

TABLE ROCK

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The
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of the
Southern
Oregon
Historical
Society

Eighty Years Ago

The Sacramento Union from July 4, 1909, published the following suggestions for a saner Fourth of July celebration.

Some Fourth of July Don'ts

DON'T forget that today is the Fourth of July, and an excuse for everyone to get maimed.

DON'T forget that a firecracker is the mother of a burn.

DON'T believe that you might get hurt. Leave that for wise men.

DON'T throw firecrackers on your sister's white skirt. The smell isn't polite.

DON'T run if your clothing catches fire, for fire feeds on a footrace.

DON'T hold a firecracker in your hand until it explodes. Familiarity breeds contempt.

DON'T remember that there were 5623 casualties from celebrating last Fourth of July. It makes you thoughtful.

DON'T you care, but 162 of them died.

DON'T explode firecrackers or torpedos near the hospitals. The sick won't appreciate your patriotism.

DON'T go near a firecracker after you have lit it. Let your friend do it.

DON'T peer into the mouth of a toy cannon that didn't explode promptly. You're not a dentist nor a detective.

DON'T murder the person who explodes a torpedo cane behind your back. One of those persons is born every minute, and he is merely showing his label.

DON'T let the little ones get hurt. They cry and that makes their faces dirty.

DON'T drop a match in the midst of a collection of firecrackers. There is always some doubt as to which one it was that maimed you.

DON'T fail to smile, to show some sense, to be courteous to other people in your celebration; to warn those younger against danger and to protect those older; to think of some "first aids" when someone is injured, and to be above all things a sane celebrator.



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Residents of this small southern Oregon community withstood isolation, drought and the hardships of the Depression, but not World War II. The government purchased their land to build Camp White, scattering Beagle-ites around the Rogue Valley. However, former residents still meet every July to trade memories and stories of their life in Beagle Country.

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Back cover: Photographer Emil Britt captured these unidentified tykes preparing for a 1908 Fourth of July parade.



Beagle Country

by Joseph G. Follansbee

Some neighbors stick together even when they're no longer neighbors. The people of Beagle, Oregon, can testify to togetherness though they're apart.

In the mid-nineteenth century, many Americans looking for a new start in life found it in northern Jackson County. As they worked the untouched soil, they sank deep roots among the oak groves. As families concentrated in specific parts of the county, authorities established post offices, which often served as hubs for new communities.

By 1930 as many as 100 families listed their address as Beagle.¹ For fifty-five years, horseback riders and mail truck drivers delivered sacks of mail—first to several homes, then to a combination home/general store/post office at the point where Beagle and Antioch roads

Early Postmaster Milton Houston, assisted by his wife Mary (left), collected and distributed Beagle County mail. SOHS #8201 Bringing in the Beagle harvest required lots of hands in the hot sun. Elbert Glass operated a threshing machine (right). Nannie Glass Askew (with straw hat) prepared meals on the cook wagon. SOHS #5536.



crossed. Neighbors greeted each other at the Beagle post office and thought of it as a focal point of community life. Beagle never rivaled Medford or Jacksonville as a bustling metropolis, but for the farmers and ranchers northeast of Table Rock, it was home.

Even when a war and the federal government wiped the community off the map, Beagle wouldn't die.

William T. Beagle may not have imagined he would be the first Beagle postmaster. The thirty-one-year-old former drummer in the Confederate Army, his thirty-year-old wife Jenny Yocum Beagle, and at least two children drove a covered wagon from Platte County, Missouri, to Jackson County in 1872. He purchased land first near the Bybee Bridge near Tou Velle, then later moved to Debenger Gap, in what later residents would call Beagle Country.

On November 11, 1885, postal authorities appointed Beagle the community postmaster. Beagle held the position for only two months, the shortest tenure of all Beagle postmasters. But the postmark still announced "Beagle" to the country, though Beagle himself moved out of Beagle Country within a decade. By 1896, he and his family had made a new home on Clay Street in Ashland and he worked for Jackson County's sheriff as an occasional deputy.

On a 1918 trip in the Colestin Valley to fight a forest fire for the U. S. Forest Service, Beagle tried to jump a horse over a log across the trail. He switched the horse, and it kicked him in the abdomen. The seventy-seven-year-old grandfather died of his injuries and his family buried him in Mountain View Cemetery.²

Almost exactly a year after Matilda Foster took Beagle's position as postmaster in 1886, Milton A. Houston took over. He held the office for eighteen years, the longest of any Beagle postmaster. After a time, the Monroe Gorden family moved to Beagle Country, and converted an old can mill on the banks of an unnamed ditch on

Houston's property into a home.³

Matty Gorden Rodgers remembered when, as a little girl, she watched the Houstons sit in their rockers and sort the mail. Everyone in the room chipped in and threw letters and notes into small compartments in a small wooden sorter no larger than a cabinet. Throughout its existence, the post office itself was hardly more than a "post cupboard."



"When Johnny was old enough to tell the difference between a vegetable and a weed, he pulled a weed."

"She was an old lady and he was old too," Rodgers said, "And the mail carrier would come in and dump [the mail], all that wasn't sealed, you know. [He'd] dump it on the floor in front of her. And that's the way she sorted it."⁴

Around the turn of the century, the Monroe children also helped take care of their grandfather Monroe, an immigrant from Scotland who spoke in a thick brogue.

