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# LATAH LEGACY

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- Touring in the 20s*
- Growing Up on the Ranch*
- Two stories by Edna Burton Bower*
- Springtime in Moscow*

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*The cover photograph shows University of Idaho graduates and observers in front of the old Administrative Building in 1903. The class president, Thomas Jenkins, is speaking. The stairs on the right figure prominently in the reminiscence by Margaret Nell Longeteig on page 19.*

The Latah County Historical Society, a non-profit organization, was incorporated under the laws of the State of Idaho in 1973 as the Latah County Museum Society, Inc. In 1985 the Articles of Incorporation were amended to change the name to its present one.

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## Touring in the 20s

by Jean Rudolph



*Jean and her brother, George, standing in front of the Capitol building in Washington, D.C.*

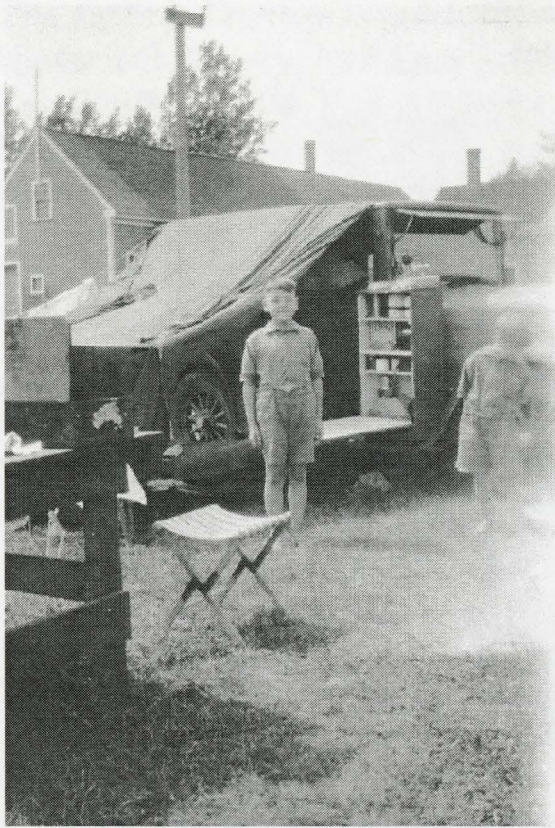
“You always stubbed your toe the first day and I spent the rest of the trip trying to keep it from getting infected,” Mother complained when we reminisced about those long summers on the road. Judging by the pictures, I seldom wore shoes or wore any clothes but big brother's last year's khaki shorts and shirt, and I never had a store bought haircut.

There we are, George and I, posed in front of historical monuments from one end of the country to the other. I suppose I absorbed some history, but the strongest memories are of heat, dust, and interminable delays while Dad changed tires. This was a long process involving prying the flat off the rim, patching the tube,

pumping it up, and cramming it all back on the wheel. And we had lots of flats.

Tires weren't very sturdy and the roads were terrible - narrow and largely dirt. I think one flat a day was average, and one day we had four. The muttered theory was that a tire shop had seeded the road with nails. But the rottenest days were rainy, when we had to set up camp in the mud.

Dad's job at Lake Forest College, Illinois, in the 1920s, included a house on campus, rent free during the school year. We weren't evicted during the summer, but had to pay rent. Since he had no classes, Dad decided we should see what he felt were the important places of our



country. Whether it was cheaper than rent I have no idea. Besides, he must have liked to drive long distances and camp out.

Modern campgrounds were largely non-existent; so, dragging everything with us, we proceeded at the stately pace of 40 miles an hour or so across the continent and back for several of my childhood summers. A couple of times "everything" included Chief, our white collie. If we found a reasonably attractive spot, we simply stopped and pitched our tents.

George and I were happiest when we camped at a school, which might have swings and teeter totters. Once in a while we left the tents strapped on the car and luxuriated in a room,

running water, electricity and much needed baths at a tourist court, the groups of tiny cabins which, too late for us, grew into motels with swimming pools.

Being self-contained obviously took some doing, but the big boxy Studebakers we owned accommodated a lot of attachments. A few boards on one fender kept Chief from falling off, a tall box on the other fender held dishes and food, and the open box lid was our table - ingenious if rather unsightly - and certainly not aerodynamic. A few years later I suppose we'd have been called "Okies," with boxes and bundles tied on everywhere.

Sleeping quarters were deployed on both sides of the car, and a floorless tent attached to the roof covered the collapsible bed for Mom and Dad. George and I tossed our bedrolls on the canvas floor of the tent on the other side. Well, actually our part of the family bedroll. This fat bundle rode between us in the back seat, and George kept shoving it over on my side, pinning me against the door.

Mother settled the inevitable squabbles by condemning the worst offender to time on the hot floorboards under her feet. Being older and smarter, George usually managed to make it seem my fault. No wonder he called me half baked!



*Traveling through the northern California redwoods*

Years later when I was the mother, my husband used to say that it took two for cross country trips: one to drive and one to hit the kids. I've never forgotten how thin the tent wall seemed one night somewhere in the wilds of Wyoming when a coyote howled nearby.

Lamps weren't required; we just went to bed when it got dark. But we had folding canvas stools, a camp stove, and a big squat green Thermos jug with a bent lid for water. When we whined for a drink a lot got spilled as mother passed us a capful on those bumpy

roads.

I don't think cross country treks were common in those days (our Eastern friends were sure we'd be scalped), but we went to the Pacific Coast at least twice. A few roads were so narrow and crooked Dad had to back up to get around curves.

Mom and Dad learned about climate on one trip. Mother was surprised to find that our khaki outfits weren't enough for a foggy July in San Francisco. She was expecting sunny California, but she had to buy us sweaters. I don't remember what she and Dad wore, something sturdy and dirt colored no doubt.



Sifting through the old pictures, I note the only ones where I'm wearing shoes are the cities - New York, Philadelphia. But the Washington, D.C., shots show us in snazzy non-khaki outfits! Seizing an opportunity for an actual laundry, she gathered up our clothes after we went to bed and took them to be done professionally. Only trouble was, in the morning she found she'd taken ALL our clothes.

We saw Washington in our pajamas while she ran in to buy us new outfits. This is noticeable in the DC pictures and some Philadelphia ones, but we appear later, barefoot and in cleaner khakis, at the Washington monument.

Some of the snapshots are marred

by streaks where the folding bellows cracked and let in light. There are not as many photos of the West: the redwoods, the ocean, Pike's Peak, Yosemite, and feeding bears in Yellowstone. But we certainly hit all the Eastern spots: Plymouth Rock, Boston, Grant's tomb, the Statue of Liberty, Mount Vernon, the Capitol, Gettysburg, Independence Hall, and Betsy Ross's house. They never went south, I suppose because it was even hotter than the Midwest. And, Mother's dad had fought for the Union in the Civil War.

