southern Idaho do not sell the same quantity of goods that Moscow does. One thing we do know to be a fact, learned from observation, that no city in Idaho is so well built as Moscow, and of which we will speak later. We will not say we are the largest town in Idaho, but we truthfully say we are the most enterprising, and good reason to believe the largest.

Moscow is only a mile and a half from the state line on the west. The townsite was located and owned by John Russell, who took it up as a homestead. For some time Mr. Russell farmed the land. A. A. Lieuellen, in 1875, located on the adjoining 160 acres and a little later established the first store in the now Queen City of the north. The next business started in Moscow was a trading post by

H. H. Maguire and Charles Curtis. Early in the spring of the following year Mr. W. J. McConnell (now ex-Senator McConnell) visited Moscow and impressed with the richness of the country and its future possibilities, bought out Mr. Curtis and went into partnership with Mr. Maguire under the firm name of McConnell-Maguire & Co. This new firm at once proceeded to erect a large and commodious store on the now corner of Second and Main, where stands the Moscow National Bank. The store was 120 deep, with a 30-foot frontage, and stocked with about \$50,000 worth of all kinds of goods. The people of the surrounding country were greatly encouraged at the sight of the then mammoth store, and from that time on the town commenced to grow. When this store was completed Moscow had the immense population of 25. The news of the great store at Moscow spread everywhere, and people from all parts of the Potlatch and Palouse countries flocked to Moscow to do their trading, and it is no exaggeration to say that to no men living in Moscow is the town so much indebted for its present size and flourishing condition than to ex-Senator McConnell and J. H. Maguire. Their business has grown to such proportions that the old store would no longer accommodate them, and last June they laid the foundation for a new building. The firm has been reinforced by the infusion of new blood, and is now known by the incorporate name of McConnell-Maguire Company, with ex-Senator McConnell president, J. C. Haskell vice-president and J. H. Maguire secretary and treasurer.



The McConnell-Maguire Company have each department of their business thoroughly organized, and under the supervision of men who, from many years experience in their special line, are very competent to superintend their several departments. Their system is complete and everything moved like clockwork in all departments down to the smallest detail.

Their new store was completed about the 27th of November last, when they moved into it. It is a three-story brick building, covered on the outside with cement. The size of the building is 80 x 118 feet. The arrangement of the structure is superb. In the rear of the building the floors are divided into four stories, so as to economize space. The dry goods department is on the first floor to the left; the hardware, where all kinds of hardware goods and groceries are handled, is on the right, and in the center is the gents' furnishing department, consisting of cloth-

ing, hats, caps and neckwear. On the first floor above is a toilet room and a safety deposit vault in which to keep their books and valuable papers.

This part of the floor is also used as a storage room for goods when received. On the second floor, in the rear part, are the offices of the president and private rooms, toilet rooms, reception and waiting rooms, and the millinery department. On the second regular floor is the large sale room, musical and carpet department, together with toilet rooms. The third floor is a storage room, where the supplies are kept to replenish the stock in all the retail departments. The store, offices and reception rooms are elegantly furnished with antique oak, beautifully polished and exquisitely carved. The upholstery is of the very latest styles and finest that could be purchased.

The stock of goods in this new, elegantly



M. J. Shields Co. Planing Mill, 1890s



furnished and palatial store is superb, and in keeping with a city of so much elegance and wealth. The shelves are groaning under their loads of the choicest silks and satins, and with the finest grades of every class of goods known to their business. Their aim is to supply all the wants of the people, and at a small profit. In doing so they have built up a business of which a Chicago or a New York business house might be justly proud.

## **Dernham & Kaufman**

On the southeast corner of Main and Third streets is the large and magnificent establishment of Dernham & Kaufmann. This business house was established in 1882 on the corner of Main and Fourth streets in a building only 20 by 67 feet. In this business house they remained until they also outgrew it, and their business having assumed such proportions they were forced to seek larger quarters. About the middle of August they moved into their new, commodious brick building on the corner of Main and Third streets, which has an 80-foot front and running back to a depth of 125 feet. The building is two stories high with inserted floors in the rear, thus giving them the accommodation of four floors. The lower or ground floor is divided into three compartments, one being used for trunks, clothing, gents' furnishing goods, hats, caps and neckwear, boots and shoes. In the middle compartment are dry goods and fancy goods, children, misses and ladies' shoes, and a millinery department in charge of a lady whose long experience eminently fits her for the position. In the rear are groceries as well as a stationery department, in which can be found the finest items of paper, fancy and plain. The third compartment used as a storage room, packing, office, and where the goods are received. On the second floor is the house furnishing department. In this department can be found all grades of goods, from the cheapest to the most expensive; also carpets, linoleums and oilcloths in great varieties.

They make a specialty of pianos, organs and

sewing machines. On this floor also is a crockery and glassware department where the finest grades of china and glassware and lamps are to be found and a large variety of all kinds of descriptions of window shades and lace curtains. Nor is this commodious store large enough to hold the stock of goods which is necessary for successfully conducting their business but they have leased the adjoining building belonging to McCarter which is 40 by 125 feet and two stories high. They will use for a vehicle department the ground floor. In this department will be found goods from the most reliable factories. The second floor of this building will be used in connection with the furniture department in their other building.

No business house in Moscow treats their patrons with more courtesy and consideration, and the public has shown their appreciation by patronizing them and no one who once purchases from them ever goes anywhere else for goods. They are a one price house and treat all their customers alike, and in so doing have built up an immense business. They have also a big branch store at Kendrick.