"As soon as we'd come home from school," said Milly Hazel Gorden Glass, Matty's sister, "We'd take him for a walk . . . one sister on one side and one on the other, and we'd hold onto his hand because he couldn't hardly see and he couldn't hardly hear."

"And then we'd stop when we was going for a walk with him, why, we'd stop under an old pear tree or up near the granary, and every time he'd say, 'Where air we now?' and we'd tell him and then he would tell us some story about what he'd done at that particular place. And we'd always get such a kick out of it."⁵

The Houstons eventually grew tired of their duties, and passed the office of postmaster to Monroe Gorden in 1905 after the Gordens purchased the Houston ranch. Though Monroe held the office, his wife Sarah Jane Murray Gorden actually performed the postmaster's duties. During her tenure, the post office moved from a bedroom to the front room of the Houston (now Gorden) ranch house. The sisters remember Sarah "had quite a time" with the post office, and she volunteered the sisters and other children for help as they matured.⁶

Every few days or weeks, the sisters recalled, a small man named Lee Mitchell "from up in the Meadows" delivered sacks of mail to the Gordens on a horse. Mitchell also delivered Beagle outgoing mail to Sams Valley.

Another rider took it to Gold Hill and beyond. Mitchell waddled as he picked up the heavy bags and manhandled them over his horse's back, the Gorden sisters said.

"And those [*bags*] flopping on each side as big as he was, you know, we used to get a kick out of that," Matty recalled.⁷

Sarah Gorden helped out her community in other ways as well. Beginning at age seventeen she often served as a midwife and nurse for the local doctor. A practical man, the doctor didn't worry about Sarah's credentials; he trained her himself. The sisters say Sarah was "real good at it."⁸



In the years before automobiles and trucks made Medford or Central Point easily accessible, the families of Beagle Country lived in relative isolation. The Gorden sisters remember going to Medford or Central Point in the spring and fall to get coffee, sugar, flour and other staples they couldn't produce themselves.

What they didn't buy they made. From fabric purchased in town, they sewed their own clothes. They also dried and canned their own fruit, including apples, pears, plums and prunes, and slaughtered and butchered their own meat and grew vegetables.

Parents didn't wait long to assign farming duties to children. Thelma Beers, who still lives in the Beagle area on Sweet Lane, said children as young as four would feed small animals and weed gardens.

"When Johnny was old enough to tell the difference between a vegetable and a weed, he pulled a weed," she said. "I scrubbed many a tub of clothes on the old scrub board when I was thirteen years old."

From the day the harvest ended in October to the end of May, when new harvest chores began, the children attended Mountain School, about one and a half miles above Antioch School, neither of which exists any more. The teacher rotated her residence among several families, and at Mountain School in 1917 taught a total of four students.⁹

Neighbors threw parties and dances for one another, and each guest brought a cake. One gentleman by the name of Ely Emmick sometimes played the violin.¹⁰ Residents sponsored a Sunday School and the young people

held box socials.¹¹ Young ladies prepared boxes of food for which the young men bid. The winning bidder became the lady's partner for the day.¹² During the warm months, the Beagle Stickies baseball team played the Sams Valley and Table Rock teams.¹³



A practical man, the doctor didn't worry about Sarah's credentials; he trained her himself. The sisters say Sarah was "real good at it."

Most farmers grew food for their families first, then pocketed extra cash when they sold excess produce or grain to buyers in Central Point and other towns. Many farmers in Beagle Country hired Elbert Glass and the Beagle Threshing Company to harvest wheat for milling in Medford and elsewhere. Elbert and his brother began the business about 1905 and worked at least a decade mowing the stalks and separating the grain from the chaff. Elbert's wife, Milly Gorden Glass, took care of the Glass ranch during the fall harvest season while her husband worked the grain fields.

During World War I, Milly ran errands in a 1914 Ford and one year cooked for the brothers and their hands.

Elbert and Milly Glass (opposite) and their Beagle home in 1912 (left) SOHS #5528, #5530 These long time Beagle-ites operated a farm and threshing company.



"One cook came," Milly Glass said, "and she professed to be a number one cook. And they gave her the job and she didn't give them satisfaction at all. She'd make great loaves of bread and bake them so fast they would be burnt on top and dough in the middle."

"And so, it came a rain, and they had to take her home. They shut down, you see. And they didn't go back after her."

Some nights, Matty slept under the wagons near the threshers. "And the dew would be just wet on our pillows," she said.¹⁴

William Jasper Rodgers took the post office from Monroe Gorden in 1916 and moved it to a new house at the intersection of Beagle and Antioch roads. Nature dealt out good years and bad years randomly; the winter of 1917-18 brought five-foot snow drifts. Farmers put snow runners on their buggies and drove right over the fences.

"I don't think any year went well," Beers remembered. "I think they were all a struggle."

However, Beers recalled one year when her father cleared \$400, "and we were rich." In those years, no child went hungry and no parent had to worry about car repairs or the electric bill. "It was a good life," Beers said. "We never had to keep up with the Joneses."

