

Lane County
Historian

The Lane County Historical Society

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The Lane County Historical Society

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Cover

Clearly they grew logs big in the old days. We don't have much information about this photo other than a label that reads "16,000 ft. of logs, Marcola, Oregon." Curtis Irish had this picture in a collection of photos of early Marcola-area sawmills where his father, Charles Irish, worked starting in 1906. For more early photos of Marcola mills, plus some recollections of Marcola in 1906, please turn to page 69.

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Footnotes to history

A collection of vignettes and curiosities about Lane County history, such as: An Indian medicine man's diagnosis—worms in the neck. And the cure: Surgical removal. Gathering medicinal herbs in early days. Case of the missing key.

From the annals of Indian medicine

In 1946 the legendary Cal Young, son of Oregon Trail immigrant Walker Young, taped an interview about the early days of Lane County. He passed along several historical vignettes he had picked up from his father. One of them dealt with the role of the traditional Indian medicine man. For years the story rested in the archives of the *Historian* in the form of a partial transcript. The late Cal Young, for whom a school and a street in Eugene are named, was not only a revered civic leader in Eugene, but a noted storyteller who, according to one source, "told his stories with a twinkle in his eye."

Mom and Dad, the story goes, had barely settled on their 320-acre Donation Land Claim in 1852 when they learned of the plight of a "very sick Indian" on the land. His constant coughing led the Youngs to suspect consumption, an early day term for tuberculosis. The medicine man had a different diagnosis.

"This sick Indian told my father that the medicine man was coming over that night to treat him for worms

in his neck, and Daddy asked him if it would be all right if he came and watched."

Treatment occurred in the Indian's home, a dugout on the side of a hill. The medicine man drew coals from a small fire in the home, and used two bones to pick up a "little round marble-looking thing" and hold it to the coals. It started to burn. He blew the flames out and held the hot object to the Indian's neck.

"Of course the smoke just flew and Dad could smell the flesh burning," recounted Cal Young. The medicine man then "grabbed the raw spot he'd burnt with his teeth. He sucked and sucked, and Daddy thought he never would quick sucking, but finally he got this worm."

Dad's inspection of the worm showed it to be a flat, stretchable object an inch and a half long and a third of an inch wide.

"He couldn't tell its head from its tail. He just took this worm and put one end of it on this coal of fire and it'd burn. Daddy blew the flame off this thing and smelled it, and it proved to be nothing but an old piece of rubber boot the doctor had in his mouth all the

time. He was to receive ten head of ponies from the Indian for removing this worm. The Indian was supposed to have worms in both sides of his neck, but the doctor came so close to killing the sick Indian that he postponed the next treatment to another day. Daddy called on the sick Indian the next day and told him what happened. He said, "If I was you I wouldn't give him a single one of those ponies."

More early day medical practices

Speaking of medicine, *Historian* archives contain transcripts of several interviews done by the late Hallie Huntington in the late 1960s and early 1970s when she was president of the Lane County Historical Society. One time she interviewed Walter Wallace who was then 84 and lived near Mohawk. He was the son of Jim Wallace, who had a homestead on Wallace Creek. In the interview, Walter Wallace talked at length about his paternal grandparents. Grandmother was likely a Warm Springs Indian, he said, and grandfather was a herb doctor whose knowledge of herb medicines derived to some extent from Indian lore.

"I can remember when I was a kid I helped my dad gather herbs for his father when he got too old to get out and gather them for himself," recalled Walter Wallace. "My father took me up there on the cliffs, tied a rope around me, and he'd throw me down over the cliffs to pull up some of that herb. He called it princess pine. Made tea out of it, or syrup, for kidney trouble. It just grew on the cliffs, right in the rocks and crevasses. I'd get all I could. Then

he'd pull me up and put that in the sack, and then he'd swing me down another place. He swung me around where I could get 'em. He never dropped me. He made medicines out of this stuff. It helped—it done lots of good.

"He went in the swamps and got some herbs there, too. There was something he got down there in the marsh, made a red liniment out of it. You'd put it on something that was sore. It would deaden it and you could operate on it. That was his anesthetic. I don't know what they called it. I was just a little kid. I saw him operating on an Indian chief. He had an arrow in his shoulder. I saw him pull it out. It [the herb medicine] would keep it from getting infected. It sure deadened it. He said he didn't feel anything."

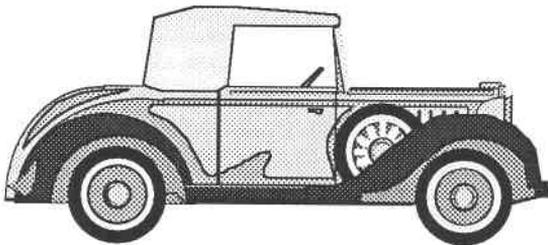
The fee for this medical service was one pony for the doctor's son, Walter Wallace's dad. "He told Dad, 'Now you take that pony home.' He called her Nellie—gentle as she could be. Mother, she rode her down to the store at Jasper. Carried her eggs."

Dad and the old chief shared hunting experiences, Wallace recalled. When the chief was traveling through the area, he'd camp at Dad's place, and "him and the old chief would go out a-hunting when they'd get short of meat. They'd kill each one of 'em a deer and hang it up, come back, and squaws would take the ponies and go get the deer." On one occasion the old chief camped on the land while the family was away. When they returned the old Indian had gone but had left a memento of his presence, a gift for the family. "There was a deer hanging up in the woodshed, all dressed as nice as you ever saw."

Strange case of the missing auto key

Jasper Hills was the oldest boy born to Cornelius and Sophronia Hills, Lane County pioneers who settled on a 640-acre claim west of Springfield after their arrival across the plains in 1851. The Lane County community of Jasper is named for him.

Jasper Hills was a Lane County pioneer in many respects beyond the mere fact that he was born into a respected immigrant family. He purchased the third steam-powered donkey engine ever built by Willamette Iron and Steel Works in Portland and used it in his logging business. He was not the first in Oakridge, eventually his residence, to buy a car but he wasn't the last. One day he took the train to



Eugene and, after a half-hour of driving instruction, returned to Oakridge with his new 1917 Maxwell, making the 50-mile trip in a little over five hours. His family marveled at the saving in time, because the same trip with a team of horses would have taken ten hours at least. Two or three years later he bought a new Dodge, and this car had among its many innovations a starter switch that operated via the ignition key, the way cars do today.

Jasper's son, the late Lawrence Hills, recalled an incident with that car in his 1982 book, *Tales from the Hills*.

"One day when I was riding with Dad, I noticed a crack in the key where it went into the ignition switch. . . . I told him that if the key broke off inside it might give him a lot of trouble removing the broken piece." Jasper vowed to get a replacement but never did.

One time Jasper decided to drive the Dodge up to Rigdon Ranch, 21 miles up the primitive Military Road that once was the primary wagon route across the Cascade Mountains between Bend and Oakridge. So primitive was that road that the first car to traverse it, in 1911, took a month. Cars had improved since then, but the road hadn't.

Jasper started the perilous journey to Rigdon Ranch, and wasn't heard from for several days. Not to worry; he typically spent time at an abandoned cabin Steve Rigdon had built about 1870. Then one day a man on horseback arrived in Oakridge with a message. Jasper had somehow lost the key to his new car. Could someone be sent to rewire the ignition to get it going again?

Yes, a mechanic left by horseback for the day-long ride to Rigdon, and Dad was soon on his way home with the hot-wired Dodge.

The incident was forgotten for more than half a century.

Then, in 1976 son Lawrence, by now a prominent auto dealer in Oakridge, chanced to visit Rigdon with a new-fangled gadget that had spawned a new hobby. A metal detector. He spent hours using the detector to unearth historical artifacts from campgrounds used by pioneer travelers. When he eventually reached Rigdon Meadow—the Grand Central Station of trans-

Cascade travelers—he expected to hit the jackpot.

To his dismay, he found little of value. A final humming of the detector prompted him to make one last attempt.

From two inches beneath the surface, he dug up an old car key. It bore a small crack on the shaft and had the inscription “D.B. 84.” DB meant Dodge Brothers.