Dernham & Kaufmann carry a \$150,000 stock—the largest amount of goods in any store in the Palouse or Potlatch country. They buy in the cheapest markets and direct from the factories. They are spot cash purchasers, getting all the advantages of discounts which enables them to sell goods at closer figures than parties purchasing on time, and they now have the hard earned reputation of selling the same goods cheaper and giving the same value for less money than any house in their line of business in the Potlatch country.

## **M. J. Shields Company**

Among the great business enterprises of Moscow is the establishment of M. J. Shields Co. Mr. Shields in March '79, on the same corner where their mammoth brick building now stands, established the business. Three years ago the building in which he first did



business was burned to the ground. He immediately commenced to build another of brick, and three stories high, with a frontage of 45 x 120 feet. In October of '89 he moved into this new three story brick building. His business rapidly increased until even this new building has become too small to accommodate it, and so last spring he built a brick addition 115 x 90 feet. In the first building on the ground floor is hardware, knives, forks, cutlery, spades, shovels, tinware and all the other small articles, and variety of goods belonging to this branch of the business too numerous to mention, and the other. On the second floor is the door, sash, window glass, hardware, oils, paints etc. The third story is exclusively devoted to stoves of every grade and quality. In the new building is an immense stock of implements, from hay rakes to threshing machines, buggies, carriages and phaetons, all from factories of the best reputation. An (sic) this building is also the harness shop and store, where they make and manufacture harness and saddles, in which there is an immense stock of goods of the finest grade. In the harness making department they give twelve men employment the year round. In this department, as in the other, they have required (sic) a great reputation for first-class goods at eastern prices.

They also have a tin, plumbing (sic) and galvanizing department which gives steady employment to about twenty men. The Shields Company did the work on the McConnell-Maguire Company's new building, and for workmanship and elegant finish it cannot be surpassed in any city in the Union. Their mechanics are all skilled artisans. The Shields company also own the Moscow Planing Mills, which give employment to 50 skilled mechanics. The wood work which they turn out cannot be surpassed anywhere, for they have all the latest improved machinery, and the most competent and skilled workmen they can procure. They do a very large lumber business, and have on hand about 3,000,000 feet of lumber. The Shields Company is also the owners of the electric light

plant, besides being interested in five grain warehouses, outside of Moscow. It furnishes employment to a large number of men with a daily pay roll of over \$400. The business concern requires five bookkeepers and a stenographer. The year that has just closed has been one of great financial success to the Shields Company. They have sold about \$100,000 worth of goods, and are making arrangements to increase and enlarge their business during '92. They carry a stock of \$225,000. The aim of the Shields Company is to supply all the needs of the people with first-class goods and at bed rock prices. To Mr. Shields is due the entire credit of building up this mammoth business. Like nearly all of our great men, he commenced at the bottom round of the ladder and by hard work, dilligent (sic) application, energy and determination he has grown to be the Merchant Prince of Northern Idaho.

### **Chicago Bargain House**

The business known as the Chicago Bargain House is an exclusive dry goods store owned by Messrs. Creighton & Co. Mr. Creighton was for several years the principal buyer in New York and Chicago for the firm of W. J. Dunstan & Co., of Spokane as well as other dry goods houses in the west. His long experience has taught him what the people of the west need as well as how to purchase. He is thoroughly conversant with every part of the business and knows in what market the goods can be purchased the cheapest, thus giving his customers the benefit of his many year experience. Their motto is "small profits and large sales." They pay spot cash for all their goods and give their customers the advantage of large discounts. Mr. Creighton has been in the east ten months of the past year purchasing goods. Mr. A. Nelson who is a partner in the concern has also had a large experience in the dry goods business having been the manager of a similar institution to the one in which he is now a partner. He attends principally to the purchasing of the goods and Mr. Nelson looks after the store and sees that the customers are "treated ac-



ording to Hoyle." They carry a complete line of goods from the cheapest to the highest grades. They expect to move in about six weeks into their fine new store in Skattaboe block where they will continue to sell their goods cheaper than ever.

## Goude & Benson

One of the splendid enterprises of Moscow is "The Moscow Iron Works," owned and managed by Messrs. George H. Goude and Charles D. Benson, of the firm of Goude & Benson. This is a business of which Moscow is proud, and one which is bringing her a splendid revenue. No city the size of Moscow can well afford to be without a foundry. Besides doing general moulding and foundry business, the Moscow Iron Works repair all kinds of machinery as well as make boilers. They are agents for and manufacturers of the Golden Gate Windmills. They are also agents for the Whitney Safety Fire Arms and take orders for loading ammunition as will be seen by their advertisement on another page. They

are both practical iron workers and understand the business thoroughly, as well as live, energetic business men. The success of their enterprise is no doubtful factor. They have done considerable repairing on our press and when we say they are first class mechanics we know they are from practical experience and we say to everyone who needs machinery repaired that they will find it to their interest to have their work done at the shops of the Moscow Iron Works.

## Farmers' Bank of Moscow

Another of the leading enterprises of Moscow is the Farmers' Bank of Moscow. It was organized some time ago with the capital sum of \$50,000, with Mr. E.R. Headley, president; H.E. Gardner, vice president; L. Stanus, cashier; H.B. Gardner, assistant cashier; and for directors E.R. Headley, H.E. Gardner, Henry Dernham, L.B. McCarter and William Hunter. They will open up for business in their new and commodious building on the corner of Main and Fourth streets,



Farmers' Bank of Moscow



built of brick, two stories high with a 40-foot frontage running back 118 feet. They are equipped with a Diebold safe with three movements and Sargeant & Greenleaf automatic timer.

They will do a general banking business, draw drafts, make telegraphic transfers on any city in America or Europe. Will do a general collecting business which will be promptly and carefully attended to.