Charles S. Sanderson, Beers' grandfather, took over post office duties from Rodgers in 1918. He ran the post office and general store in the front rooms of the family home. Some customers bought goods with money, Beers recalled, while others bartered with products from the fields, the orchard or the chicken coop.¹⁵

After two years, Sanderson handed the post office chores back to Rodgers who ran the post office for five more years, then passed it to Ella Smith in 1925. Fred G. Thompson took over in 1926. His tenure lasted only five months. Ollie Walker held the office until 1928, then gave it to Ruby Mayfield. Under her tenure, the building that housed the post office burned down. The house was soon rebuilt.¹⁶ In 1930, Louis "Brother" Swanson took over.

Through the 1920s and the 1930s, the post office and a store next door run by the Walker family drew neigh-



bors together for supplies and friendly talk. The Depression years tightened community bonds and few in Beagle Country fell into complete destitution. People worked a little harder during the day and hunted game at night. Central Point resident Gordon Jesse Walker, the son of postmistress Ollie Walker, said some today might call the hunting poaching; then it was called survival.¹⁷

But the long awaited end of the Great Depression brought a blow from which Beagle would never fully recover. In early 1942, Beagle families and dozens of other families living on the land around Table Rock and northern Jackson County received letters from the federal government.¹⁸ A war was on, soldiers had to be trained, Camp White had to be built, and the families had to leave, the government told them.

Most families accepted the government's order without fuss; while others were being asked to sacrifice their lives for the war effort, they only had to sacrifice their

homes. Besides, the government offered fair market value for the land: about forty-eight dollars an acre.¹⁹

Still, the blow came hard to some. The Walkers had barely recovered from the Depression years and didn't trust the government's words. But they took the offer of \$400 for their land, dismantled their buildings, packed their personal property in a pickup and a trailer and drove a team of horses to a new home eight miles away.

"Dad wasn't one to fight a battle," Gordon Walker recalled. "He just wanted to be on his way."²⁰

"It was a pretty hard wrench to have to leave that place," said Charlotte Sweet of Medford. Charlotte and her husband, Marshall, who later worked for the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers and helped build Camp White, packed all their personal belongings, moved the milk cows to a relative's place and sold their horses for slaughter.

"It was awful," she said.

The Sweets moved out their last load on July 4, 1942.

"It was almost impossible to find a place to live," she said.²¹

Beers has similar memories. "The first shell was shot over our head before we moved," she said.²²

The army bulldozed every building and tore down every fence. At the Antioch Cemetery just down the road from the Beagle post office, the military laid headstones face down and buried the graves under more earth.²³ Quiet, bucolic Beagle Country metamorphosed into an imaginary war zone as soldiers of the 91st Division, the "Wild West Division," which fought in three major battles in World War I, prepared to meet the German army under the banner: "Shoot, march, and obey."

"That," said Maj. Gen. Charles H. Gerhardt, commanding officer at Camp White, "sums up the soldier to me."

The rolling, lightly-wooded hills around Table Rock proved perfect for simulating the plains of Europe. Winter fogs obscured the vision of spotters on the Beagle artillery range, but it "only made the gunners try harder," one *Oregonian* writer said.

As a guest at a forward observation post just above Table Rock, the reporter said he "heard the shrieking flight of 105-millimeter projectiles overhead [and] saw infantrymen in the foreground advancing unconcernedly directly under the artillery fire."

"The lines of infantry had come up within 300 yards of where the screaming projectiles, hurtling now close overhead, were bursting in thunderous salvos on the once gently sloping hillside."

Just below Beagle across Highway 234, engineers had constructed several concrete pillboxes that simulated the European continent's coastal defenses. As the reporter watched the exercise, D-Day, June 6, 1944, was less than a year away. Camp White soldiers assaulted the mock defenses with flame throwers and bazookas. Some would toss simulated explosives into a gun embrasure, "then scuttle around the nearest corner before a real charge, electrically fired by an instructor from a nearby point, could blast them over."



Although Monroe Gorden was appointed postmaster, his wife Sarah actually attended to most of the mail duties. Pictured from left to right in 1903, the family included Bessie, Monroe, Milly, Samuel, Olly, Clara, Sarah and Matty. SOHS #5533 For a time, the post office was located in a converted bedroom in the Gorden family home, pictured above in 1912. SOHS #5534.

One man didn't get away fast enough, and the detonation "probably jarred some of his teeth loose."

After the artillery and bazooka attack, the troops rushed the objective with the Wild West's battle cry: "Powder River—Let 'er buck!"

The battle over, Gen. Gerhardt addressed his men.

"Does it make sense to you?" he asked.

"Yes, Sir," they replied²⁴

The war ended in 1945 and the howitzers at the base of Table Rock ceased firing. The federal government dismantled Camp White in 1946, leaving only the Veterans Administration Domiciliary. Rogue Valley residents picked at the camp's remnants like vultures, buying buildings and equipment at army auctions.²⁵

Out above Table Rock, tank maneuvers had destroyed farm buildings and ruined water wells. Wrecked trees made a forest of splinters, and craters seven feet wide and fourteen feet deep pock-marked the ground. Infantry trenches crisscrossed the hills, and the soil itself was alive with unexploded shells.²⁶

Yet Beagle still breathed, at least in Grants Pass. For three years, families who had called the land above Table Rock home had met for an annual picnic on July 4. The

Beagle Community Club has continued this tradition for forty-three years.