“It was then that I remembered what had taken place 54 years before, and I am convinced this must be the same key my father had lost on his trip in that early Dodge.”

Speaking of footnotes, a tale out of the old west

Elsewhere in this issue (page 81) we have a story about how John, the Idaho sheriff, met Annie, the Oregon farm girl. Author Marshall B. Shore sent along an interesting footnote to that story, as follows.

When former sheriff John Howell was in his 70s one of his daughters was a school teacher in Berkeley, California. She was living in a boarding house, and one of the other residents was a newspaper reporter. He tried to date her—hassled her in “bizarre ways,” recounts Shore. The old sheriff warned the reporter that if he didn’t leave his daughter alone, he’d kill him. At least one court restraining order forbade the reporter to confront the daughter. The hassling continued. Two weeks later the sheriff pushed open the door to the reporter’s room and shot him dead. A coroner’s inquest ruled the incident justifiable protection of the daughter’s honor, and the old sheriff was never brought to trial.

Catching up with correspondence

Former teacher Vivian Harper Pitman, the subject of a story in last summer’s *Historian*, reports that it was her hometown of Paisley, not Eugene, where she played piano for the silent movies for 50 cents an hour.

Paisley was and is a small desert town near Lakeview, and Mrs. Pitman passed along some recollections of those early days.

“My grandfather built a community hall that boasted a stage, and the name Opera House was chosen. Local talent, as well as traveling companies, staged shows. The hall also boasted a fine dance floor, and Saturday night dances were a ‘must’ for all ages. I recall the masked balls at holiday time. Grandmother took my little brother and me to see the grand parade of costumes. . . . And we glowed with pride when our parents ‘won the prize waltz.’

“I’m enclosing a copy of a long-ago favorite U. of O. song [titled *As I Sit and Dream at Evening*]—we sang it between courses at dinner. Fraternity men sang it when they serenaded the sororities. It was sung on floats that used to drift down the old mill race on Junior Weekend. I’ve wondered if it could be brought back.”

Alan D. Powers of Anchorage, Alaska, writes:

“George Beres’ interesting article, “Rose Bowl Mania,” [Spring 1995] contains a small error regarding football rules in effect in 1958. If Joe Shaffeld played both ways in the 1958 Rose Bowl game it was because of Joe’s excellence, not because of the rules. The relaxation of substitution rules

started in the late 1940s. For example, Norm Van Brocklin and others did not play both ways in 1947.

"Before the substitution rules were relaxed, starters got a lot more game time than now. But even then the rules did permit a player to return to the game in the quarter following the one in which he had been pulled. This situation led to some interesting strategies regarding which players started the fourth quarter."

Hugh H. Hughes of Bryan, Texas sends us verse depicting some fond memories of a childhood in Lane County. He was born at Hayden Bridge in 1912.

*Running off my elbows
Ripe Elberta peaches
Grown on McKenzie River bottom
Tender and sweet as lasting love
Nothing else could near compare
Not even Mom's annual pie
On canning day.*

*Glen and Dora farmed the place
Which included cauliflower and cabbage
How tiring to hold those sticks upright
In holes that Dad had dug
One summer day when I was five
Helping plant those little trees
For a canning day.*

*Summers late when I bit
Into the tender yellow flesh
Of the blushing fragrant fruit
The day we got the crate
Of fully ripened peaches
Though juiced gushed down my arms
It was worth it all
On canning day.*

At last! The official history of Eugene

The City of Eugene this fall will publish its own account of the city's history, a well-documented 164-page volume that is scheduled to go on sale in December.

Titled *Eugene Area Historic Context*, it is part of the city's work in historic preservation. For the person interested in the community's history, it is an encyclopedic chronology of local events and developments through six eras: Native American and exploration (through 1845), settlement (1846-1870), railroads and industrial growth (1871-1883), progressive era (1884-1913), motor age (1914-1940), and World War II era to 1945.

The volume does not cover the most recent half century because, by historic preservation definition, anything younger than 50 is not historic. As time progresses revised editions are contemplated, perhaps every five years, according to Ken Guzowski, historic preservation specialist in the Eugene Planning and Development Department.

The volume is the culmination of a two-year project by four researcher-writer-editors: Guzowski, Teresa Bishow, Elizabeth Carter, and Michelle Dennis.

The book, an 8.5x11-inch paperback volume, will go on sale beginning in December at the city's planning office (99 West Tenth Avenue) and at the Lane County Historical Museum at the Fairgrounds. The sales price has not yet been determined.

The project was financed by a grant from the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office.

The Oregon Trail lives!

Present-day Oregon is a product of the ideas and expectations of its immigrants, and they came expecting a Promised Land—or at least conditions better than those they left behind.

By Dorothy Corkery

Assistant Editor

Historians never tire of discussing what prompted so many seemingly “ordinary” folk to pull up roots and head west during the 1840s mass migration. The wagon trains have disappeared, but the dust along the trail has never really settled; more modern-day arrivals have made and still do make their way to Oregon. The Oregon Trail lives on.

The more recent arrivals, 1900 and after, came for many of the same reasons as the early immigrants—in search of opportunity, better living conditions, adventure, and a more moderate climate.

Those who came in search of better living conditions brought their ideas about the “Promised Land” with them. Oregon as we know it today is the product of these ideas and expectations, with environmental issues often in the forefront.

These latter-day settlers also came with specific ideas about Oregon’s livability now and in the future. The “Last Settler Syndrome” identifies the notion that some of these non-natives think it’s time to close the trail down to keep Oregon from being overrun by

more immigrants like themselves.

Last spring *Historian* editor Ken Metzler’s journalism class at the University of Oregon conducted a series of interviews with latter-day immigrants to Oregon who discussed their motivations and trepidations before, during, and after their treks from other areas of the country. Some came from as far away as the east coast, others from as near as California, all no less than 20 years ago.

What follows is a mix of remembrances from these interviews.

Ella Boesen, of Eugene, age 96, former nurse, interviewed by Patrick Minford. “My father came from Denmark, and he arrived in Nebraska in 1887 or 1888. He went to work for my mother’s father on his farm. That’s where he met my mother and married her.

“After he had a couple of kids, he decided he didn’t want to bring up his kids in that horrible climate. It was the climate mostly that got him out of there.

“He hated Nebraska with a passion because it was so hot in the summer, and they had all this thunder and

“He hated Nebraska with a passion because it was so hot in the summer, and they had all this thunder and lightning and blizzards in the winter.”

“The main thing in Springfield that I remember in 1914 and 1915 was the liquor. Springfield was two factions of people that fought like cats and dogs.”

lightning and all that stuff that he didn't like, and blizzards in the winter. He thought there should be someplace in these United States where the weather was better.” Ella has no idea how he picked Eugene, Oregon. She suspects he just found it on a map.

So in 1901, three-year-old Ella Boesen moved with her family to Eugene by train from Homer, Nebraska. They arrived on a September weekend on the day of a civil war football game between the University of Oregon and Oregon Agricultural College. All the hotels in town were filled for the game.

They finally found a boarding house near Fifth and Olive. “My mother stayed up all night because the place was lousy with bed bugs.”

Eugene then fell largely between Fifth and Tenth Avenues, she recalled. “There was absolutely nothing past Tenth. There was mud on Willamette

Street. There was a street, but you know how the rain is in Oregon. Well, it was just a mud globlolly. You couldn't walk on it. They had board sidewalks but not very good ones.”

Around 1910 the family moved to Roseburg. Three years later they packed up their belongings and set out for Klamath County in a homemade covered wagon. Lizzie, a sister, kept a diary of the 11-day trip that included eight children, a pony, two dogs and two horses named Fox and Sour Grapes. Ella recalled a typical day meant “walking and just getting there, and finding out where you were gonna stay the next night, where you were gonna eat lunch, and all that. We could walk faster than the horses. My mother and father both rode in the wagon and the three little kids. The rest of the kids walked all the way.”

The family eventually returned to

Springfield where Ella graduated from Springfield High School in 1918.