Mr. E.R. Headley, the president of the Farmers' bank, came from Springfield, Ill., well recommended, in July, where he had been vice president and one of the directors of the Loami bank. Mr. Headley brought his family with him to Moscow. He is a careful business man and with him as president and with the financial backing the bank possesses success cannot but crown their efforts.

They will open to do business about the 7th of January.

## **Commercial Hotel**

The Commercial Hotel formerly under the management of Mr. T.H. Taylor is now managed by Mr. Hugo W. Hoffbauer, formerly of Bozeman, Montana, where he resided for a number of years. Mr. Hoffbauer has been in Moscow since June. He attends very closely to the business and does all the buying himself. The table is supplied with the best the market can afford, and the hotel is managed in first class style. The rooms are kept clean and neat and everything presents a homelike appearance. It is headquarters for the traveling men who all speak highly of their treatment and accommodation (sic).

## **Moscow Business College**

The Business College is another of Moscow's laudable enterprises. It is managed by Prof. Thompson, an experienced and practical business college man. The branches taught are penmanship, bookkeeping, shorthand, typewriting, arithmetic, grammar and commercial law. The college is in a flourishing

condition and the professor says that he has a large number of pupils and a great many more will join his classes after the holidays.

## **Business Men**

One of the most prominent men of Moscow and in fact of Idaho is Ex-Senator W.J. McConnell, who is the head of the mammoth business firm of McConnell-Maguire company. Senator McConnell is a native of Michigan. He came west when about 20 years old and engaged in mining in Nevada and California. In 1862 he went to Oregon, and the following year he became a citizen of Idaho. He engaged in the gardening business and found a market in Boise. Like all of his enterprises the gardening proved to be a great success. He is a gentleman specially fitted to manage great commercial and mercantile enterprises. He was a member of the Constitutional Convention of Idaho, and his work in the convention was that of a far-seeing, practical business man, and when the question was put before the people he was an ardent supporter of statehood. His efforts in behalf of Idaho's admission into the Union was surpassed by no other one of her statesmen. He was the first senator elected to represent Idaho in the national halls of Congress and his work in the senate was characterized by the same masterly ability and aggressiveness as is shown in his mercantile business. It was a great misfortune to the people of Idaho, and of the great west, that the long term did not fall to his lot. Like Tom Reed of the lower house, he was a reformer. He is a practical man of affairs and would not be bound down by any impractical iron-clad law or worn-out custom of the senate chamber. That silence for the first six years, was golden, he did not believe, but immediately on being seated commenced to emit lightning flashes and gusts of eloquence, which made his name a household word throughout the land. He had been elected to represent the people of Idaho and he would not allow the sneers and slurs of hoary senators who had long outlived their usefulness to hinder him. Only a man of the ex-senator's dare and dash could



have had the nerve to assail so gigantic a corporation in such bold, blunt eloquence, as he did the Central Pacific in the halls of Congress.

Many of the leading papers called it gush and bluster. As well call the upbursting fountain gush and bluster. He saw a great wrong to the people and immediately commenced to right it, and we hope to see the day he will complete this work which he so heroically and ardently commenced in the senate chamber, even if it was an invasion of the decorum of that dignified body.

The ex-senator is a gentleman of splendid business ability, self-made, known as a man of genuine worth, straightforward and upright in all his dealings and a man of irreproachable character.

J.H. Maguire, the backbone of the firm of McConnell-Maguire Co., was one of Moscow's first settlers. He came here about 1877, and has had his permanent residence in Moscow ever since. He had an eye to business when he settled down in Moscow, and his keen business ability has made him known as the leading business man of northern Idaho.

Mr. Maguire is the secretary and treasurer of the newly organized firm, and attends to the office work. This is a position for which he is admirable fitted. He is also largely interested in the Moscow national bank and the Moscow savings bank, being one of the directors in both enterprises, thus giving the bank a sure financial ring.

Mr. Maguire is well known all over northern Idaho, and the people all speak highly of his honor and business integrity, as well as of his splendid ability. The mammoth business of which he is secretary and treasurer is a standing monument to his financial and business capabilities. The people of Moscow and of Northern Idaho respect and honor no man more than they do Mr. Maguire. They regard him as the father of this beautiful and prosperous city of the north.

F.L. White is another of the McConnell-Maguire Company, and has charge of the office work. Mr. White is well known all over Northern Idaho. He was formerly a partner in the drug business under the firm name of White & White. During his connection with the medical world, Mr. White amassed quite a fortune. His splendid financial ability makes him a valuable man to the business, and especially in the department under his direct supervision. He is "the right man in the right place." He managed his branch of the business with great accuracy and is a very necessary part to complete the workings of such a gigantic business. He has a host of friends who think him just as near right as men usually approach.

Another of the main men of the McConnell-Maguire Company, and interested in the firm is J.C. Haskell. He was a valuable acquisition to the Company, for he not only subscribed to the finances, but brought with him a valuable experience. He has charge of the farm and implement department, and it would be difficult to find a more competent manager for that branch of their business than Mr. Haskell. He was many years a traveler for a large implement manufacturing firm. To say that no man understands the business better than he, is no flatter (sic) or exaggeration (sic), for he not only has had a large experience, but he has a splendid business ability and added to that a natural brightness which pre-eminently fits him for the position he now fills. He is well liked and the people think highly of him.