"A basket lunch was enjoyed at noon and John Peffley took pictures of the gathering seated at the tables," wrote Charlotte Sweet for the club minutes of its first meeting on July 4, 1943.²⁷

In July 1945, "a letter was presented by George Loflin to be placed on file in Washington, D. C., stating that the former residents wished first choice in event the land in the Beagle area became available," the secretary wrote. "Those wishing to do so, signed (the letter)."²⁸

In 1946 and 1947, the Beagle-ites again discussed going home,^{29 30} and in 1949 the federal government offered them an opportunity. It would sell the land back to Beagle residents and other landowners displaced by World War II and Camp White at a price comparable to the 1942 purchase price.³¹

The Sweets bought back their 38.8 acres from the federal government for about two-thirds the government purchase price of \$2,309 dollars.³² The Beerses purchased land they once rented from an elderly couple near the Beagle post office.³³ The Walkers were among the families that didn't come back.

The Beagle Community Club (right) holds its annual reunion on the third weekend in July.

The 1988 gathering featured fried chicken, watermelon, and a variety of salads and desserts.

Photo by Natalie Brown A few former Beagle residents returned to the area following dismantling of Camp White after the war. Some pillboxes, trenches and other evidences of soldier training still remain. SOHS #5567



The Beagle expatriates found their land as the army left it, dangerous and plastered with shell holes. Jagged shell fragments peppered the ground. The Antioch Cemetery Association reactivated the Antioch Cemetery and the army uncovered the graveyard, replaced the headstones, and polished them clean.³⁴ Thelma Beers filled the craters around her home with dirt and planted them with trees.³⁵

Thelma's husband Lloyd once drew a plow over a phosphorous shell, which blew up and damaged the machine. He wasn't hurt. In the beginning, the discovery of an unexploded shell became an excuse for a public gathering. Marksmen detonated the bomb with a high-powered rifle and shells still go off occasionally in the area.³⁶

Nonetheless, life slowly returned to Beagle Country. "Much of the land is in crops this year and many persons are building homes, barns and other structures," one newspaper reported.³⁷

"I remember digging post holes and getting slivers in my hands," Charlotte Sweet said.

But with all the renewal, one thing never returned: the post office. Authorities had shut it down April 30, 1941.

Today, a visit to Beagle Country yields few traces of the early years. Below Highway 234, as many as nine shot-up pillboxes—empty and stained with moss and lichen—sit on hillocks that command the base of Table Rock a mile away. One pillbox serves as an extra room for a mobile home.

The intersection of Beagle and Antioch roads shows no sign of the post office and store, save for a low shed with an aluminum roof that covers the old well. Ancient oaks that may once have shaded the store now shade a fenced pasture bare of grass. A goat warily watches travelers from another pasture, and an aloof bull chews his cud under a young locust tree.

But about a half-mile away on Thelma Beers' lawn, on the third Sunday in July, under the shade of trees that

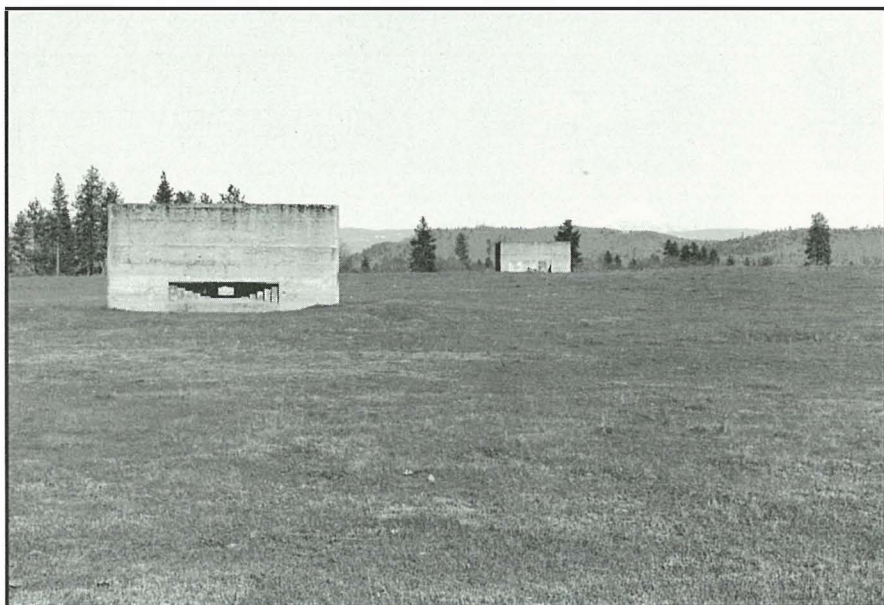
grow in old shell craters, a few people who remember Beagle renew acquaintances, show each other rusted shell fragments, mark the passing of friends and hold the annual meeting of the Beagle Community Club.