"The main thing in Springfield that I remember in 1914 and 1915 was the liquor. Springfield was two factions of people that fought like cats and dogs. They were the dry people and the wet people, they called them. It was mostly the church people and the other faction. It was a real battle. The wet people outvoted the dry people, so we had liquor. You couldn't sell a drop of liquor in Eugene. It was dry. They voted themselves dry. That why they had to come to Springfield. Anybody that wanted liquor had to come to Springfield. We didn't do much on weekends in high school on account of the liquor. It was pretty bad. There was an awful lot of drinking. The Main Street of Springfield was similar to what it is today, but every other entrance was a saloon. It was just dangerous to go downtown, so we were not allowed downtown. Everybody came to Springfield to get drunk."

Ella's father found Oregon's climate a vast improvement over Nebraska's. "You could pretty much grow anything through the winter" in Oregon. Ella said of him, "I always thought you'd have to have a lot of guts to pick up and take a wife and six kids across the country just because he didn't like the climate."

Later Ella chanced to complete part of her nurse's training in Pittsburgh. "I had never been to the east coast in my life. It was the dirtiest, filthiest place in the world. You go to the east coast and, boy, you're glad to get back to the west coast. I tell you, it's just miserable."

Don and Susan Zadoff, Eugene businessman and U.O. dance teacher, interviewed by Kris Henry. Don Zadoff came to Oregon in 1971 leaving a job as the manager of a brokerage office in New York City.

"Commuting four hours a day—I thought there had to be a better way of life." He remembered his Air Force days and a supply sergeant from Eugene named Jack Buck. "He talked about Eugene and made it sound nice."

But it was his wife's encouragement that led to the move. "I was the one who pushed the move," explained Susan Zadoff, "because I knew my husband was somewhat restless. . . . He was also quite adventurous."

Like Oregon Trail treks of old, the trip itself contained its share of misadventure, at least for Don Zadoff who drove the 3,000 miles to Oregon alone in a '69 Camaro. (The family, including the family dog, went by air.)

The trip meant fatigue: "I drove until I couldn't anymore."

Boredom: "I bought a harmonica and listened to the radio, but when you're traveling through the center of the country, a lot of times there is no radio. So I just played the harmonica." In a tiny town in Idaho he asked if there was a movie in town, and the two ladies running the motel directed him to a theater just down the street—which turned out to be a porno flick.

Danger: Glazed highways in Wyoming led to a nasty skid on the ice. He picked up a hitchhiker and then noticed he was carrying a huge knife in his belt. ("I said I was tired and going to stop, so I let him off.")

Don Zadoff somehow survived the rigors of this modern trail, and with his

“I bought a harmonica and listened to the radio, but when you’re traveling through the center of the country, a lot of times there is no radio. So I just played the harmonica.”

“I was starvin’ in Tennessee. . . . I came in one day and I told Ruth, ‘We’re going to Oregon.’ She said ‘What?’ I said I’m not going to stay here and beat my brains out on one of these rigs for nothin’.”

family he adjusted to a new life in Oregon. “Sometimes,” he said, “I sit back and say, What the hell am I doing in Eugene, Oregon? What I did was probably a pretty stupid thing. I was just lucky it turned out okay. The whole town was just so comfortable and unassuming.”

Dean and Lou Rea, Eugene, interviewed by Thomas Kouns. The historical record suggests that moving west was a fine antidote for restlessness. It was this very quality, said Dean Rea’s wife, Lou, that brought them to Oregon. Dean’s mother, a school teacher, had always told her students to do everything to the best of your ability. Dean, a journalist, took that advice to heart to the extent that every time he accomplished something, he had to move on to new challenges, according to Lou.

Whatever the motivation, the family record shows that one day Dean came home from work in Missouri complaining about the low pay and the weather, particularly the stupefying summer humidity and the resultant inability to get a good night’s sleep. “We should have gone west instead of coming to this miserable place,” he told his wife, and she replied, “We could still go,” and he replied—jokingly, he claimed later—“Sure.”

In 1954 they packed their belongings and two infant children in the Studebaker with a trailer and headed west with no particular destination in mind—only a vow to leave behind the “snakes, chiggers, and ticks” that Dean said had plagued their outings in Missouri.

Dean’s first memories of Oregon were of the drive over Immigrant Pass in northeast Oregon when he looked

down on a flat desert from the 4,000-foot pass and said to his wife, "Lord, why did I bring my family 1,500 miles to this? What are we doing here?"

It wasn't until they moved to Hood River that the Reas felt at home—"in a small town with a big-town feel to it" and one of the most beautiful communities in the country, they decided. "When we got to Hood River Valley and saw that place with Mount Hood to the west and Mount Adams to the north and the great Columbia River coming through, and hundreds of acres of orchards and the beautiful winters and summers—that's when we knew we had arrived."

The Reas moved to Eugene in 1957 when Dean went to work at *The Register-Guard*. Lou Rea calculated that in 44 years of marriage, she and Dean had moved 24 times. Had they stayed in Missouri, Dean said, he'd have been a wealthy newspaper owner with ulcers, not enjoying life as much as he has in his multi-faceted career as a journalist and teacher. A student interviewer once asked him, "What are you running from in life?" and his answer was, "Probably boredom."

Ruth and Elzia Dills, of Cottage Grove, interviewed by Natasha Shepard. The motivation that sent this couple from Tennessee to Oregon via rail was delightfully uncomplicated.

"I was starvin' in Tennessee," said Elzia Dills. And they'd heard from friends in Oregon that this western outpost was not only beautiful but needed workers in the lumber business. In Tennessee in the 1940s, Dills had started work for a logging company at ten cents an hour.

"The job I was on, it was winding up," he explained. "So I began to wonder what I was gonna do. I came in one day and I told Ruth, I said, 'We're going to Oregon!' She said, 'What?' I said I'm not going to stay here and beat my brains out on one of these rigs for nothin'—I just couldn't see staying there any longer."

The couple already had a reputation for impulsive decisions. One day when he was 21 and she 14, he asked her to marry him. After giving it some thought, she said okay. They took her father's car into town, got married, and returned as though nothing had happened. Several days later they confessed. Her father, a minister, said, "The only thing I'm mad about is that you took my car." They've been married 55 years.

Crossing the country by train was a big adventure. They planned to stay a year to make money to buy a house in Tennessee. Ruth Dills actually had a plan of her own that she didn't share with her husband. She would go as far as Chicago and then tell him that she already didn't like Oregon and wanted to go home. But when they pulled into Chicago she decided to go all the way. They liked what they saw of Oregon and they stayed.

Linda McCarthy, Eugene businesswoman, interviewed by Patrick Devine. Linda remembers the day her husband, Jim, brought home a *National Geographic* with a story about Bend, Oregon. "What do you think about moving to Oregon?" he asked.

"I didn't pay any attention to him," she recalled. "I just thought, 'Sure, how we gonna do that?' I didn't realize

“A lot of people our age talk about coming here and say, ‘Oh, you live in the country, how wonderful!’—well, they really don’t want to do this. It’s a lot of hard work. If you live in a push-button world, chopping your own firewood is not something you do once and then it’s over with. We lived without electricity; we hauled our own water.”

“Indians don’t live in tepees. Only white hippies live in tepees.”

he was serious.” They lived just outside Los Angeles then and were bothered by its smog and traffic. “I taught school, and there were days when we weren’t allowed to let the kids outside to play because of the smog problem.” Recreational travel was a hassle. “With all the people and driving, you get home and you’re worse than when you left.” So they sought out a nice community with a good local economy where they could raise a family, enjoy nature, and recycle bottles.

Perhaps it was prophetic that on the drive north with the U-Haul trailer they encountered rain right at the Oregon border. “The rain spotted my lamp shades, and we kept the shades for a long time because it seemed so appropriate.” In fact, she loves the rain, she said. “When I got up here I realized I was sort of climate-deprived because what I hate about southern

California was on Thanksgiving it could be 85 and no one felt like cooking a turkey.” In Oregon, rain was a holiday treat. “We used to get excited if it rained on Christmas.”