There was of course no radio to relieve the tedium. Dad conjured up games like completing the alphabet, in order, from the roadside signs, which were few and far between on many stretches. The Burma Shave ones were a highlight.

Some days he would assign George Fords and me Chevvy's, and whoever had counted the most by the time we camped didn't have to do the dishes. Come to think of it, we couldn't carry much water. I wonder if we ever got them clean.

And Dad could spout an endless stream of silly songs. One went:

Grasshoppers run loose in Kansas,  
Grasshoppers run loose,  
As big as a goose,  
And spit tobacco juice on Kansas.

We were expected to join in on *Old McDonald*, *Clementine*, *Sweet Adeline*, *Springtime in the Rockies*, and the like. Actually we had a fair family quartet when we were older with Dad's tenor, George's bass, and Mother and I alternating alto and soprano.

My favorite was *Little Grey Home in the West*, so I was happy in 1929 when the trips ended at a new home in Moscow (and it was grey!). Not that we didn't trek back to Iowa and Nebraska to see the relatives, of course.

The camping didn't end right



away however. Moscow was having one of its housing shortages, and we camped for several weeks where the swimming pool was later built. Mom and Dad hunted for a house to buy. In order to get out of living in the tents, they finally rented one they didn't like with the provision that the rent would go toward purchase if they found nothing better.

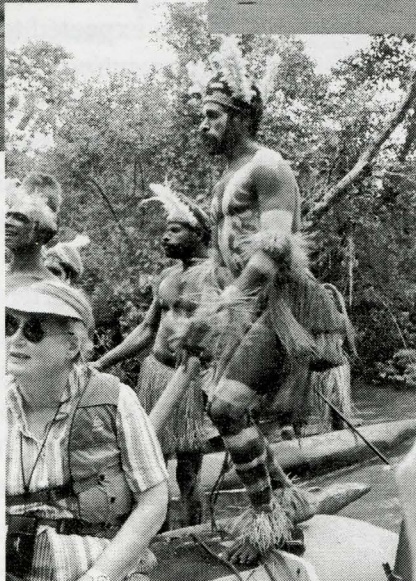
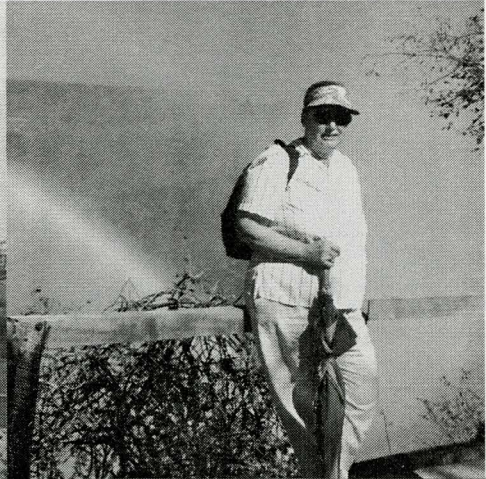
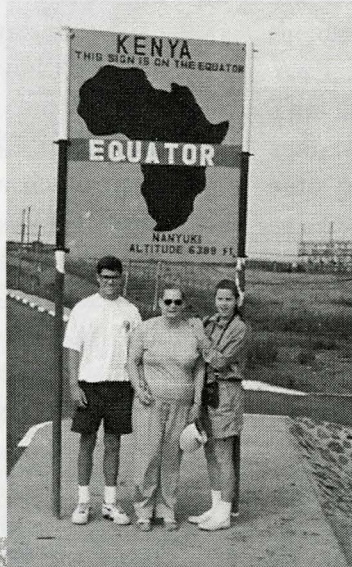
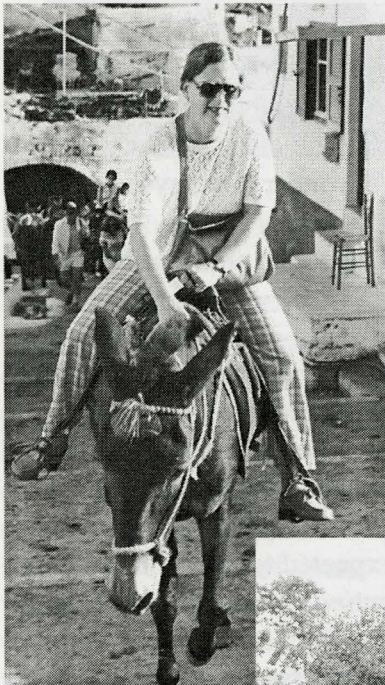
We lived in that house until 1961, paying a total of \$2500, as I remember, for a pre-1900 house that still stands on North Howard Street.

Perhaps I learned some history and geography, but I definitely wound up disliking tents and long car trips. Travel has been my pleasure in recent years, but never by car!

**Editor's Note:** *Jean Rudolph has written several articles for the Latah Legacy. In more recent years her travels have taken her all over the world and into some adventurous situations.*

*When she's not traveling, Jean spends Tuesday mornings volunteering at the historical society.*

*Below are scenes from her travels in Greece, New Guinea, Kenya, Victoria Falls, and Japan where she enjoyed a cooking session as part of an Elderhostel program.*



## Growing Up on the Ranch by Nettie Gale

### Introduction by Lee Gale.

*Our two daughters kept after Nettie to put down in writing some of her memories of her early life growing up on the old ranch. I suggested to Nettie that it would be nice to have her story on tape, and for her to tell it. So this was done by reading the document she had written. The record was made while we were living in Colfax in the early 1990s. I thought she did an excellent job. I am also grateful to Rachel Gleason for helping out in all of this by transcribing the tape.*

*As to other information or remarks about Nettie, I would be at a loss as to what to include with her story. I might say she grew up with many special talents, especially music and playing the piano and organ. She was active in many Potlatch community projects, where we lived for many years, and was talented in making quilts. She loved to be out in the woods, and the highlight of any camping trip was picking huckleberries. Her huckleberry pies were second to none. Just ask any of her grandkids!*

### Way Back When

My father, John Christian Gleason, was the eldest child of Christian and Anna Margaritha Gleason. Both grandparents came from Germany to Spangle, Washington, where my grandfather served at one time as the town's policeman. Keeping law and order in this small town was no problem except for the horse thieves. Grandmother Gleason was 19 years of age when she arrived in this country and 57 when she died in 1904.

My mother, Ida Nettie, married my father shortly after her 17th birthday. She was the daughter of Charles and Lucinda Frick. Grandfather Frick was a veteran of the Civil War.

He and my grandmother operated the only hotel in the town of Spangle when the railroad

went through. My grandmother served family style meals for 25 cents. She also did laundry for the boarders.