ENDNOTES

1. Bill Manny, "Beagle—Gone, But Not Forgotten," *The Medford Mail Tribune*, July 20, 1986, p. 1A.
2. Personal interview with Guy Randles, Ashland, OR, July 28, 1988.
3. Oral history interview with Millie Hazel Gorden Glass and Matty Gorden Rodgers, Jacksonville, Southern Oregon Historical Society, May and June, 1982, p. 12.
4. Glass and Rodgers interview, pp. 23–24.
5. Glass and Rodgers interview, p. 15.
6. Glass and Rodgers interview, p. 22.
7. Glass and Rodgers interview, p. 23.
8. Glass and Rodgers interview, p. 13.
9. Personal interview with Thelma Beers, Sams Valley, OR, July 17, 1988.
10. Glass and Rodgers interview, p. 73.
11. Manny, p. 1A.
12. Beers interview.
13. Manny, p. 1A.
14. Glass and Rodgers interview, pp. 80–82.
15. Beers interview.
16. Personal interview with Charlotte Sweet, Sams Valley, OR, July 17, 1988.
17. Interview with Gordon Jesse Walker, Sams Valley, OR, July 17, 1988.
18. Beers, Sweet and Walker interviews.
19. Beers interview.
20. Walker interview.
21. Sweet interview.
22. Beers interview.
23. Manny, p. 4A.
24. Herman Edwards, "Powder River—Let 'er Buck!": the Wild West Division," *The Sunday Oregonian*, 11 July 1943, Sec. 2, pp. 2, 7.
25. "Long History of Camp White, Fights, Controversies, Related," *The Medford Mail Tribune*, 31 July 1949, Sec. 2, p. 1.
26. Beers interview.
27. *Minutes*, unpublished, Beagle Community Club, July 4, 1943.
28. *Minutes*, July 1945.
29. *Minutes*, July 1946, 1947.
30. The minutes of the 1949 Beagle Community Club record a discussion of the activities of oil speculators in the Beagle area that year. The minutes say the speculators wanted to lease the land for three years. Subsequent minutes contain no further reference to the subject.
- 31., 32., & 34. Manny, p. 4A.
- 33., 35., & 36. Beers interview.
37. Clipped newspaper article (paper unknown) on file with the Southern Oregon Historical Society under MS 322, "Beagle."
38. Sweet interview.

A former Ashland Daily Tidings reporter, Joseph G. Follansbee is a free-lance writer residing in Ashland.





August and Rose Singler pose for their wedding portrait. Photo courtesy Diane Walker Singler's campaign materials for the Republican nomination for sheriff consisted of a portrait of his family (*opposite*). During the general election, a photograph of his eighth child was inserted with the handwritten comment, "addition since the primary." SOHS #507



Party
I Am
Working
For

Very Truly Yours

AUG. D. SINGLER

Candidate for
Republican Nominee

FOR SHERIFF

The Party I Am Working For

By C. Anders Nilsson

The serenity of the sparsely populated foothills southeast of Jacksonville was shattered by a brutal exchange of gunfire at dusk on Tuesday, April 22, 1913. In a matter of seconds, nineteen-year-old Lester Jones was dead and Jackson County Sheriff August D. Singler, thirty-six, was staggering from the scene with a wound which would take his life the next day. Though there was some confusion concerning the exact sequence of events immediately preceding the shootout, one fact was undisputed; the life and career of a popular, respected lawman was cut short.

Born May 15, 1876, August David Singler was one of thirteen children of a prominent Indiana businessman. On November 15, 1898, he married Rose Probst and set up housekeeping in South Bend, Indiana, work-

ing as a salesman for the Singer Sewing Machine Company. When their first child (appropriately named Valentine) was born on February 14, 1900, August watched as the attending midwife assisted Rose with the delivery and used the knowledge gained to deliver the seven children who followed Valentine¹. The self-reliance and confidence in his own abilities that he demonstrated by assisting his wife in the births of their children formed a cornerstone of his personality and shaped his actions for the rest of his life.

In 1901, Singler made the first of two solo trips to Oregon by hitchhiking from his Indiana home to the Rogue Valley. There were two purposes for the trips; one was to visit a brother (William) and sister (Anna Singler

The Other Victims

"Mrs. Singler, your husband has been shot, but don't worry, it is nothing serious."¹

Those words were Rose Probst Singler's first indication something terrible had happened to her husband, Jackson County Sheriff August D. Singler. Accompanied by several of her eldest children, she traveled from the Singler home in Jacksonville to Sacred Heart Hospital in Medford, where her husband was being treated for a gunshot wound received in a shootout with a young man he had tried to arrest. Though doctors pronounced the operation (removing a bullet from the sheriff's chest) a success, internal hemorrhaging took his life at 8:35 on the morning of April 23, 1913.²

After her husband's election as sheriff, Mrs. Singler had begun supplementing the family income by preparing meals (at thirty-five cents each) for the prisoners held in the Jackson County Jail³ across the street from the Singler's rented home in Jacksonville. With her husband's death, Rose was to receive \$62 a month from a widow's fund, a \$1000 life insurance payment and financial assistance from August's brother, William Singler⁴ to augment her income from the county. However, the widow's fund income ceased after a short time,⁵ much of the insurance payment was used for August's funeral expenses and William Singler failed to honor his promise.

The years following the sheriff's death were difficult ones for the family. Rose fended off attempts by various social agencies to take her children from her⁶ and tried to support her family on her wage as cook for county prisoners (supplemented by money earned by some of the older children who worked in local orchards). Her fortunes changed for the better when she took a job at a dry cleaners on Fir Street in Medford, which paid \$60 per month.

In 1920 she used a small inheritance from her father's estate to pay \$125 down on a house on Grape Street. She continued working for the dry cleaners and managed to support her children through their school years, finally retiring in 1940. In June 1966, Rose Probst Singler was laid to rest beside her husband in the I.O.O.F. cemetery in Medford.