Richard Gross and Michelle Holman, business owners, Deadwood, Oregon, interviewed by Sean Smith. They operate a manufacturing business out of their home on Deadwood Creek Road, off Highway 36, in the middle of the proverbial nowhere. They represent the unique attraction Oregon and Lane County have for those who would retreat from mainstream society, repair to some backwoods locale, and, as an old song suggested, seek happiness in the west and “Let the rest of the world go by.” The simple life in other words: carving a home out of the wilderness as did the early pioneers.

Their business is called "Coyote Collections." From their workshop three employees produce hand-painted mirrors and "Adventure Puzzles," jigsaw puzzles hand-made from wood. They sell them all over the country by mail.

Michelle Holman and Richard Gross are a married couple in their 40s, she from Medford, he from Tennessee. His first trek along the Oregon Trail came by motorcycle with a group of friends by way of British Columbia and Washington. He described himself then as a "scraggly biker with bell bottoms and an American flag sown onto my pants cuff." Oregon happened to be dry and green on that summer visit, and Richard was impressed by Eugene's "slowness, small-town feel, and friendly demeanor." He also liked a small arts and crafts market called "Scarborough Fair." Living later in Boston where he drove taxi, he plotted with friends to move west, either to Colorado or Oregon. Finding the former too snowy on that winter visit, they made a bee line to Oregon—"It was like a force," he recalled. "Having grown up without a tremendous amount of space and nature, it was like a redemption and a renewal, a thrill to be in beautiful natural places."

Eventually he settled with friends in one of those beautiful natural places, Deadwood, in western Lane County. He met Michelle at a Eugene restaurant where she worked, and they began married life in a tepee on 140 acres of land they'd purchased with a group of people.

"Indians don't live in tepees," Michelle said. "Only white hippies live in tepees." When their tepee began to mildew during that rainy winter, they

bought a school bus and made it their home. After their daughter was born, they bought property on their own and built their house, opening the crafts business in 1980.

Now that they've settled in Oregon, the "Last Settler Syndrome" may have gripped them. "We're both protective of Oregon," Michelle said. "I'm concerned about—and this is going to sound elitist—the 'right' people being here. I'd like to hand pick them."

Among the people who should think twice about coming to Oregon are those who would follow them into the backwoods. Their life, they said, is overly romanticized by outsiders.

Michelle explained, "A lot of people our age talk about coming here and say, 'Oh, you live in the country, how wonderful!' Well, they really don't want to do this. It's a lot of hard work. If you're used to the push-button world, chopping your own firewood is not something you do once and then it's over with. We lived without electricity; we hauled our own water. We're a long way from the marketplace, and you have to be fairly organized or you do without. Most people have an unrealistic fantasy about living in the backwoods of Oregon. It's right for us, but it's not necessarily right for everybody else."

Richard remains philosophical about immigration to Oregon—just about everybody is an immigrant or a descendant of previous immigrants, he said. Yet he shares some of Michelle's unease—"I'd like to choose people of a certain viewpoint... people who live in rapport with their natural environment with the highest regard for other people in the area as well."



The crew of SP Tie Mill #1, Marcola, ca. 1907.

1906: first glimpses of Marcola and its sawmills

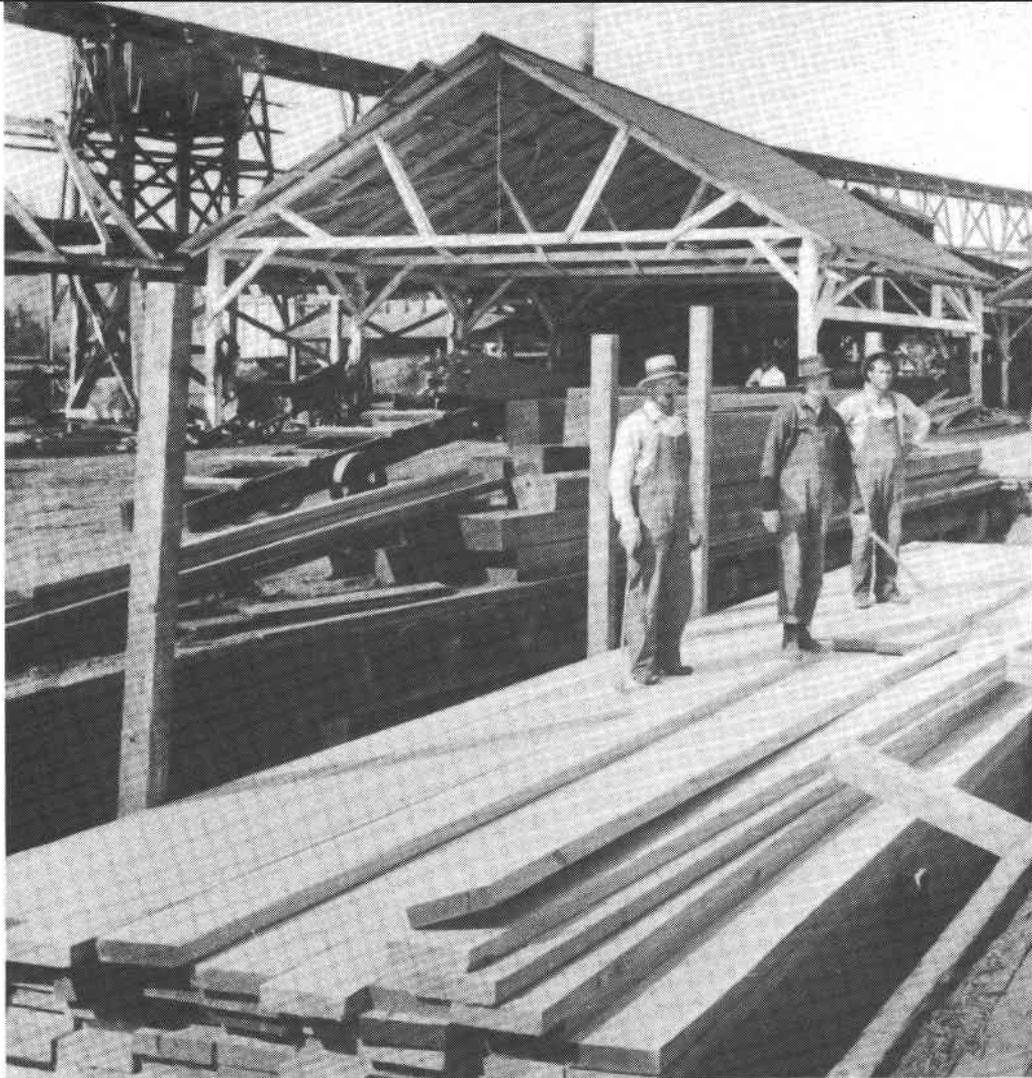
Charles Irish and his brother left for Marcola at the same time, one by bicycle, the other by train. Guess who arrived first.

My father, Charles Clyde Irish, was 21 in the fall of 1905. He came west from Wichita, Kansas to Salem, Oregon, where he worked for the Oregon Nursery Company until spring. He moved to Springfield and worked for the Booth-Kelly Lumber Company.

In the fall of 1906 he moved to Marcola, Oregon where he went to work for the Southern Pacific Tie Mill #1. Eventually there were three different S. P. Tie mills operating in the Mohawk Valley, and Dad worked at various jobs in all of them. Dad kept the

time books for yards #2 and #3. The last working day listed before the yards were closed down is February 28, 1911. A working day was 9 and 10 hours long. Mills #2 and #3 had flumes to bring the lumber to Marcola. The S. P. Tie Mill Company was not allowed to sell any of its lumber, which was a by-product of sawing ties. Lumber that they could not use was sent up the conveyor to the burner and wasted.

Employees listed as working in Mill #2 February 1911 were: Curtis Arnold, H. Bridenhagen, C. G. Baker, W. F. Baier, Tom Ball, Jim Cole, Earl Crocker, Ole Carlson, Frank Drueke, Homer



Fischer Lumber Company Mill, Marcola, ca. 1913.