*Ida Gleason.*

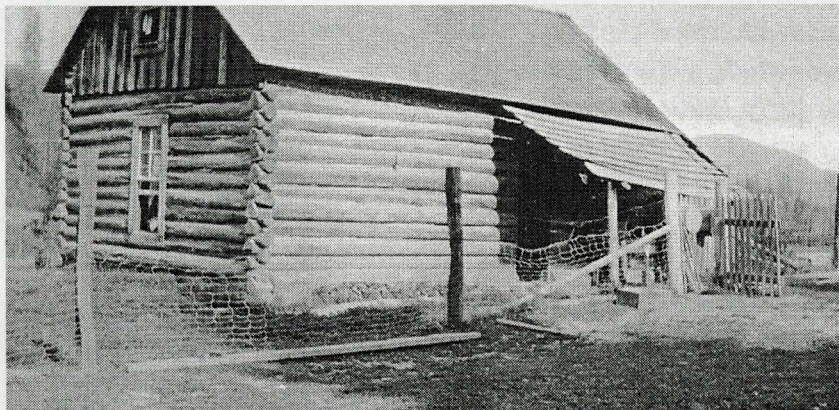
My mother had 10 brothers and sisters. I remember hearing Mother tell about the year when she was in seventh grade. She started to school, but turned back. She returned home to help her mother and never went to school again.

I am the fifth child of John Christian and Ida Nettie Gleason. I was born on Timm's place, a small farm near Spangle, on December 21, 1908. Uncle Timm was the brother of my grandfather Christian Gleason.

My earliest memories go back to our new home near Harvard, Idaho. It all began when Dad read about this recently logged-over land in Idaho being for sale. It must have sounded like a

good investment to him, as he was soon the owner of 80 acres of this land located on an old railroad spur. One of the Hengen families also bought land in the same area. Years later, my sister, Margaret, married one of the sons, Leslie Hengen.

I am sure that it was not easy for my mother, who was born and raised in Spangle, to move away from her family. However, in November 1911, my folks loaded the household furniture and all the family treasures into a covered wagon, and moved from Spangle to Harvard a distance of about 65 miles. The ranch was located on Maple Creek, one mile from Harvard.



*The original cabin built in 1911 when the family moved from Spangle.*

The first winter in Harvard we lived in a rented house just across the road from the schoolhouse. I spent hours at the fence watching the kids at school play at noon and recess.

My folks chose a lovely place to build our log house. It was less than a mile away from the rented house. The site was just above the creek, at the foot of a high hill which we called the mountain.

Our first winter in Harvard, father spent getting the logs down to the building site. They had to be uniform in size and were pulled down the mountain by the same horses that had moved us from Spangle. The hoops of the covered wagon were eventually hung on the side of the barn and were never used again.

In the spring the logs were peeled and put in place. I can remember when I was 3 years old sitting on a log and pulling the knife toward me and seeing how slick and shiny the log was underneath.

Our log house had two stories, and at the end of the kitchen there was a ladder to climb

upstairs. Later on we had a real stairway. The house, barn, and chicken house were all built of logs.

Next came the well. It was only 50 feet deep and had to be braced up on the sides with rock. The water was pulled up in a pail with a rope going through a pulley overhead. When Dad worked on the logs, I was allowed to help. However, on days when Dad worked in the

well, I never got to go along.

Clearing the land was the next big job. What stumps couldn't be pulled with the horses had to be blown out with dynamite.

Father never, ever beat the horses to

make the pulls. Picking up sticks and stumps were a part of our lives as long as we lived there, especially for the boys.

I know for a fact that my brother John couldn't have been more than 13 years old when he went alone, taking the horses, some dynamite, and the go-devil to clear the land.

Springtime was a beautiful time on the ranch. I especially remember the song of the chickadees and the sound of the rushing water as it came tumbling down over the numerous falls between the hills on its way to the creek. I can still hear the red rooster crowing in the morning and the ringing of the cowbells as the cows started to eat.

Springtime also meant sheep shearing time which I dreaded. The older sheep didn't mind and would be pretty happy about the whole thing, especially when it was over. The little lambs, born with long tails, had to have them cut off when they were young, which was a traumatic experience for them and me, too.

Preparing the wool to be used for such things as sweaters, socks, caps, and mittens took



a lot of time. First the wool was washed and all the burrs picked out, then it was put to dry in the shade before bagging. Carding the wool came in the fall and winter. Mother used wooden brushes that had wire teeth. The brushes were pulled in opposite directions until all of the wool fibers were smooth and no knots were left. It was really hard work.

There was the spring plowing, too, which Dad always started as soon as it warmed up enough and the soil was dry. The horses and plow turned over only a single furrow at a time, a much slower process than it is today.

Spring was a time for planting a vegetable garden. It was also a time for setting hens because that was the only way we had to get little chickens. When the eggs hatched the mother hen was put in a coop with her brood and was fed and watered there until the little chicks were big enough to follow her.

Soap making was another chore that demanded time and attention. The ingredients were grease, lye, and water which were cooked in a big black kettle over an open fire outside. Someone had to be constantly stirring the mixture. When the cooking time was over, it was poured into frames which helped to make a good shape. After the mixture cooled, it was cut into bars. This soap was used for washing clothes because in those days soap couldn't be bought in boxes.

Monday was wash day and I mean it took a whole day. The big black iron range had to heat the water hauled from the well. Sheets, pillow cases, and all white things had to be boiled in the boiler. The socks were all turned and washed on both sides. Fortunately, we had a washing machine and plenty of manpower to run it.

Every two years another baby came along, and everyone took his turn pushing and pulling the handle that ran the dasher inside against the corrugated sides of the tub. And eventually you got all of laundry run through, rinsed, carried out, and hung on the clothesline to dry.

Now a big iron range is a joy in the winter time, but on Tuesday morning in summer when

you had to heat those sad irons to iron with, it was not. Even though you were in school, you still knew it was Tuesday by the smell of the kitchen and the freshly ironed clothes hanging around when you got home from school.

The same range had a tank which supplied us with hot water. Keeping this tank filled with water was a job for my brothers. They also brought in the wood that kept the monster fed. If we ran out of wood in the summer time, we had to go to the woods and haul more home on a go-devil. A go-devil is a rough sled made of wood, pulled over the ground by horses. The runners are made of two small logs slanted upward in front. One soon learned to stay far behind because it could easily slide into your ankles.

Most any day was bake day, but Mother regularly baked on Saturday. She bought flour by the barrel which was equal to four, fifty pound sacks. And many weeks it would take almost one fifty pound sack. She always baked six loaves at a time in two big black tin pans.