Another of the stalwart men of the McConnell-Maguire Company is Mr. Frank A. David. He has resided in Moscow about two years. He is a native of Wisconsin where he was engaged in the drug business for twenty-two years. He is a very essential factor in the firm in which he is interested as a partner. He has charge of the help, and oversees the clerks throughout the entire business, and sees that the customers are properly treated, and get the goods they want. He is a gentleman just fitted for that position. Determina-



tion is written on every line and feature of his face, and that is one of the most essential qualifications to successfully handle clerks. At the same time he is one of nature's gentlemen and possesses the happy faculty of making every man whom he meets his warm friend. No more competent man could be selected for the position as his natural capabilities peculiarly suit him to this special department. Although Mr. David is a comparatively new comer to Moscow, yet he has made many warm friends, and has already established for himself the reputation of a first-class business man. His splendid tact and business ability will make the Company many friends and will undoubtedly assist in building up the business.

## Latah County Officers

F.E. Mix is the sheriff of Latah county, and was elected on the republican ticket by a majority of 113. Some time ago Mr. Mix held the position of assessor before the county was divided. He is a native of Ohio, from which place he moved to Illinois when he was quite young. He has been a resident of Latah county for about nine years. He has a family of eleven children. Two of them are married, and the others live at home with him. His two sons, W.R. and U.S. Mix, are his only deputies. Mr. Mix is interested in a large nursery about a half mile north of Moscow. He has all kinds of fruit, ornamental and shade trees and shrubs. The people speak very highly of Mr. Mix as an officer, and say that he discharges his duty with the greatest fidelity.



David & Ely c. 1900 (Formerly Dernam & Kaufman)



*The following material was prepared as a possible foreward to the book Grubstaking the Palouse, by Richard Waldbauer, but was never used. It is interesting and informative enough to be published as an individual article.*

## Palouse and the Hoodoo Mines

by Keith Petersen

Even the Hoodoo Mountains' name conjures up a certain sense of mystery. The area has lived up to this image from the early 1860s mining days to the present. To Latah County residents the Hoodoos are a place that has spurred mining legends and stories, some true, some not. To residents of Whitman County, the Hoodoos provided one of the first economic booms for one of the county's largest towns—Palouse. The history of the Hoodoo mining region and that area's impact on the economic development of Palouse provides an opportunity to demonstrate that historical connections pay little attention to political boundaries.

The Hoodoo mining area spurred the development of a boom town, appropriately named Hoodoo, and a variety of names upon the landscape—Eldorado Gulch, Browns Lode, Copper King, Mizpah Creek, and, of course, Hoodoo itself, which was identified not only with the town, but a gulch, some mountains, and an entire mining district. Tracing the origins of place names is sometimes as elusive as trying to hold mercury, but "hoodoo" is not uncommon as a name in mining districts. It was no doubt brought to Latah County by miners from other areas who, for various reasons, failed to find the fortunes they hoped for.

There is hardly a Latah County creek, ledge, or gulch that has escaped prospecting. Opals, copper, mica, vermiculite, asbestos, and gold have been taken from the land. It was gold, though, that brought the first whites to what is now Latah County, and the earliest and

richest of the mining areas were the Hoodoo district and its neighbor, the Gold Hill mining district.

These Latah County mining areas, though financially insignificant when compared to many mining regions in the Pacific Northwest, nonetheless played a significant role in the development of the Palouse region and the districts contributed their share of stories and legends. Emmett Utt of Princeton used to tell tales of a woman who lived on Gold Hill and ran chickens. Seems gold was so plentiful the chickens would scratch it up and, since it was bright, eat it. "And every once in awhile she'd kill a chicken and get a couple of nuggets of gold out of the goldarn craw," Emmett would say, adding, "No foolin'!"

Some of the tales of Latah County mining districts are obviously apocryphal, but these stories, if told with enough frequency and fervor, have a way of taking on an aura of truthfulness. Tales of others getting rich, usually combined with a bit of personal luck at finding color, led to what has come to be known as "gold fever," and this fever was present in the Latah County districts, just as it was in other, richer Western gold fields. It's a virus that bites you," explained Frank Milbert, who has been a Latah County miner since the 1930s. "You don't ever get away from it. And you've got it like you would have malaria. It'll pop out any time on you. You have sane or reasonable times in your life, but most of the time you have gold on your mind."



This fever brought a good number of miners to the Hoodoo and Gold Hill areas, most of them solitary bachelors who worked hard at maintaining their independence. Glen Gilder used to visit some of the Hoodoo miners as a kid in the 'teens and recalled that "They'd live there within a quarter of a mile or half a mile of each other and wouldn't go in each other's cabins once a year, most of 'em." Milbert got friendly with the old miners on Gold Hill in the 1930s and also found them to be loners. But being independent was not synonymous with being unfriendly. Gilder cherished memories of being shown around the mountains by miners who were glad to see him, and Milbert remembered that it was never necessary to take grub into Gold Hill as he was welcome at any miner's table.

Not every miner was friendly with every other miner, of course, and some of the saddest stories from the mining districts stem from racial hatred. In Latah County, as in other Western mining regions, it was common for Chinese to move into an area after whites believed they had mined it thoroughly. Chinese were willing to work for a more modest return than whites, but occasionally they were able to uncover considerable amounts of gold, which often led to jealousy. The Latah County mining areas were sparsely populated in the late 19th century, and there is little in the way of historical documentation from that time. Still, persistent oral history accounts passed down through the years substantiate stories that on at least two occasions Chinese miners were massacred by whites. A group of Chinese miners were apparently poisoned in the 1880s near the headwaters of the North Fork of the Palouse River when strychnine was dumped into their water supply, giving the name "Strychnine" to a prominent Hoodoo district creek. Later, a group of about twelve Chinese were killed on Hoteling Creek where they had successfully excavated ore in an area considered by whites too difficult to work. While the Chinese slept one night their cabin was set on fire, and as each ran from the lodging he was shot. In each case a

search for gold supposedly hidden by the Chinese proved unsuccessful, leading many future generations of miners and adventurers to try their hand at treasure hunting in those locations.