Frazier, W. Freeman, C. F. Hartman, W. E. Hartman, George Holt, Charles C. Irish, W. H. Jahnke, Ernest Krauter, S. Malcolm, Jack Mason, J.W. McDaniel, W. S. Mikel, Joe Oles, Guy Redding, Ralph Redding, H. Riggs, A. B. Smith, J. Smith, Tonie Shavie, Fred Shinrock, Ben Wyant, and Gilbert Zacker. Employees at Mill #3 were George Allison, Frank Briggs, Alva Frazier, Clint Frazier, C. Higinbotham, S. C. Higinbotham, Law Higinbotham,

Charles C. Irish, B. C. Kellogg, S. C. Kitts, C. L. Lansing, H. McDaniel, J. D. McDaniel, V. McDaniel, A. McKenzie, J. D. McLeod, J. W. Redding, J. H. Simpson, Ed Strand, and Ed Tarry.

After the S. P. Tie mills closed down, Dad worked for various mills in the Mohawk Valley, including Coast Range Lumber Company at Mabel; Booth-Kelly Lumber Company at Wendling, and Fischer Lumber Company at Marcola.



Author Charles C. Irish stands in center with tally sheets.

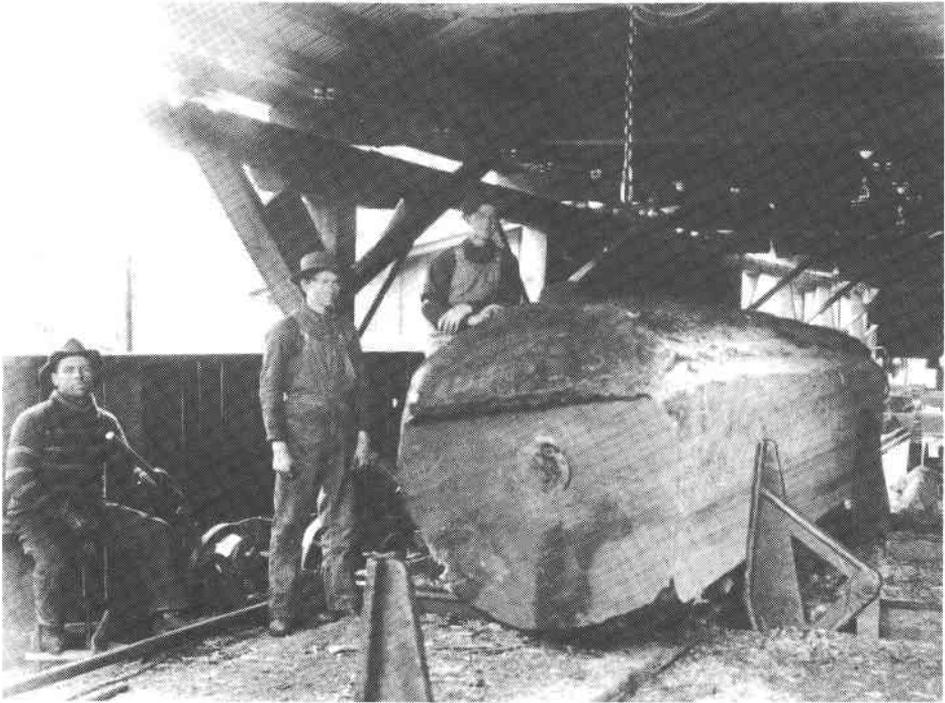
About 1953, my father wrote about his first day in the Mohawk Valley.

—Curtis Irish

By Charles C. Irish

Sometime during the morning of August 21, 1906, I left Springfield, Oregon on a bicycle and arrived at Marcola near noon. I was covered with dust from head to foot and very thirsty. Not seeing any soft drink parlor, I went to the Columbus Cole Store, where the

Victory Theatre is now. Mr. Cole was the only one in the store, and I asked if he had drinking water. He said, "There is a pitcher of water on the shelf back there that I brought over from the house this morning." I picked up the grimy glass alongside and drank a glass of that warm water. Then he said, pointing to a case of soda pop on the east side of the counter on the floor, "I have soda pop but seems like nobody wants it."



Giant log for railroad ties at SP Tie Mill #1, ca. 1907, Marcola.

I explained to him that I was looking for a job at the S. P. Tie Mill. He said that the office was in a tent down the street. The S. P. tent was set up about where the Meechem Tavern is now. I went to the boarding house of Jack and Rose Frost for my dinner. It stood about where the vacant lunch counter is now, east of Odd Fellows Hall, and possibly lapping over to it.

The Marcola Post Office was in the small annex to the Fischer Lumber Company office which stood across the street from the present new Post Office Building. J. S. Churchill, a bookkeeper for Fischer Lumber Company, was Postmaster and Notary Public. A combined Barber Shop and Saloon was operated by a Mr. Smith, where the present Assembly of God church now stands.

There was no depot here then, just a granite strip, and a maintenance box-car sat up on a tie crib, north of where the depot was built later. Somebody had chalked up on the side of the car, "Don't cry, little car, don't cry. You will be a depot by and by." Cole's warehouse stood along the side track, south of the present depot. A water tank stood near the tracks on the other side.

In the middle of town there were high sidewalks on both sides of what you might call a wide place in the road. Columbus Cole had platted the town of Marcola, on his former farm, and sold lots to home builders. I was told that the Southern Pacific Railroad was completed in 1899 [ed. 1900] and Henry Schwind Sr. was placed here as Section Foreman. He still lives in our midst. The first Station Agent after the depot



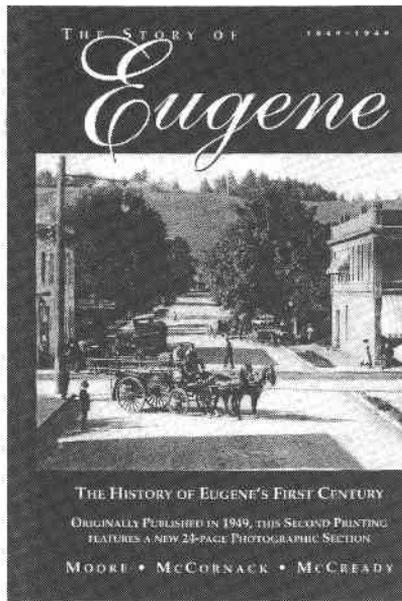
Exterior of SP #1 shows donkey engine and log pond, 1907.

was built was Leonard Humphreys. Previous to that, the conductor sold fare tickets. Before the building of the railroad, the Post Office was known as Isabell. The Southern Pacific Railroad Company, after acquiring the right of way from the Coles, named the station Marcola, honoring Mary Cole, wife of Columbus Cole. I well remember Mary Cole in those early days, with the dust from the road settled on her shoulders and straw hat.

My brother, Vick Irish, left Springfield at the same time I did on August 21, 1906, only he came on the slow and easy combination passenger and freight train. He carried both of our bags. Fare was 60 cents. A bicycle was faster than a train so he didn't arrive until afternoon. We then went to the S. P. Tie Mill tent office where Mr. Young, the super-

intendent, asked us to go to Mill #1 in the timber above Hyland Siding. A Bonneville steel powerline support stands where the mill pond was then. The foreman said he wanted both of us on the dam construction crew.

The bunkhouses could not be built until the sawmill was constructed. An S. P. tent had been set up over on the McCornack Farm, on Mabel Road where we could sleep and board. We didn't like the looks of that lousy tent, so picked out a spot among second growth fir, choosing four saplings at right angles to each other. We cut the saplings with our pocket knives, and tied up a lean-to, and unrolled our bedrolls in it. It rained on us only once before those bunkhouses were built. We continued to get our meals at McCornacks, and carried our lunches.



The Story of Eugene revisited

Almost half a century later, a popular history book is being reprinted. It's time to reintroduce the Wilkins Sisters and to remember them for a unique contribution toward understanding the city once irreverently called Skinner's Mudhole.

By Ken Metzler
Editor

Forty-six years have elapsed since a locally authored history book, *The Story of Eugene*, reached bookstores. More than 30 years have passed since an interested reader could find a copy for purchase except at a used-book store. Even there the book had become such a collector's item that copies originally priced at \$2.25 began commanding \$45 to \$65, depending on their condition.