1. SOHS file 178.

2. *Medford Mail Tribune*, April 23, 1913, p. 1.

3. SOHS file 178, p. 9.

4. *Medford Mail Tribune*, April 23, 1913, p. 1. In addition to listing the widow's fund and insurance, the report states William Singler accepted the appointment to finish his brother's term of office with the understanding he would "assist in the care of his brother's family and look after their welfare, a responsibility he cheerfully agreed to assume."

the Rogue River National Forest, pp. 165-166.

5. SOHS file 178, p. 9.

Rick) and the second was to "see what the West was like."² His second trip in 1903, again made via thumb-power, convinced him southern Oregon should be his growing family's new home. He wired Rose (who was by then pregnant with their fourth child, Zita) to bring their three boys and join him in Grants Pass where the family lived in a cabin belonging to August's sister until moving to Medford in 1906.³

Singler added the selling of "patent medicines" for the Electric Medical Company to his job with the Singer Sewing Machine Company and used the proceeds to buy about three acres on Lozier Lane. Though he knew little about construction, he built a two-story house that became the family's home for the next six years.

Singler's career in law enforcement began in 1909 when he became constable of the Medford District. Already a popular and active citizen⁴ in the growing community of Medford, he soon became a respected lawman as well, known for his "industriousness, optimism and integrity."⁵ A number of cases during his four-year tenure as constable demonstrated his tenacity and bravery in apprehending criminals.

In July of 1911, Peter Janetos used a revolver "large enough to besiege a city" to settle an argument with an acquaintance named Ruchias in a lumber camp near Butte Falls. Constable Singler and his brother William drove to the camp to investigate and learned Janetos and two friends were in a smaller camp some distance down the railroad line. Using a railroad handcar the lawmen arrived at the second camp and confronted Janetos' friends, who attempted to display ignorance of their companion's whereabouts. A guilty glance toward a wood pile betrayed Janetos, however, and the constable "got the drop" on him. When the trio returned to Medford the next day, they were confronted at the corner of Central and Main by an angry group of Ruchias' friends intent on relieving the lawmen of their charge and carrying out their own justice, but the sight of the officers' gun muzzles held them at bay and the prisoner was taken to jail.⁶

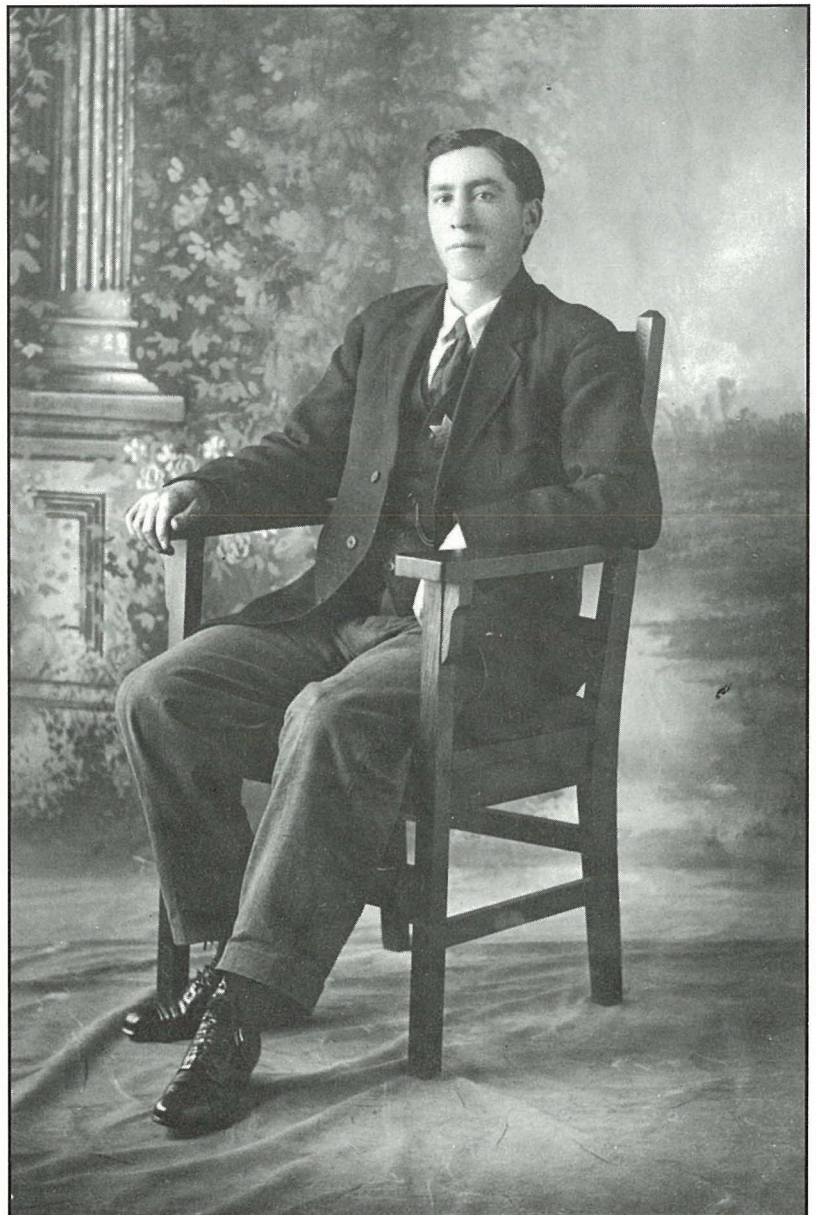
Other cases proved Singler's thoroughness as an investigator. Over a period of several days in late 1911, he discovered that a group of boys ranging in age from twelve to fifteen was responsible for a string of thefts. As his investigation progressed, evidence surfaced that a junk dealer had been buying the loot taken by the gang.⁷