The promise of buried treasure has probably lured more people to Latah County gold fields than has the prospect of finding gold in its natural setting. There are several stories of Latah County buried treasures, including the Chinese caches, but one has more persistently encouraged treasure hunters than any other—the famous Lost Wheelbarrow Mine of Moscow Mountain. Like most legends, the tale of the Lost Wheelbarrow takes several forms with minor deviations. Basically, though, the story concerns two miners who, in the 1880s, found a rich lode of gold on Moscow Mountain and quickly unearthed \$20,000 worth of ore, hauling the gold out of the crude prospect hole with a wheelbarrow. As partners are sometimes wont to do, these two got into a fight. The older man, Casper, hit his partner over the head with a shovel and, believing he was dead, left him draped over the wheelbarrow at the entrance to the mine, took the gold they had collected, and headed for San Francisco. After a long binge, Casper found it necessary to support himself as a sailor, and spent the next twenty years at sea. One time, while his ship was moored in Portland, he was shocked to see his former partner, who did not recognize him or remember anything about the mine. Although he had not been killed, he had developed amnesia. Realizing it was safe to return to Latah County as he had not committed murder after all, Casper left the sea, journeyed to Moscow Mountain and spent over ten years wandering unsuccessfully along creeks, valleys, and ridges in search of a mine with a wheelbarrow at the entrance.

Rumors of the Lost Wheelbarrow persisted in the region, and in the late 1930s Dr. C Landis Treichler, a Palouse, Washington dentist, and Jack Moore, supposedly a mining engineer, capitalized fully on them. Treichler and Moore claimed they discov-





The Wheelbarrow Mine located north of Gold Hill

ered an old mining tunnel with a wheelbarrow near the entrance. The mine was on Gold Hill, supposedly explaining why Casper could never re-discover it in his long search of Moscow Mountain. About a year after the initial discovery, Moore and Treichler announced they had discovered a human skull—supposedly that of Casper's partner, for in some versions of the legend murder was committed. The two worked the claim, but spent most of the time working the press, and then began selling stock in the company. For 2 1/2 cents a share, the two entrepreneurs sold thousands of stock certificates. At one time there were as many as fifteen cabins on the site, used by people who worked the mine for shares because they could not afford to pay cash. Many of the stock buyers were locals, but the Lost Wheelbarrow Mine gained national attention when Treichler appeared on national radio and Paramount News sent a camera crew to Gold Hill to cover the story. Hundreds of requests for stock followed.

After several months of ballyhoo, operations ceased. Moore left the country, leaving many

unpaid accounts in Palouse stores. Miners ceased work, and the truth became obvious—the “re-discovery” of the Lost Wheelbarrow had been a hoax, the mine planted with a wheelbarrow, gold specimens, and even a skull. Treichler was charged with intent to defraud, but was acquitted. Moore was not so lucky, being picked up by federal officials as he tried to re-enter the country from Canada. He served a prison term. Rumors of the Wheelbarrow Mine riches have persisted, but treasure hunters have had no luck discovering the lode.

While Treichler and Moore were more audacious than most, the Hoodoo-Gold Hill area has had its full share of mining promoters over the years. “There’s been guys dug holes in the mountain up there and mined,” recounted Emmett Utt, but most of them would “get a few little nuggets someplace, and go around and sell stock in that mine.” A good number of mining promoters came from the town of Palouse, and there has always been a direct tie between Latah County Mining activity and the growth and development of that Whitman County community.



The *Palouse Republic* newspaper, premier example of small-town boosters, kept a diligent watch on the mining districts and encouraged town businessmen to invest in them. "Nearly every man in town . . . has a claim staked out somewhere," *The Republic* reported in 1895, and five years later reported how the Hoodoo district was alive with prospectors, waiting for the "grand boom next spring." The boom did not come that spring, but in 1904 *The Republic* reminded its readers that Hoodoo gold was of "remarkable purity." Just a year later, *The Republic* assured its readers that the Hoodoo area—and Palouse—would surely boom, because the Potlatch Lumber Company was building its Washington, Idaho and Montana Railway adjacent to the fields, and all that was ever necessary to make the district prosper was good transportation. "There is every reason to believe that by the time the railroad reaches the Hoodoo region arrangements will have been completed which will result in the development of several properties of unquestioned value, and Palouse will have tributary to her one of the rich mining camps of the Northwest," it reported. The railroad did not bring a boom, but that did not prevent *The Republic* from continuing its hopeful boosterism. As late as 1917 it reported that the Hoodoo region was "The most promising field today in the Northwest for the prospector, promotor or investor," and would one day rival the Coeur d'Alene mining district.

Such boom times never came, and the Latah County mining districts never had the riches or fame of the Coeur d'Alenes or other great mining regions of the West. But they had an impact on the lives of many—people like mining promoters J.C. Northrup and Paul Bockmeier and other Palouse entrepreneurs who invested heavily in hopes their gamble would pay off. Or people like Dr. Dart of Palouse who spent all of his free time searching Gold Hill for a rich ledge, and had his ashes scattered over the hill from an airplane when he died. Or like Allan Lamphere, Palouse banker and businessman, owner of

prospect holdings in the Hoodoos who drove into the Hoodoo Mountains in November 1953 to inspect his claims and never returned. Five years later his skull was found and these remains are buried in the Palouse cemetery under a marker that reads simply, "Lost, November 20, 1953."