During the first World War we had to use lots of cornmeal because flour was not always available. In those days there wasn't such a thing as yeast cakes. Instead, we used yeast sponge starter. We kept this active for years by adding the water from cooking potatoes to the crock that held the starter. Then when we baked bread we just took from the crock what we needed for the day. It was really good tasting. And if you



*The home that replaced the cabin*

put your ear close to it, you could hear it fizz like 7-Up, and you could feel it on your face as well. We also made our own vinegar. We started it with apple juice which we kept in a keg.

There was never a shortage of dairy products at our house. We always had plenty of milk and cream, and we made our own butter and cottage cheese. One day, I remember so well, our neighbor's cows were dry and the mother sent her oldest girl, with a nickel, to our house to get a gallon of milk. Mom filled a pail for her, cream and all.

As the days grew warmer, our activities changed. Hay making was always around the 4th of July. If the hay was in the barn, then we could go to a nearby 4th of July celebration which was usually at Grizzly Camp. Most everyone in the community took a picnic dinner with a home made freezer full of ice cream. We listened to patriotic speeches, played in the river, played ball, and just visited.

Huckleberry time came about the end of July and each summer, we had one camping trip up to the HooDoos on the Palouse River. We took the team and buggy. Usually my brother Bud and I went with Mother, and we'd sleep beside the water.

Mother so much enjoyed visiting with the people who lived along the road and they liked visiting with her too, as they had few visitors. They would tell us where to find the best berries.

One time we had to break camp early and go home because Bud had a toothache. It was so dark going through the woods that Mother couldn't see to drive, so she just hung the reins over the dashboard and said, "Go home Prince." And the team did. I knew where we were when we got to Strychnine Creek because we could hear

the water as it went under the bridge.

At other times we went by horseback up Maple Creek and climbed Gold Hill on that side. If you wanted to get up there more quickly you could always hang on to the horses tail. A horse is like a dog. He needs to belong to someone to be trusted and loved. They will do anything as long as they know what is expected of them.

In summertime the cows were unfenced, and left to graze and forage wherever the best grass led them. By evening they could be far from home. As we grew up, Bud and I took turns in going after them, always noting when they left, which way they went, and listening throughout the day for their bells.

Sometimes a cow expecting a calf would hide out, and it took quite awhile to find her, although we always tried to keep these cows in. If by chance a cow did calve outside the fences, the newborn had to be brought home on the horse with Bud holding it and going very slowly.

Once when going for the cows we were on a narrow trail going over the hill to Jerome Creek when Bud and Old Bess both spied a bear on the trail ahead. Well, Bess threw us both, knocking the breath out of me. When I was revived, I looked up to see that Bud had the reins and was holding Bess who was rearing and blowing. It was a while before we were able to mount and ride on. It was dark by the time we got home that night, and Mother was worried.

Everything had to be confined at night because coyotes came right into the yard for chickens and ducks. One day I took a double barreled shotgun and loaded both barrels and went out to get a chicken hawk that hung around all day. I was so surprised to get him with one shot that I forgot the other



*Ida Gleason feeding an orphaned bear cub.*

barrel was loaded. On breaking the gun apart the loaded barrel went off right between my feet. It really dug a hole in the ground. I was kind of scared of guns after that.

Threshing time came at the end of August. It was a big day when the threshing machine came up our road. It took between 12 and 15 men to keep the machine running. The boys drove wagons bringing the sheaves to be threshed. Straw was blown out into one huge pile and the wheat went into sacks. Dad was the sack sewer and went wherever the threshing crew went.

At noon the men all came in to eat, and what a huge meal had to be prepared. Some of the men had to feed and water all of the horses before they came in. I'll never forget how fast those pies disappeared.

How we kids looked forward to that huge pile of straw after the threshing was finished. It was then that the fun began for us. We'd haul out our denim mattresses and fill them with fresh straw. How good they smelled! We stuffed them as full as we could, and Mother would sew them shut. About this time my brothers always moved their beds to the barn.

What a thrill it was to go to bed that night. You could fluff these straw-filled mattresses just like you could a feather mattress. The straw was also used for bedding in the chicken house.

We seemed to get along just fine, in those days, without many of the things that most folks consider necessities today. For instance, in that long ago time, we had no telephone, no electricity, no refrigeration, no radio, and the TV had not been invented. We had nothing made of plastic, no toilet tissue, or other paper products. There was, however, the Wards and Sears catalogs.

On hot days we hung our butter and cream down in the well. In the country store there was no meat, milk, dog food, or fresh vegetables. We used kerosene lamps and lanterns. There were no packaged cookies. However, crackers

and pickles and gingersnaps were sold from barrels.

So, if there was no refrigeration how did we make ice cream? Long ago, some folks had ice houses which were insulated well with sawdust to keep ice far into the summer. These huge chunks of ice were harvested from the river in the winter. Putting up ice was a winter time chore for all who had an ice house. And one could buy ice by the chunk from the store.

It was an exciting time when someone came out our way, as company was rare at the ranch.

We expected to see the McNess man, once every summer with spices, vanilla, new pots, and pans. There was the Watkins man too, who brought salves, ointments and also Lydia Pinkham's vegetable

compound.

Sundays were special. It was then, we got into our clean, ironed, cotton best clothes, wearing our tennis shoes freshly polished with Bon Ami and went to Sunday School. We each got a penny to take for the collection.

The music was so wonderful. We received a picture card with a Bible verse on the back along with our lessons. I usually went home on a cloud. Except for the story about the man who killed the fatted calf for the errant son who returned after squandering his share of the family wealth. I was always in sympathy with the one who stayed at home and worked. Well, I knew what work was. I kicked dirt clods all the way home at the injustice of it.

We also went to Christian Endeavor which was on Wednesday night and was led by the young people. Again it was the music that I was so hungry to hear. I remember a time or two pestering Mr. Canfield to keep on playing. Anyway, one day, it just so happened to be February 14, he hauled his mother's old organ on a sled up to our house. I learned to play this organ long before I could ever read a note.

Dad would sing or play on the mouth organ tunes he loved until I could play them, then he

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**How we kids looked forward to that huge pile of straw after the threshing was finished. It was then that the fun began for us.**

---

and Anna would dance.

Maybe you wonder what we did for fun. In the summer we played baseball in the evenings, Run Sheep Run, or Ante-Over until it was too dark to see. In winter we went coasting. We could start way up the mountain and coast clear to the creek.

We also had coasting parties in town. When it was too dark to see we would go inside and go to bed. Mom who was already in bed would call out, "Wash your feet," followed by, "are all the children in?." Then we would all have to call good night to each other.