The Lounsberry train robbery case involved the search for loot and other evidence which would tie Wells Lounsberry to several train holdups. Constable Singler searched the Lounsberry ranch on the Jacksonville-Central Point road for at least two days, going so far as to search the brick-lined well. He noted following his search that although the Lounsberys had a fifty-seven-acre orchard and ranch their library contained no books on the subjects of ranching or farming.

"Most candidates set up the plea that they were urged to run by friends and felt it a duty to do so, so far as we know Singler is the only candidate in the field who has said that he is running because he wants the job."

After two terms as constable, Singler decided to run for the office of Jackson County sheriff and entered the Republican primary race. His campaign slogan was unique for its straightforwardness; the caption "The Party I Am Running For" appeared over a family portrait. The *Ashland Record* noted: "(Singler) sets up the plea he has a family of eight and needs the job to feed them. His honesty is refreshing. Most candidates set up the plea that they were urged to run by friends and felt it a duty to do so, so far as we know Singler is the only candidate in the field who has said that he is running because he wants the job."⁸ Singler received 1,475 of the 2,490 votes cast in the primary.

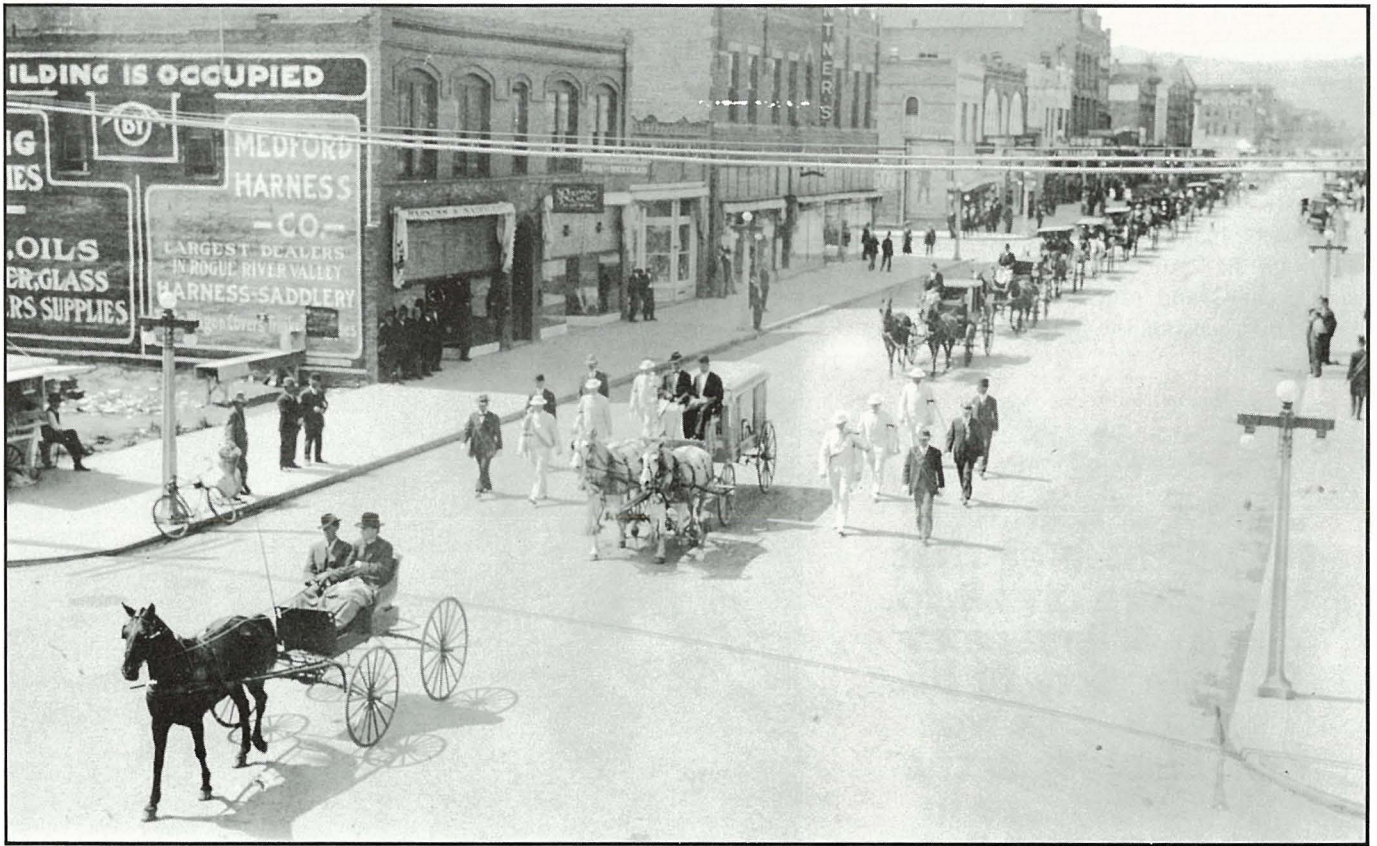
Only one change was made in his campaign for the general election; the Singlers' eighth child, born following the primary election, was added to the candidate's photo with



"addition since the primary" written above the child's head. As in the primary race, Singler was once again given poor odds for victory and once again he won by a substantial margin, defeating a powerful incumbent named W.A. Jones and two other contenders.