Mostly, though, the Hoodoo and Gold Hill districts affected the lives of those who chose to make these hills their home, living on the hope that their prospecting might bring riches. Theirs was not the romanticized myth of Hollywood films. There was little romance involved in living in a ten foot by twelve foot cabin, often nothing more than a lean-to built in front of a hole dug in a hillside. Few miners struck it rich, and in the midst of rampant Hoodoo boosterism by *The Palouse Republic* was this 1905 story about a hard-luck miner. The story is not remarkable because it is particularly unusual, but in fact that, while attempting to get people to invest in the Hoodoos, the editor inadvertently, in his effort to tell a gruesome tale, actually came close to telling what life for many people in the Hoodoos was actually like.

One of the saddest and most sickening things *The Republic* has ever beheld and chronicled is the remarkable living death of Arthur King, an eccentric, obdurate miner of Hoodoo, who is literally dying by inches.

King is in the very last stages of a lingering death—loathsome to the eye, and more offensive to the nasal organ. Corruption oozing from his cancerous face dropping on his clothing and defiling his living apartments and the entire surroundings.

Mr. King came up from California about ten years ago and succeeded in getting into trouble and the Moscow jail the first thing. Latah County residents would have no placer mines located on their farms, and Mr. King was driven from pillar to post until he found hiding place and a field for operations at Hoodoo. Here he lived and worked, with the same meagre results following which usually attend men of like occupation. Keenly feeling



the imprisonment injury and disgrace Mr. King kept his whereabouts hidden from his friends. Time wore on and King grew older each year, and finally sure-death cancer appeared on his lower lip.

The only real desire of most people associated with the Hoodoo mining district, whether promotor or prospector, was to get in, get rich, and get out. Simply because few got rich does not make the story of the Hoodoos

any less significant than that of other Western mining regions. In fact, in many ways it makes the story more important, for the Hoodoos were far more typical than other areas with greater fame. For every Coeur d'Alene there were dozens of Hoodoos. It is unfortunate that in our effort to record the stories of the rich and famous we have too often overlooked the histories of these more common places.

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## George Cormier, 81, Active in Moscow

George Lewis "Lew" Cormier, 81, early caretaker and curator at the McConnell Mansion, died July 16, 1988 in Moscow.

He was born Jan. 22, 1907, in Cambridge, Wash., to Stella Eva and John Cormier. He was raised and went to school in Pomeroy, Wash., and attended Whitman College of Walla Walla for two years and later the Bible Institute of Los Angeles. During his early life in Pomeroy, he worked in the hardware business and for the Green Giant Company.

He moved to Moscow in 1962, and began working for the University of Idaho as a gardener, a position he held until his retirement in 1972. In the early 1970s, he became affiliated with the Latah County Historical Society, working at the McConnell Mansion as resident caretaker and curator until 1976. He later accepted a position with the Latah County Chapter of the American Red Cross as chapter executive, which he held until the time of his death.

Music was a lifelong interest, and he auditioned for the Metropolitan Opera at one time, and sang in local choirs and choral groups most of his life. He was also an avid skier and taught skiing at Mt. Hood, Ore., and swimming at the Multnomah Athletic Club in Portland.

His friends remember him as a man of firm religious principles, a man of regular habits and cheerful disposition.

At cooking he excelled, and his sure sense of interior design and landscaping made every place he lived pleasing. He had a wide circle of friends of all ages and kept in touch with students and oldsters alike. He was a neighbor you could rely on.

At the McConnell Mansion his influence may still be seen. The hedges bordering the front walk were planted by "Lew". We miss and remember this talented caring man.

Jeannette Talbott



## Moscow Schools in the 1890s

*The following letter from the Society's archives discusses Moscow public schools in the 1890s. It was written to then Superintendent L.C. Robinson by Moscow's first Superintendent of Schools, John C. Muerman, who came to Moscow as a teacher in 1890. In 1891 he became principal — the highest position at the time, and, as the number of pupils grew and teachers were added, he was nominated as Superintendent in 1894-95. He was Grand Mason of Idaho in 1899. He was drafted in 1901 to serve in the Philippine campaign. He returned to Moscow in 1965 at the age of 100 and was honored by the local lodge. He died at the age of 104.*

Dearfield, Ohio  
March 31, 1953

Superintendent L. C. Robinson.  
Moscow City Schools  
Moscow, Idaho

My dear Superintendent Robinson:

Your kind request for some recollections of the early days in Moscow and the city schools bring back memories of over sixty years. I can hardly believe it has been so long, but the date is 1890-1901. "The Gay Nineties."

In the eastern and middle states conditions in general, at that time did not seem to offer opportunities that could be found in the West, especially did this apply to teaching, with low wages and often the school patrons did not realize the importance of a good education. Horace Greeley's advice, "Go West young man" was also heard at this time.

From friends and an uncle who lived in Seattle I was somewhat familiar with a small part of the West and decided to go to Seattle.

I had taught in my home school town for several years. At the close of the school term in June, 1890 I purchased a railroad ticket to Seattle, Washington. In a religious paper I read a letter from a man who was once pastor of the home church, now pastor of a church in Cheney, Washington. A letter to him brought an early reply stating that he lived in a young growing city in Idaho territory called Moscow, and it would be well for me to "get off" at

Spokane and come down to Moscow, and at that time the railroads were very willing for you to "stop and see the West." The last day in June saw me at the railroad station in Moscow, Idaho territory (as it was then) and a two mile walk out into the country over the dusty road. Yes, dust far superior to anything in Ohio both in "quantity and quality."