*A group of Camp Fire girls and their leaders. Nettie's sister, Anna, is third from the left.*

Anna and I belonged to the Camp Fire girls, so we got in on some camping and picnics at Grizzly Camp. Those were interesting times and we learned a lot. There was also a Parent Teachers Association and school programs. But there is only one time that stands out in my memory. The school kids were in the program, and when it was over the chairman asked if that was all. I was surprised when my brother, Bud, raised his hand. He said that he would sing a song. That was fine with everyone. So he went on the stage and sang a parody on "Froggie Went a Courting." It was just a little bit naughty, but the crowd just clapped and cheered. There were lots of verses. I thought it would never end. I'll never forget him standing

there in his knee pants and his black stockings jiggling from one foot to the other in time to the tune.

Well, we didn't tell Dad when we got home. He always said in his lectures to the boys, "You'll wind up in the penitentiary." For years every time a letter arrived from a brother who had gone away, I looked first to see the return address.

In September we had to get back to school. I helped mother with the sewing. The boys had to have new shirts, the girls had to have new dresses to start with, and for winter there was long underwear. Also, everyone had to have new shoes.

Girls had never heard of slacks in those days or store-bought dresses. Unfortunately, there were no church bazaars or rummage sales to help out in clothing our big family. We were entirely dependent upon our own resources.

When we came home from school we would usually find Mother carding wool or quilting with fresh baked bread on the table and a kettle of soup on the stove. If she was quilting when we got home she would have one of us help her pull the quilt to the ceiling on four small pulleys, out of the way, until she had time to quilt again.

My first chore after school was to fill the lamps with kerosene and clean the lamp chimneys and trim the wicks. Most of my work was in the kitchen. Anna and I seldom had time to be outside. But I liked to take care of the ducks and the sheep the best.

I first started school in September when I was five years old, and continued to go until just before Christmas time when the snow got too deep for me to walk, even though Dad went ahead of me to break the trail. Then I started again the next fall when I was six. I was so timid and afraid of doing something wrong. The teacher was very strict ducks and the sheep the best.

I first started school in September when I was five years old, and continued to go until just before Christmas time when the snow got too

deep for me to walk, even though Dad went ahead of me to break the trail. Then I started again the next fall when I was six. I was so timid and afraid of doing something wrong. The teacher was very strict and there were so many rules.



Harvard schoolhouse with all eight grades, 1911.

The school house had two floors. The first four grades were downstairs and the upper grades were on the second floor. You raised your hand with one finger up to go to the restroom outside. To sharpen your pencil you waited until recess or noon. No one must whisper or look behind.

I took phonics, penmanship, spelling, and reading. In reading each grade had to go forward to sit on a bench and read the lesson, each child reading aloud. When you passed fourth grade you went upstairs to the fifth grade. When you finished the eighth grade you had to take the state exams to pass.

The teachers always exchanged with other local school teachers in giving these tests to avoid the temptation of helping a favorite student. If anyone failed to pass the test they had to take the eighth grade over. So of course

everyone was anxious to get the test grades back from Boise. When the returns finally came it was good news for everyone. How we cheered!

The next fall there were only two of us who went on to high school in Potlatch. There were no school buses or paved roads in those days. During my first two years I boarded out in Potlatch except for returning home on weekends. The last two years I walked three miles to and from school. At that time we lived at Princeton. In later years, when I met a student who did not go on to high school, he would quip, "We went through Harvard together didn't we?"

As I said earlier, there were no radios or TVs, so information was scarce. We did, however, subscribe to the *Daily Spokane Chronicle*, as well as a monthly farm journal called *The Idaho Farmer*.

Our wish books, the *Sears and Roebuck* and *Wards* catalogs came early every fall. If my sisters and I wanted anything, the answer was, "Cut it out," or, "Pretty is as pretty does." If my brothers wanted anything, the answer to them was, "Fine clothes don't make a gentleman." They couldn't buy anything, anyway.

Well, I don't have to tell you we were poor. But we didn't know any other way of life, and folks all around us lived the same way. Some of the years were awfully hard, especially when there was sickness. On two different occasions the ranch was mortgaged. Claude had pneumonia two different winters, and John had typhoid fever one spring and was in bed one whole summer. Dr. Thompson came up on the noon train from Potlatch and would go back on the afternoon train. The typhoid fever was hard on John's heart, and he was never strong after that.

When my brother, Virgil, the oldest child, family graduated from the eighth grade, he went to Kinman's business college in Spokane. After completing his studies, Virgil went to work in the Potlatch Bank. He spoke to me once about how hard those years were.

Whenever a new baby came along, Mother just sent for the neighbor who lived over on

Jerome Creek who acted as midwife. She would come over and tend Mother. From then on Anna and I took over.

Then there was the time Margaret and Claude got into a bee's nest when they went down to meet Dad coming home from work. Claude came bringing Margaret home with bees in her hair and all through her clothes. He had a bee in his ear and all through his hair. I'll tell you they were pretty sick kids for a week.

Late in the fall when the weather grew colder, my father would butcher our winter's meat. Taking care of the meat was quite involved, it was time to render the lard, make little pig sausages, and smoke and cure the hams and bacon.

Some of the meat was put into a salt brine. Nothing was wasted. Meat from the head was either put into sausage or head cheese which was so good in sandwiches. The feet were skinned, cleaned, boiled, and made into pickled pigs feet.

Night came early in the winter time, and all chores had to be finished before supper. The boys put the hay down for the horses and cows. And when we saw Dad coming to the house with the milk pail in his hand and the lantern light shining on the snow, we knew it wouldn't be long until supper.

Someone would separate the milk from the cream. Then Mom filled the bowls with soup which had those delicious noodles swimming on top, and there was fresh baked bread and butter. My, wasn't that the best food ever.

This story wouldn't be complete without the outhouse. It was set away from the house, among the trees and beyond the woodpile. Hopefully, anyone returning would be encouraged to bring back a load of wood to the house. Placed between the seats was a *Sears and Roebuck* catalog. On winter days, the snow blew through the knothole, on one side, so it was not a comfortable place to go and one didn't linger long.

The same knot hole was handy in the summer time to peek out and see if the old red

rooster was about, before you ventured out. He would fly at you and scratch your legs with his spurs if you gave him half a chance.

You had just as well call for help because he would stay as long as you did. Strutting up and down and just daring you to come out. He reigned as king of that flock way too long.

During the first World War, we kids could sense the worry and pain our parents were going through. Friends from Spangle as well as Harvard served in that war and many did not come back.

When it was about over, Dad would walk to town every day to get the paper. When the Armistice was finally signed on November 11, 1919, we were all waiting in the yard for him when he came into sight at the end of the woods, wildly waving a green sheet. This sheet held all of the important news of the day. We were ecstatic. The war must be over. The little kids, not realizing the reason for so much joy, played leapfrog across the dry grass in the yard. We could hardly wait for him to get home.