This fall a second printing has been issued, in paperback, complete with a new 24-page insert of historic photos, selling for \$12.95. So perhaps it is time to re-examine the book and its three authors—Eugene natives who lived much of the history they chose to record. They did more than live it. They searched through countless documents and interviewed long-time residents. Like a jury, they winnowed through the often-contradictory evidence until

they arrived at what they believed to be the truth: factual accuracy. With one exception.

One of the three authors confessed—just months before her death in 1990 at the age of 95—that they'd made a mistake in listing Eugene pioneer T. G. Hendricks, prominent businessman, banker, school superintendent, mayor, and state senator, as a Republican. Hendricks, who crossed the plains from Illinois with his parents in 1848 when he was ten, was in fact a Democrat. How the folks in Eugene used to tease the authors about that. "People kidded me about that one forever," said the last surviving author, Gladys Wilkins McCready, in that 1990 interview with *The Register-Guard*.

Who were these authors, and why is their book enjoying renewed interest?

They were known as the "Wilkins Sisters," Nina, Lucia, and Gladys, Eugene natives born to Francis Marion and Emily Marie (Goltra) Wilkins. The authors' paternal grandparents had immigrated to Oregon in 1847. Their dad operated a drug store in Eugene and served as the city's mayor in 1905-07. The three girls, along with two older siblings, grew up in a grand old house, built in 1882 at Charnelton and Ninth (now Broadway).

Nina, 1882-1968, attended the Universities of Idaho and Oregon and in 1905 married a career Army officer, Condon C. McCornack, who rose to the rank of brigadier general. As an Army wife she became a world traveler, artist, and writer. Before collaborating on *The Story of Eugene*, she had completed one book (*Dear Angeline*, published in 1951) and had published magazine articles.

Lucia, 1887-1982, graduated from the University of Oregon and also traveled widely, courtesy of the U. S. Army, after she married Dr. Harvard C. Moore in 1913. He enlisted in the Army Medical Corps where he rose to the rank of colonel. She published a book of poems and a novel, titled *The Wheel and the Hearth*, which won a Silver Spur Award from the Western Writers of America.

Gladys, 1895-1990, youngest of five Wilkins children, was a lifelong Eugene resident. In 1918 she married Lynn McCready, who became a prominent banker and civic leader in Eugene. Gladys earned a degree in journalism at the University of Oregon in 1920. She worked for the *Morning Register*, the *Guard*, and *The Register-Guard* following their merger.

Eventually the two Army sisters returned to Eugene where the stage was set for a co-authored book. The project began when a New York publisher picked Eugene for one of a series of American community histories and inquired of the local librarian for potential authors. Who better than the Wilkins Sisters, librarian Elma Hendricks replied—three talented and sophisticated women with wide experience as writers.

They promptly set to work exploring documents, searching memories, and interviewing gold-time residents. Gladys Wilkins McCready recalled later that the old timers "could remember vividly the stories of the Skinners and of those few other men and women who truly founded Eugene." They opened their personal memoirs and memorabilia. "We can remember rainy afternoons around cheery fireplaces, with open

boxes of keepsakes and letters, clothing and old school books, while we talked of home-keeping, children, and olden-day log school houses, of food and its care, and learning what 'second-day dresses' meant."

The interviews with those old-time residents became providential. Within three or four years most of them had passed on, their memories gone forever.

When the book appeared in 1949, observers hailed it as a monumental achievement, the first book-length history of the community. "The book is history and it is something more," proclaimed a *Register-Guard* editorial in June 1949. "It is an affectionate account of the growth of the city and the men and women who made it. . . . The book is packed with facts and anecdotes, but its greatest charm is in its understanding of the people who have made Eugene." A reviewer for the same paper pointed out that the three authors had "developed a unique way of conveying the true spirit of the valley to the reader by providing atmospheric preludes to each chapter, which set the scene and pace, seen through the eyes of the 'Old Settler.'"

The Old Settler was, of course, Eugene F. Skinner, for whom the town is named and who arrived in 1846 and died in 1864, having never quite recovered from exposure and other perils associated with the great Willamette River flood of 1862. Given their literary creativity, they naturally began to speculate on how the Old Settler might have responded to modern glimpses of the city he had started. How might he have reacted to change from the silent trails and the gently falling leaves of



Nina

yesteryear to the noisy crunch of latter-day machinery trundling down paved roads, along steel tracks, and even flying through the air?

The authors added still another dimension with their frequent use of historical vignettes, anecdotes, and oral-history accounts to make it more than historical chronology. The authors loved Eugene, and the very subjectivity of their account brings to life a bygone city without today's obsessions with traffic congestion, drug dealing, and random violence. Simpler concerns marked early times—muddy streets in Skinner's Mudhole, as Eugene was once called ("Mud as thick as boarding house custard and about the same color") or the big log that blocked the road around Judkins Point. Occasionally the concerns embraced more severe complications, of course, such as the brazen political attempt in the



Lucia



Gladys

1930s to move the University of Oregon to Corvallis.

After the book's release, the publisher of a Eugene periodical, *The Home Magazine*, asked each author to write a brief autobiography.

Introducing the authors, publisher Charles Dickson could scarcely contain his enthusiasm for their book. "Its novel approach and every-day breeziness present a new and refreshing technique to the historian who would make a "best seller" of the driest of subjects. . . . Just three beautiful women, hearts lifted in song to gladden coming ages; three women-souls implanting the patterns of their affection on all who know and love Eugene; three grand girls (and we know and love them all) who can hardly know the greatness of the contribution to Eugene's future."

Given their carte blanche assignment, the three authors rose to tap

their full creativity. Nina Wilkins McCornack called it "an uninteresting assignment, but since I would rather write than not write, I will enjoy recalling a few bright spots along my way."

Nina talked of her love of art and sculpture and her childhood entry into the world of journalism. She claimed to have owned and operated one of Eugene's first newspapers. It happened about the time her second teeth came in, she said.

"It was a one-page affair about six by ten inches, often carrying illustrations of a sack of flour or something about as complicated. . . . It was a good, newsy sheet and it sold for one copper cent. And, I might brag, sold well, notably because of a 'rumor' column which I featured—news picked up by eavesdropping on every and all conversations."

She confessed to being less than an avid student in school. "In high school I cut class to go to a dancing school, and about my senior year in college THE MAN came along and before my diploma quite caught up with me we were married."

"The man" was Condon McCornack, grandson of the University of Oregon's legendary Professor Thomas Condon.

"Then followed busy years settling house after house in the career of following an Army husband about the world. Thirty-two in all, I seem to remember, were settled and unsettled all the way from Texas to Wyoming, in the Philippines, and in Hawaii, Washington, and all those wild spots. Often in the summer we spent our vacations retracing the Covered Wagon route our grandparents had taken for the same reason—to get to Oregon."

Lucia Wilkins Moore talked playfully of her lifelong but unfulfilled desire to take a sleighride.

"The nearest I ever came to it was on the night before I was born when my father took mother out along the glistening snow-road southward from our home on Ninth Street and told her to look down from the hill slope. . . upon the blanketed town with its five or six churches and its trees, new-planted and bent under their load of snow.

"She looked, doubtless, and then she must have said, 'Marion, the new son is threatening'. . . With one boy and two girls ahead of me, my job clearly was to be male. By eleven of the clock on the morning after OUR sleighride, my brother was rushing out to inform our street that there was another 'damn girl' at his house."