Here I was surprised to meet several friends I had known in Ohio, and one was a member of the local school board and he gave me the welcome news that they wanted a teacher right away for two months at \$50 per month. The County Superintendent issued me a permit to teach in District 13 until the next regular examination in August. My average daily attendance was about 17 pupils. The salary in Ohio was \$35 and the Board there required, or tried to require, me to teach every other Saturday, this I refused to do.

A few days later, July 2, the old cannon became the glorious welcome to a new state, Idaho. Then came the only Fourth of July of its kind ever celebrated in Idaho, the placing of a new star on our country Flag. There was a large crowd of people from the surrounding towns, and rural districts. The speeches were full of bright and flowing prospects for the opportunities offered to settlers in the "Palouse Country." Some of these hopes have already been realized, but the "end is not yet." Very little attention was paid to a shower in the afternoon which only "laid the dust."

The order was excellent, and the friendly



spirit, the ample "basket lunch" for everyone only added to the joyous occasion. I could not fail to notice some who wore their old blue uniform of the G. A.R. Hall which served Moscow as a useful Community Center. It was a large building and the G. A. R. Veterans who owned the building were generous in letting it be used for all public purposes as well as for the usual "Bean bake" of the Order. Some one should write the history of the old land mark and the purpose it served.

In this old hall we had at times some excellent "stock companies" that gave us a week or two of excellent programs. Once a "promoter" organized a local company and put on a play called "The Poor of New York." The company produced it in Colfax and Pullman but it hardly paid the expenses and some were heard to say the name should have been changed to "The Poor of Moscow."

But a play by local talent named: "The Old District School" was greeted with a full house and almost one hundred dollars profit was used for charity or the school library.

While Moscow was not located on the main line of a great Western railroad, it could not be called a "dead town." Once we had an excursion to Spokane to see an Opera called "The Flying Dutchman or The Phantom Ship." The branch line of the Northern Railroad furnished the transportation and a good crowd took advantage of the trip. A YMCA did good work for a time. "K" company of the Idaho National Guard, was mustered out in 1893 and I hold an honorable discharge as Sergeant. We saw actual service in the Coeur d'Alenes. The Fraternal Orders were well represented. Also the Denominations of the different churches. Politics were not neglected and the political parties were well represented and at times very much in evidence. The early settlers from the Middle Western states were for the most part in the majority and most of them kept the same name they had in the home state.

A fair association was formed, and it opened

an excellent exhibit in the fall of 1890 for one week, but heavy rains finally closed the fair entirely.

Some rivalry among the fast growing towns in the Great Northwest could be noticed, but it was not serious and a friendly spirit of cooperation for "the greatest good for all" seemed to be the motto.

Freight rates between the East and the West, "Tide water rates" and the interest rates on money were among the questions discussed at this period. The big "Idaho Potato" had not as yet been discovered but most historians I hear agree that living conditions were better in the Northwest than in most other parts of the Great U. S. A. The fish industry, lumber, the rich fertile land and the fruit all seemed to more than balance the higher cost of clothing and other necessary articles that required "long hands".

### **The Schools:**

My application was placed with the clerk of the school board and accepted. And on September 8, 1890, I reported for duty as a teacher of the 8th grade and assistant to the Principal at a salary of \$70 a month for 12 months.

In August one of the best County Teacher's Institutes was conducted by a Professor Danford. At the close of the two weeks Institute an examination was held for all who wished to teach in Idaho. Applicants were from many states some looking for places but for the most part, they already had places to teach subject to passing the examination.

I shall never forget the Geography list. One question was, "Draw a map of Idaho and locate the cities, mountains, rivers, lakes, and counties." To those applications coming from Kansas, Ohio, Nebraska, and Indiana, and Illinois, etc., it was a hard question and it counted 9 points out of a possible 10. Several failed, but the County Superintendent made some concession and they passed.



The only school building was the Russell and what a fire trap it was. The few pupils in the high school were in the same room as the eighth grade and this grade had 44 pupils which made for a crowded room. The other rooms also were crowded. At one time two rooms on Main Street were used. This crowded condition affected the discipline and school work and no relief was given until the completion of the brick high school.

During the fall of 1890, the two upper rooms went out to the mountains near some old mines, and had a most enjoyable picnic day, with an abundance of "good eats."

About the second or third year, 1892 or 1893, on account of financial conditions, the school year was cut short one month. The Teachers with the cooperation of the pupils worked hard to complete the full terms work and in a large measure succeeded. I took advantage of this "vacation" to visit schools and study school systems of a few well known schools. My salary was on a 12 month basis, but no part of the trip was paid by the school board. My interest was largely in the Primary Department, teaching methods and discipline. "Individual instruction" was advocated by some educators which took me to Pueblo, Colorado for about a week and then to Youngstown, Ohio, stopping on my way to visit some Primary Departments in the St. Louis schools. On my return, Salt Lake City, Portland, Boise, and Spokane, were "Ports of Call." As the systems visited were larger than Moscow, I did not pay much attention to the administrator, but I did gain much information in selecting text books, and the history and English books were changed that year in Moscow schools. It also made me realize that we were fortunate in having local teachers well qualified in Primary work and in the upper grades, but we did not have as many qualified for these grades so the "turn over" was much greater in the upper grades at that time. It is certainly a pleasure to know that the school board has so well remembered the good work of two of these faithful Pioneer workers in the schools.

I have said that the old Russell school building was a fire trap. The school board installed an alarm in the building and fire drills were made a part of the regular school program. So well did the teachers and pupils perfect this drill that you could hardly believe the short time it took to perfect "safety first" drill.