A couple of summers ago, I drove back up the old road to look the place over. There had been many changes. All of the old log buildings were gone. Gabriel's log house across the road had tumbled down and was covered by bushes. The two big black stumps where the boys used to hide behind to play their cowboy and Indian games were gone completely. But the big fir tree that always leaned so far over the bend in the creek is still leaning there.

Yes, there have been a lot of changes, yet I had vivid memories of how it used to be. I could almost hear the song of the chickadee, and I could visualize the first yellow violets by the creek. How beautiful it all was. I was tempted to look for caddis fly cases in the creek, or lady slippers at the end of the woods, but I didn't linger.

Sheep were still being raised there, and they continue having twins just as ours once did. These kids belong to 4H and take their sheep to the Fair in Moscow which was not something my siblings or I could do. I'm so thankful for

that progress. These kids really have a chance to learn.

Finally, I don't think that anyone will ever see again the crisp, still, winter nights, the snow glistening in the moonlight with the sky so studded with stars that it was almost as bright as day. The beauty of it has stayed with me even to this day.

Yes, I have lots of memories, good friends, and a loving and caring family to share it with. I'm glad I grew up there.

**Editor's Note:** *Nettie and Lee Gale lived in Potlatch for many years. Nettie was active in*

*the Potlatch theater group, the local 4-H club, the Potlatch Library, and the Presbyterian Women's Association. She also was the pianist for a dance band in the 1920s and 1930s, and taught piano for over 30 years. Lee Gale was a manager at the Potlatch Mill. He provided much information and many insights and resources, including photographs, for the book, Company Town.*

*In 1988 the Gales moved to a retirement home in Colfax and then to Clarkston, Washington. Nettie died in May 1998.*

## Two Stories

by Edna Burton Bower



*Richard Read playing in the back yard in front of a clothesline of freshly washed sheets. Photos of backyards and ordinary workaday scenes are fairly rare.*

### Yea, Good Old Days!

The “good old days” never existed . . . actually.

Like the wonderful pies that grandmother used to make, they are leftover memories, accumulated during childhood, with all the unpleasantries deleted by the passing of years. The mind plays happy tricks on us, making us forget the long trek to the hilltop orchard in our bare feet to obtain the apples for grandmother's masterpiece; the wood we so laboriously cut and carried to heat the old iron oven in which it was baked. By the time it was served we kids were so famished that it became “food for the Gods” and as such, it was remembered.

Do you recall the innumerable trips we

made with gallon lard buckets to the distant creek for water? Or sometimes it was to the backyard well where the old pump required the weight of two and a half kids to depress the handle. The water came in dibs and dabs, taking forever to fill the bucket. Remember that ever-thirsty reservoir attached to the cook stove? We never could figure how so much cold water went into it but so little hot water came out.

Then there was the hungry wood box that worked on the same principle, and the ash box that worked in just the reverse. How we dreaded emptying the ashes as they got into our eyes and noses and made such a mess for us to clean up afterwards.

My memories cling to that battered granite washbasin residing on an apple box outside the back door where workmen and dirty kids were expected to wash up at mealtime. We tried to wash our faces first, before the water became too saturated with grime and lye soap, though we sometimes became half-frozen before our hands were considered clean enough to make a dash for the old roller towel hanging inside the kitchen door. Finding a clean, dry spot usually required the magic of a Houdini. Luckily a wet kid with his eyes full of lye soap is not very particular. A gunnysack would have served the purpose.

My fondest memories of the “good or bad, old days” are of the hours, when snuggled between handmade woolen comforters and a feather mattress, I drowsily listened to the pitter patter of raindrops on the roof so close above my head.

*Those were the moments, the stuff that dreams are made of!*





*The University of Idaho once had a collection of animal specimens in the main hall of the old Administration Building.*

### **The Owl in My Icebox**

When my "intended" first invited me into his parlor to see his menagerie, I felt much as the hapless fly must have felt upon entering the spider's domicile. Menagerie! I thought I had heard everything, but this was a new twist to the old "etchings" gimmick!

Upon entering that huntsman's paradise I found the man had literally meant exactly what he had said, "menagerie!" I stood wide-eyed and gaping as I left the hair rise on the nape of my neck. Glassy eyes stared at me from every nook and cranny. Their gaze followed whichever way I turned my head in undisguised criticism. (If you have ever opened a magazine to suddenly meet a pair of unavoidable eyes, you know what I mean. You, like me, probably slammed the book shut. All I could do at that moment was stare back!)

Animals were everywhere. Birds! Birds! Birds! Huge hawks glared at me from bare tree limbs, talons clinging tenaciously to their

perches. Barn owls swung precariously on half-moons from the ceiling; several of the great horned variety sat ogling me from small tree stumps. While many other varieties of the bird kingdom sat, heads cocked, casting quizzical eyes in my direction.

In a far corner I saw a bear cub, ready to climb a snag in case I ventured too close. While a bobcat stood, back arched, mouth open with white teeth gleaming in angry protest at having his domain invaded by a stranger. That oversized feline could have torn me to ribbons when alive! I restrained the desire to arch my back and hiss right back at him.

Then suddenly I noticed the masked face of a mischievous raccoon poking his snooty little nose around the corner of the lounge, too inquisitive to remain out of sight. Unable to resist the urge I brazenly winked back at him.

Boldest of all were the large animals, who appeared to have poked their huge head through the upper walls and, being unable to force further entry, yet unable to retreat, apparently

decided to remain there. Their great glassy eyes followed my every move.

The adorable deer, the stately elk, and the majestic moose all appeared to be my friendly enemies! Had I walked outside, I would not have been too surprised to see their posteriors protruding from the outer wall.

"Don't you ever get the idea that you are being watched?" I asked my future intended as I stared in openmouthed consternation.

He grinned and answered, "Sort of."

"My gosh! You have everything here but a rattlesnake and a vampire bat! Rattlesnakes are poison and bats carry rabies, so you avoid them, I suppose?"

"They wouldn't bite or carry much of anything here," was the laconic reply.

"How about moths? This place looks like moth and flea heaven to me," I said.

"One bite out of any of these animals would spell 'curtains' for the guilty party," he explained, "these things are deadly."

Being a lover of all wild things I felt the hackles rising on the back of my neck. This place was a morgue! My stomach contracted as though I had just swallowed an underripe persimmon. Good Lord! I was planning on marrying a murderer!

Sensing my reaction Charley explained, "I did not kill them. They were brought to me after they were dead - for preserving."

I sniffed derisively. I had always thought that preservation of animals meant preventing their demise - not stuffing their empty carcasses! Somewhat mollified by the knowledge that this man's hands were free of guilt I heaved a sigh of relief and asked, "Do you still practice taxidermy?"