Through her early years she vowed

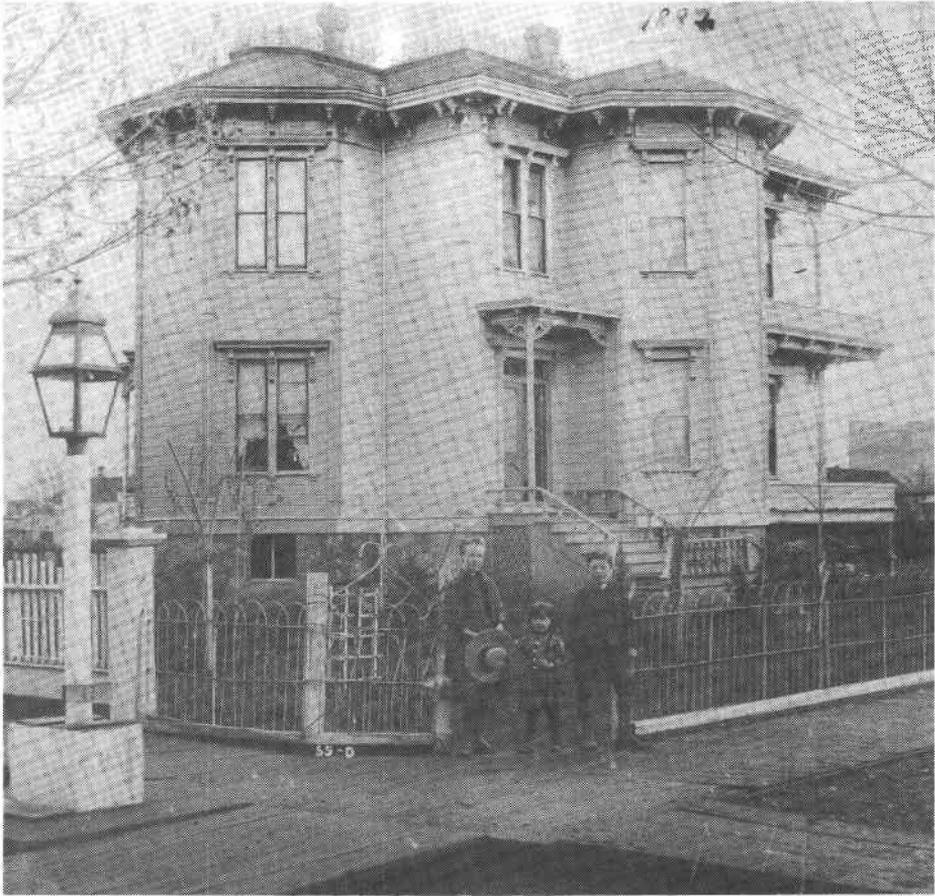
never to marry a doctor because her experience in father's drug store suggested that doctors lead troubled lives. She relented when Dr. Harvard Moore asked for her hand. He soon joined the Army Medical Corps and resulting career involved "30 moves, settling 22 houses. . . temperatures from 13 below to 120 above. The fact that Harvard Moore decided on an Army career without consulting me, his bride, added zing to the years: Army Medical School in Washington, Mexican border with its sand storms and desert blister, two right big wars, with years of peace and travel in between. I kept up a fast cadence; sometimes it was Harvard Moore's cadence and the Army's, not mine."

Gladys Wilkins McCreedy, the baby of the family, told of taking a newspaper job after her husband had settled in the banking business.

"Like the fly I ambled in, sat down, and got all tangled up. Proof-reading followed society, then country correspondence, next came reviews of all sorts, and pretty soon I was doing personal interviews and feature writing all over the place.

"Aimee Semple McPherson, John Philip Sousa, and Pauline Frederick were pretty heady brew for a 'young married,' and what that newspaper got out of me for ten cents an inch was sheer robbery.

"There I stayed for six or eight years, thoroughly underpaid but highly amused, intrigued, entertained, or infuriated—depending on the day's assignments. . . . When the newspaper era ended I owned a near-hysterical allergy to murders, divorces, society items, typewriters, and—women.



The Francis Marion Wilkins home as it appeared on West Ninth and Charnelton in 1887. Nina's in the center flanked by older siblings Maude and Frank. Photo by R. H. Gardiner; courtesy of Lane County Historical Museum.

“So when my two sisters propositioned me—on *The Story of Eugene*—it was like lassoing a bucking bronco, but thank heavens they finally persuaded me (temporarily) from my loves of gardening, gallivanting, golf, and Canasta.”

Having outlived her sisters, Gladys McCready had the last words about *The Story*. In 1987, when she was 92, she held several discussions with personnel at the Lane County Historical Museum, discussions that included the

possibility of reprinting the book. She assigned the publication rights to the museum, and director Ed Stelfox sought out a publisher.

In 1990, just months before her death, she gave a final interview to Ann Van Camp of *The Register-Guard*. She spoke fondly of her childhood home on West Ninth Avenue (later named Broadway) and Charnelton. She recalled shopping downtown one day in 1944 when she looked up to see the wrecking ball crash through what had

once been her home. "It was the house I was raised in and loved," she said. "I felt badly, terribly badly. I couldn't go back to that area for nearly a year." Van Camp remembers Gladys McCready at 95 as a woman with a sense of humor and a lively curiosity about the world outside Cascade Manor, then her residence. Journalist to the end: "She asked me as many questions as I asked her," said Van Camp.

Today's renewed interest in *The Story of Eugene* stems partly from desperation, partly from an affectionate nostalgia for the sisters' unique view of the city's birth and first century of growth. Desperation because this is the only book-length history available, at least until the City of Eugene completes its account, entitled *Eugene Area Historic Context*, a 164-page document due to be published in December as part of the city's historic preservation work. Affection because of the warmth, the loving care, and the hard work the three sisters bestowed on the project—and because of the unique perspective of authors who had lived much of that early history.

Talk of reprinting or revising the book began in earnest seven or eight years ago, recalls Ethan Newman, president of the Lane County Historical Society. Negotiations with the museum resulted in a contract for reprinting with the Historical Society as publisher. The work was completed in September with October 1 the official publication date. The new *Story of Eugene* should be in local bookstores by the time you read this. An official "unveiling" of the book will be held at the society's quarterly meeting on October 22.

Of course, a lot of history is missing from that book. The authors chafed at the word restrictions set by the original publisher, for they had a lot more historical vignettes they could have added, Gladys McCready said later. And, to be sure, the history of Eugene's most recent half-century has yet to be recounted. Even the forthcoming *Historic Context* statement by the City of Eugene excludes the last half century. In the world of historic preservation, it's not history unless it's at least 50 years old.

So writing about recent history must depend on some other author. The sisters, like the Old Settler, might have found the recent progress and expansion of Eugene—not to mention its increasing stridency in coping with public issues—little short of bewildering. Gladys McCready hinted at this in a kind of farewell message. In 1985 she'd prepared an autobiographical sketch which was read to mourners at her funeral service after her death on September 7, 1990.

"Looking back," she said, "the changes I have seen in Eugene seem unreal—friends so long known and enjoyed for a half-century have disappeared forever; stores and shops, markets and customs, organizations and ideals—even familiar names and faces. We are no longer individuals but numbers on a computer!

"I rejoice that I have lived through the larger part of a fascinating century, but I am not sorry that I shall be spared the crash and rush of the one we approach. Because I thank a kind God that we had 'time to smell the flowers' as we lived our long and joyous years together."

When John met Annie

When the sheriff arrived at the Belshaw farm near Eugene City in 1866, he found that Annie was, indeed, as pretty as her picture, and he was smitten. But there was a problem. Annie was only 15.

By Marshall Belshaw Shore

The Belshaw Wagon Train came to Oregon in 1853. George Belshaw Jr. was elected captain after they crossed over into Indian Territory. His wife was Candace McCarty Belshaw. Her three brothers were also along. The youngest, Fayette Asbury McCarty, helped with the driving of the two Belshaw wagons. George and Candace settled on a donation land claim just west of Eugene City. George later became one of the major taxpayers in Lane County for many years. John G. Howell II, sheriff of Alturus County, Idaho also came to Eugene City later on and married Annie Belshaw, the daughter of George and Candace.

How they met is quite a story.

The Story

Rocky Bar, an Idaho gold mining town in Alturus County 95 miles east of

Boise City, in the early spring of 1866, was the location of a drama fitting of a story of Louis L'Amor. It was to unite the McCarty, Belshaw, and Howell families in a manner they had never experienced before.

Fayette Asbury McCarty, a miner, was lying on his deathbed in a shack along a creek pouring into the South Boise River. Twenty-five hundred miners, some of them Chinese, were actively sluicing for gold that had recently been discovered along the narrow marsh filled valley. This small confined valley was also a natural place for the malaria carrying mosquito (anopheles). Fayette was dying of malaria.