The state Grand Lodge of the I. O. O. F. visited the schools when they held their annual meeting in Moscow and one of the members referred to the drill rather doubting the time record. A stop watch was given him and the record was beaten by 2 or 3 seconds. One of the Grand Lodge delegates had reason to regret forgetting the order to "stay out of the line of march."

One of our difficulties, hard even now to meet, was irregular attendance. The country was new and many families were undecided where to locate permanently. In the rural districts about Moscow prosperous farmers would "come to town," rent or even buy a house, put their children in school; but in the spring the children often were needed for farm work before the close of the school term. In the fall they might enter a month after the beginning of the school term. Time and conditions have now changed this, but it was once the cause of many headaches, for often our brightest and best pupils came from the rural area. In the University the entrance requirements were so low that many of the advanced pupils in the high school were eligible for admission. While we realized the great value of the University and its worth to Moscow as well as the necessity for a good enrollment and its effect upon appropriations for support, we did regret to see some of our prize pupils leave us. Time also has made a great change in the matter of standard courses of study and entrance requirements for admission.

The school boards in those early days in the Independent Districts once made a demand on the Superintendents and high school principals that they take the County Examina-



tion for teachers. About twenty-four hours notice was given us, but all complied with the demand. It was given but once. Some passed with very low marks and then sought other positions for the coming school year. I had already secured a state life certificate upon the presentation of my college work in Ohio, but I took the examination with the rest and still have "my first grade county certificate." Some of the boards did not approve the "trick."

A teacher suggested that we invite the Pullman teachers over to spend a day in our schools sometime. The Moscow School Board heartily approved the suggestion and an invitation was sent and accepted by the Pullman teachers. The day was set, also an invitation was sent the Pullman School Board to attend a banquet in the evening and meet the Moscow Board. The day and evening were enjoyed with an attendance of all concerned except one detained on account of illness. The high school pupils took charge of the entertainment in the evening with the assistance of the teachers. We were at a later date invited to Pullman for a similar visit and an equally "good time" was enjoyed by all.

I believe the first few years from 1890 can be called the period of adjusting or trying to adjust the schools to existing and changing conditions in Moscow. We had criticism. One of the heaviest taxpayers (he said this himself) wrote several articles about the schools. Some highly critical of the school system. He was invited to visit the school, shown every favor and courtesy possible by both teachers

and pupils. His final article for the press was satisfactory to all concerned.

Another patron demanded the teaching of the ABC, for "how can my children ever read a letter file?"

Questions of discipline came up, teachers abused before their students in the school room, fortunately very few cases of this kind. The vast majority of the patrons gave their full and loyal support to the schools, even going out of their way to commend the work of a good teacher. Only once did the Courts take notice of a case in discipline. Fortunate indeed was Moscow in the early days to have a school board interested in Public Education.

It was not my intention to make my life's work in the field of education when I first came to Moscow. In fact I "read law" under a Moscow judge for over a year; but I soon realized I had "a full time job on my hands" and gave it my full time and energy, leaving Moscow in July 1901 to sail on the U. S. Army Transport, Thomas, from San Francisco to Manila, Philippine Islands July 23, 1901.

I believe it was Kipling who said: "There are lessons you learn from the Brown that help you a whole lot with the White." From personal experience I can reverse this by saying, "There are lessons you can learn from the Whites that sure help you a lot with the Brown and the Yellow."

J. C. Muerman



*The following informative letter was received as a comment on our recently published article entitled "Prairie Castles."*

Latah County Historical Society

Latah Legacy  
To the Editor:

I have just read the article "Prairie Castles" in your Spring Issue. I am concerned that a number of statements in that article can leave a misunderstanding of history. Some of these items are as follows:

(1) Page 14, "The breaking plow...was pulled by one or two horses." The breaking plow was a very heavy plow. The normal team was three, or more horses.

(2) Page 15, "In 1859 it was brought from California to Walla Walla." This particular seed may have been brought as indicated. However, wheat had been raised at Walla Walla for several years before 1859. The seed for such crops was brought from Oregon.

(3) Page 15, "The reaper was an important first step...first hundred bushels of wheat, etc." The statement is clear that the reaper threshed the grain replacing an earlier method of trampling the grain. The reaper only cut the grain, replacing the scythe. It did not tie the grain in bundles, nor did it change or replace any previous threshing method.

(4) Page 15, "a man sewed the sacks...closing the sack with nine stitches." Wheat sacks were always sewed with eleven or twelve

stitches. Nine stitches would permit the wheat to leak out.

(5) Page 16. "Each sack of wheat held two bushels which weighed 120 pounds." The sacks when filled weighed 140 pounds on average. The weight varied from 137 to about 145, depending on the quality of the wheat and the man doing the sewing. There was never an effort to measure only two bushels into the bag.

(6) Page 17. "A team of blind horses driven in a circle provided the first source of power." While this may have been true in this particular instance, the impression is left that only blind horses were used for such purpose. Such was not the case. Horse power was used in this manner to provide power to threshing machines and feed grinders on the farm. Blind horses were not used there.

(7) Page 20. "Framed wood covered with sheets of galvanized, corrugated steel was construction typical of the 1950's." By the 1950's, farm storage was pretty well standardized with circular bins made of curved sections of galvanized, corrugated steel. Commercial storage used somewhat larger bins of the same type, or concrete. Nearly all of the storage is still in use, and can be examined.

(8) Page 22. "In 1974-75 the United States exported 28,225 metric tons of wheat." This figure is completely in error. In a number of recent years, over a million tons of wheat have been shipped for export from the Port of Lewiston. I believe this amounted to somewhat over 1% of the total export of the nation.

Sincerely yours,  
Carl C. Moore, Lewiston



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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.