"No, I did this years ago. I just keep these for people to admire."

"H-m-m-m," I muttered thoughtfully while still feeling a distinct distaste for the whole bloody business. Animals are meant to be admired alive, in their own natural habitat, not glued together and crammed into this wallpaper jungle. If they were D.O.A. then I guessed this

guy had to be A-I, OK!

When Charley and I were married we moved into a trailer near his mother's big house. The menagerie, whether his or hers, remains in the big house as when I first laid eyes on it, for which I am grateful. As long as my husband's handiwork was to become a thing of the past, I had no fear of its ever invading my domain. Never could I appreciate becoming the curator of such a museum of deceased artistry . . . even though it was the work of my beloved husband's hands. I find it morbid, this kind of dead animal sanctuary.

However, through the years, nine to be exact, someone often calls, claiming to possess a 'cadaver' he would like to have preserved, or a set of animal horns he desires to have mounted. Generally my husband says no to the former and as the time permits, he affixes the latter to a wooden foundation as a favor to a friend or neighbor. However, he keeps the wherewithal for continuing his art work in his possession at all times . . . just in case. It could be that he is biding his time until such an hour that I shall give my approval, if so, has a mighty long wait ahead of him indeed.

A close friend to my daughter found a small barn owl that had frozen to death. That winter had indeed been a sorry one for many such birds, so many perished despite human efforts to help them. The lady thought, "this bird, if stuffed, will be just the thing for perching upon that piece of driftwood that adorns the basement wall."

That ill-fated little bird could have suffered a worse ending, if anything can be considered worse than death. He could sit upon his lofty throne and admire the red carpeted floor, the soft furniture, and muted lighting, and (let us not forget) the black leather bar with its chrome stools and foot rail, and all those expensive goblets.

Since that tiny body was frozen stiff the lady gathered it up, wrapped it in a piece of meat paper, and placed it in her locker box. Later she inquired as to whether my husband would stuff

and mount it for her. He, of course, said he could and would, if or when he had the time. Knowing that my daughter could get it to Charley, the bird ended up in her locker for an indefinite period of time before she remembered to deliver it to us. One evening, weeks later, it arrived at my house like a frozen ham hock, to take its place in my food locker.

Since my man happens to be an incurable procrastinator, I still find myself stuck with an unidentifiable packet of frozen fluff that invariably seems to get in the way of my groping fingers in their search for hamburger. The idea of harboring a frozen barn owl, feathers, guts, and all, slightly nauseates me. The first time I grabbed that package my mistake and felt the feathers give beneath my grasp, I sputtered, "Oh drat! The freezer has gone kapoot!"

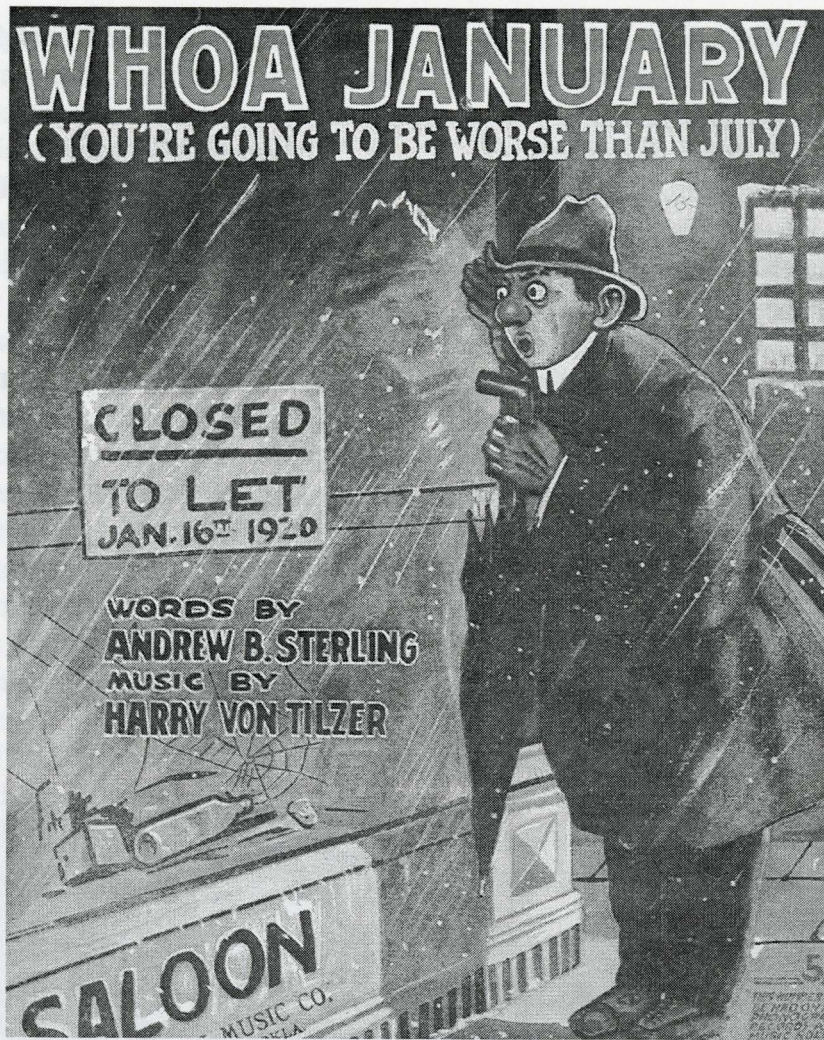
When I squeezed the next package and found it firm the truth hit me, and the owl bird hit the floor.

"I'll burn that consarned thing!" I swore. Then remembering its owner, I carefully retrieved the bird and replaced it in a special location and mentally labeled it, "Sleeping Beauty, do not disturb."

But somehow that packet keeps getting moved about and eventually makes its way back into the hamburger department. After several years, I now squeeze every package before defrosting it. I feel sure my husband would fail to appreciate overripe barn owl; however, I might choose to serve it anyway. And who knows, with science freezing bodies to be resurrected at some later date, this fortunate (?) little fellow may awaken to get a bird's-eye view of the year 20,000!



*Fred Hecht and Roy Gladden take a break from sawing and splitting wood, another task from the "good old days." Photo donated by Marilyn Sandmeyer.*



The national prohibition act, passed in 1919, inspired this song as citizens faced the prospect of a dry and cold January 1920 when the law went into effect. Jeanette Talbott donated the sheet music.

The first of July they said we'd go dry  
 And everyone thought there'd be nothing to buy.  
 But you got yours, and I got mine  
 And every one was happy. We were feeling fine.

But soon we'll be through, then won't we feel  
 blue.  
 No more we'll hear that "have another" sound.  
 Can you picture the saying "gimme some tea"  
 When Mister January comes around.