He lay on his deathbed consisting of a sack stuffed with grass for a mattress and a soiled wool blanket to cover him during his frequent chills. He couldn't help recounting the happenings of the recent years and wonder what his fam-

ily would remember about his life. He knew he was going to die. Would it be the carefree days when he was 19 driving one of the Belshaw covered wagons across the Oregon Trail? He was one of the best hunters and suppliers of wild meat on that trip. While he had taken sick several times in his life, he had always recovered. He was 39 years old and nothing as serious as malaria had stricken him before.

Not even on the trips he had made working on sailing vessels to China and to the Sandwich Islands had he been this sick before. There had been other gold prospecting camps in South America and Alaska. He had been a wanderer after he skipped bail for a shoplifting charge in Pierce County where he was living on a donation land claim on McNeil Island opposite Steilacoom (founded 1854) in the Washington Territory. His brother Jonathan and L. F. Thompson, a neighbor, had pledged \$300 apiece to the Steilacoom court judge to assure he would appear in court for his sentencing on that charge. He had been fairly convicted as six witnesses had testified against him for the prosecution. Depositions made by the sheriff at that trial revealed that Fayette was living with a woman who was not his wife. Leaving her in the lurch he had taken off and signed on a sailing ship in Puget Sound and had not returned.

After wandering for eight years he returned to the place of his youth, Cedar Creek, Lake County, Indiana. Here he regaled his boyhood friends with

many wild tales of his life. Here is an excerpt from a report made in 1892 by the Historical Secretary of the Lake County Old Settlers' Association to the Northwestern Indiana Historical Society.

Fayette Asbury McCarty

He went into the Far West, beyond the Rocky Mountains, about twenty years ago [1852]. The maiden who he had chosen to become his wife, fell with others a victim of Indian border strife just before the time set for their marriage. Lone in heart, he engaged for three years in warfare against the Indians; was four times wounded by them; killed with his own hand 21 of the Red Warriors who had burned the dwelling, and killed the whole family of her whom he loved. Like Logan, The Mingo, against the whites, he could say. "I have killed many"; and then he commenced his wanderings. He went among the mines; he went to Alaska, then Russian America; he went down into South America; he crossed the ocean—the Pacific; spent some time in China; visited the Sandwich Islands on his return; made money among the mines; and after fourteen years' absence, visited, some six or seven years ago, the haunts of his youth in Lake County. He found here some old friends; narrated to us his adventures; went to New York to take passage again for the mines; was taken sick, and died soon after reaching the gold region at Idaho. Successful in obtaining gold, noble in disposition, lonely in heart in the sad romance of his

The author, Marshall Belshaw Shore of Spokane, Washington is the great grandson of George and Candace Belshaw. He is working on the Belshaw family history.

life, he leaves his name and memory to be carefully treasured up by the friends of his boyhood at Cedar Lake.

As Fayette's mind wandered between periods of delirium and violent chills from the fever in his body, perhaps he thought of the good times he had growing up in a family of affluence and good education. He had experienced a good upbringing. His father, Benjamin McCarty Jr., had been the first sheriff of La Porte County in 1832. Their family of six boys and two girls was respected in the communities where they had lived. His sister, Candace, had married George Belshaw and was the mother of three children and well into her third month of pregnancy when their wagon train started from Lake County on the 23rd of March in 1853. Her husband, George Belshaw, was elected captain of the wagon train after crossing the Missouri River at Council Bluffs. Fayette was hired to drive one of the Belshaw wagons. George had a wagon pulled by horses that carried the pregnant wife, and three children who were under eight years of age. It also contained their day-to-day camping equipment, bedding and clothing, and some food. In addition, he had a baggage wagon pulled by four oxen and a cow.

The three McCarty brothers, Jonathan, Mortan Green, and Fayette had come along on this venture to settle in Oregon Territory.

After arriving in the Willamette Valley, Fayette filed for an Oregon Donation Land Claim not far from Eugene City. But before he could settle down and work this land he and his brothers took a trip north of the Co-

lumbia River to explore the Puget Sound area. Liking the opportunities for better land here, Fayette and his brother Jonathan filed for Washington Territory Donation Lane Claims near Steilacoom in Pierce County. Fayette took over the claim of Ezra Meeker for 149.32 acres on McNeil Island. (Certificate #469, Roll 99, Page 195, 1 September 1855.)

When the local Indian uprising took place in 1855 three neighbor families nearby were massacred by the Indians. No doubt the girl Fayette talked about to his boyhood friends in Cedar Lake was a member of one of these families.

Fayette volunteered for the militia and became a private in Company C of the First Regiment of Washington Volunteer Militia, Captain George Gaudy, commanding, W. B. Afflick was first lieutenant, and J. K. Hand the second lieutenant. They served for 90 days guarding the fort at Steilacoom from October of 1855 and were mustered out the next January. They had no contact with the Indians and fought no battles. There are no records today of Fayette Asbury McCarty having killed 21 Indians by his own hands. Had this been true, there would have been a record left and stories about these killings would have appeared in the Olympia papers that were in print during those years. There were none.

Fayette had come from his visit to Indiana by boat from New York via the Isthmus of Panama to Portland, up the Columbia and Snake Rivers to Lewiston and by horse down to Boise City and on east to Rocky Bar, Idaho.

John Gilson Howell II, was also a much traveled man. He had gone to sea from

the New York area, sailed around the horn and over to the Sandwich Islands. There he took sick and was put ashore to recover. After spending many months ashore and working as a sign painter, he eventually made his way on a cattle ship to Seattle. From here, he traveled east ending up in the latest hot spot gold mining camp known as Rocky Bar. Being a good man with a gun as a result of his long hours of practice while a young man in Minnesota, he was appointed sheriff of Alturus County when it was organized in 1865.

No doubt Fayette and John had some conversations of their seafaring experiences and compared notes on their respective families. So when Fayette called for the sheriff, John Howell responded. Fayette made a personal request of John to take his wallet and money to his sister after he died. The sister, Candace McCarty Belshaw, lived four miles west of Eugene City, Oregon. John went through the wallet and pulled out a picture of Annie Belshaw, daughter of Fayette's sister. John was 36 and had not married, but he had been thinking that he should marry soon. He looked at the beautiful girl in the picture and told Fayette that if that girl was not married when he got to Oregon he would make her his wife. That was a promise he was to keep, as we shall see.

John Howell roomed and boarded in the hotel in Rock Bar. He had pur-

chased a couple of lots in town and sold these before he took off for Oregon early in the fall of 1866. When he arrived at the Belshaw farm he, indeed, found Annie to be as pretty as her picture. He fell head over heels for Annie and she apparently responded favorably. Soon John asked her father, George, for his daughter's hand in marriage.

But the marriage had to wait. George said that Annie was only 15 and she could not be married until she was 16. Being sympathetic to this union, however, George offered John a job on the Belshaw farm until his daughter became 16.

And so it was that John Gilson Howell II, and Annie Belshaw were married the next spring in the home of her parents. He decided to become a publisher, so a year later they fitted out a covered wagon and traveled 600 miles down the Oregon-California wagon road where they settled in Healdsburg, California. Here he founded the *Russian River Flag*. It soon became heralded as one of the best small-town newspapers published in northern California.

Our early day pioneer families had a way of getting around, and the relations of the members of these families became entwined in many interesting and unpredictable ways. Stories like this one make the study of family history an exciting venture.

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Now at last! *The Story of Eugene*, written by the "Wilkins Sisters,"* has been reprinted and is available at Eugene area bookstores and the Lane County Historical Museum. Something new has been added—a twenty-four page section of historic photos from the Museum. Buy your copy today. Paperback at \$12.95.

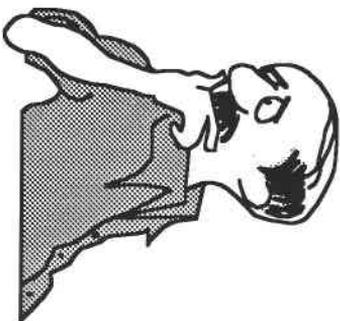
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