*Chorus*

Whoa January, oh January  
 I hate to see you come 'round.

July was mighty tough,  
 But we could get enough  
 And if we knew the barman  
 We could get the regular stuff.

But oh January, whoa January,  
 I'm so sad I want to cry.  
 You're the month that's going  
 To make my life a wreck.  
 I know I will turn into a horse's neck.  
 Whoa, January, when you go dry,  
 You're going to be worse than July.

## Springtime in Moscow by Margaret Nell Longeteig

**Author's note.** *My grandparents Jasper and Nellie Jolly came to Moscow in 1891 by emigrant train from Michigan. They stopped in Moscow because it was the end of the railroad. Grandpa soon got a job as delivery man for the main grocery store. Ida was born in Moscow in 1891, and Effie, my mother, in 1893. When Charlie was born in 1895, he completed their family of five girls and three boys. They bought a homestead relinquishment and moved to the prairie north of Nezperce in about 1898. They proved up in 1904 and went to Twin Falls, but soon returned to Lewiston and lived in the valley for the rest of their lives. Both Effie and Aunt Hattie told me this story of the slide on the steps of the University of Idaho Administration Building. When I first went to college in the fall of 1936 I happened to meet old Mr. Creighton, and he remembered my grandfather who delivered groceries.*



*Jasper and Nellie Jolly in 1896 seated with their eight children.  
From left to right are Hattie, Minnie, Ida, Myrtle, Charley, Effie, Tom, and John*

It was a nice Sunday in March, One of those days on the Palouse that gave hope of spring really coming after all. Since the usual toys and games were off limits, Sundays were supposed to be quiet and religious. Ida and Effie were bored. Big sister Minnie was washing the dishes from Sunday dinner and Myrtle was drying. Hattie was probably bored too. Not that they had diagnosed their feelings as such because children in the 1890's hadn't heard the word, bored. But they were restless and tired of their Sunday School papers.

In fact it was Mamma who suggested that

Sister Hattie take them for a walk (a decorous walk was allowable on a Sunday afternoon). From their home on Asbury street they started toward Paradise Creek, but since they had on their Sunday dresses they didn't go near the edges, only looked over the railings of the bridge.

Up near the top of the hill the new University building reared up in all of its three-story height of red brick. A wooden sidewalk led up the hill to keep the students out of the super sticky Palouse mud. Since no one was around, the trio decided to go investigate what

the building looked like close up.

The front entrance stood out imposingly with a long flight of concrete stairs leading up to massive front doors, nearly a story above ground level. In those days, handicap access was not considered, and university students were supposed to be strong and active. After staring at the majestic front entrance, they sat on the steps in the warm sun before climbing to the top of the stairs.

When they arrived, Effie gazed down the long, smooth concrete banisters on both sides of the stairs. Although the youngest, she was the most adventurous. It looked to her as if sliding would be the easiest way to get down to ground level. Climbing to the top of the banister she put her plan into action. Since it was a long way to the ground, she didn't try to do it standing. She hunched down into a squatting position and found that the soles of her shoes would easily slide easily down. Down she went.

It looked like such fun that Ida and Hattie followed suit. In fact, why stop with one slide? They climbed the steps again and slid down several times more.

It was Ida who discovered the draft under her skirts. The flour sack panties she was wearing were not made to stand much abrasion. There were two neat holes in the seat where she had rubbed them on the way down. Upon her exclamations of dismay, Effie and Hattie made the same discovery. Oh, woe! They were new panties. Mamma had bleached the flour sacks by boiling them in soap suds and hanging in the sunshine until they were nice and white and didn't say "Princess Flour" any more. Then she had stitched them up on Auntie Russel's new Singer sewing machine.

Oh dear, Oh dear! It was a sad and subdued group that morosely walked down the hill and home. By unspoken agreement they did not tell Mamma their troubles, but things like that cannot be hidden for too long. Next washday they were called to account and the story was told.

Mama hid her amusement under some very real exasperation and immediately gave all three a patching lesson. They had to patch the holes with unbleached flour sacks that still had printing on them! And since the rest of the garment was new, those panties seemed to last forever.

After the Jolly family had moved away to the Nez Perce Reservation, the fine University building burned and the concrete steps were hauled away to a dump.

Fifty some years later someone noticed that all the concrete was still intact. The steps were hauled back to the much enlarged campus and set against a hillside to be used as a path between classes. However Effie's daughter noted that the concrete had weathered and gotten so grainy that probably no one was tempted to use it again for a slide.

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**Author's afterword:** *My mother was Effie Jolly. Being a women's libber before the term was invented, my mother always signed her name Effie Jolly Waters. She drove the Model T Ford and could change and patch a tire. She always said she couldn't bob her hair until they got a newer car because she'd fix the cotter pin on the gas line of the old car with a hairpin.*



*Effie Matilda Jolly about 6 years old in 1897.*

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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 traditions 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. Subscriptions 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:

	<b>Member</b>	<b>Friend</b>	<b>Contributor</b>	<b>Sustainer</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>Patron</b>
<b>Individual</b>	\$10-15	\$16-30	\$31-75	\$76-150	\$151-499	\$500 up
<b>Family</b>	\$15-25	\$26-50	\$51-100	\$101-250	\$251-499	\$500 up
<b>Business</b>	\$25-50	\$51-100	\$101-250	\$251-350	\$351-499	\$500 up

*\*Note: For Canada and Mexico, add \$4; for other countries, add \$8.*

Privileges are identical for all classes; the higher categories and sliding scales are available to those wishing to make a donation above the basic membership dues. We sincerely appreciate these donations which help us provide our many public services. Dues are tax deductible to the extent allowable by law.

**The services of the Latah County Historical Society** include maintaining the McConnell Mansion Museum with period rooms and changing exhibits; preserving materials on Latah County's history; operating a research library of historical and genealogical materials; collecting oral histories; and sponsoring educational events and activities. Our mission is to collect and preserve artifacts, documents, photographs, diaries, and other items relating to Latah County. These are added to the collections and made available to researchers as well as being preserved for future generations. If you have items to donate or lend for duplication, please contact us.

**Our library and offices** are in Centennial Annex, 327 East Second St., Moscow; hours are Tuesday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The McConnell Mansion Museum is open Tuesday through Saturday from 1 to 4 p.m. Visits to the museum at other times can be arranged by calling (208) 882-1004. Admission is free to members and donations are requested for non-members. Our FAX number is (208) 882-0759 and our e-mail address is lchlibrary@moscow.com. The Mansion's first floor is handicapped accessible. Researchers who cannot access the Annex can telephone or write us; research materials can be made available at the nearby Moscow Library.