Having won the office, Singler prepared to assume the role and offered the required \$10,000 bond to the county court. He was informed, however, by Judge Tou Velle that the bond amount had been increased to \$15,000 for the sheriff's post and an additional \$40,000 bond for the secondary office of tax collector. Singler started to argue the point, stating the court had no jurisdiction over the sheriff's office, but was rebuffed by an angry Tou Velle. Singler arranged for the

August David Singler, constable of the Medford District, ca. 1909
Photo courtesy Diane Walker



bonds through independent bondsmen and a bonding agency, stating "he wished no trouble with the court."⁹ Trouble seemed unavoidable, though. A week later a newspaper carried an account of another exchange between the county court and the new sheriff, this time involving the choice Singler had made for first deputy. Again Singler acquiesced to Tou Velle's wishes and a "mutually acceptable choice was made."¹⁰

For Singler, being sheriff of Jackson county meant spending a lot of time in Jacksonville (then the county seat) as well as commuting to and from his home on Lozier Lane; spending time in Jacksonville meant spending time away from his family. To remedy the problem, the family rented a house at the corner of Sixth and D streets (across Sixth from the courthouse and jail) and settled into a routine. The sheriff's wife cooked meals for the jail inmates to earn extra money¹¹, the sheriff dealt with county business, and the children and three bloodhounds took turns serenading the community (the children by day with their music lessons, the dogs by night).¹²

On the evening of April 22, just four months after Singler had taken office, word reached him a young man named Lester Jones had been sighted in Medford and Ash-

land. A warrant for Jones' arrest had been sworn the year before accusing him of petty theft in Jacksonville. When the Jacksonville marshal attempted to arrest him, Jones drew a revolver, disarmed the marshal and escaped into the mountains of northern

The mayor of Medford ordered all businesses closed during August Singler's funeral.

SOHS #2432

Wounded through both lungs, Singler fell, emptying his revolver into his assailant as he dropped.

California.¹³ Accompanied by George Launsbach, a neighbor of Jones, Sheriff Singler drove down the Jacksonville-Ashland road to arrest Jones.

What happened at the two-room cabin in the hills may never be known for certain. An inquest held the day following the shootout failed to "clear up the story of the revolver duel."¹⁴ By Singler's own account, given fol-

(continued page 16)

What Really Happened?

Newspaper articles are all that remain as a record of the pistol duel which took the lives of Sheriff August D. Singler and Lester Jones in a small cabin "three-quarters of a mile south of the crest of the first long hill as one leaves Jacksonville on the Ashland road" on April 22, 1913. If a transcript was kept of the coroner's inquest and if a written record of Sheriff Singler's deathbed statements was made, those pieces of evidence no longer exist to aid in the investigation of these few moments of Oregon history. Instead of first-hand testimony, second-hand (and often conflicting) accounts must be used.

Newspaper reports of the Singler-Jones gunfight agree on certain basic facts. Sheriff Singler had a warrant for Jones' arrest and was attempting to carry out his duty when Jones opened first from inside his two-room cabin. The first shot entered Singler's body just under his left armpit, passed through both lungs and lodged against the ribs on his right side. The second bullet hit a knuckle of his right hand and a third hit the stove in the center of the room. Singler returned fire after receiving the first wound and hit Jones with all six rounds from his revolver; one to the right cheek, one through the scalp, and four to the abdomen.² Jones died almost instantly, while Singler managed to stagger from the cabin and down the hillside to a fence at the edge of a plowed field.

Accounts describing the actions of the combatants immediately preceding the shooting and the part played by George Launspach differ on several points. According to *The Medford Sun* story published the next day, Sheriff Singler "was reading a warrant for his arrest when the young thug whipped out his revolver" and fired as Singler was standing on the steps just outside the door. "John Launspach³, living half a mile away heard the shooting and rushed to the aid of Singler" who was lying beneath a tree. After making Singler as comfortable as possible, Launspach returned to his home and telephoned for help.⁴

A *Medford Mail Tribune* account states Launspach guided Singler to Jones' cabin and waited at the bottom of the hill while the sheriff went up to arrest the "young desperado" alone. As the sheriff approached the cabin he saw Jones at the stove inside preparing dinner. Singler walked "up the steps, with his gun drawn" and "opened the door with his left hand. As

he did so Jones shot." Singler emptied his revolver at Jones "then turned and walked down the hill nearly one hundred yards, when he reeled and fell."⁵ Yet another account in *The Medford Sun* of April 25 placed Launspach 150 feet from the cabin and calls him an eye witness.

At Sacred Heart Hospital, doctors Golden, Pickel and Stearns removed the bullet from Singler's chest, treated the wound and pronounced the operation a success.⁶ The sheriff was conscious for several hours; he was visited by his family and friends, and "talked to those helping him about the affray,"⁷ giving a "disconnected account of the tragedy."⁸

If Singler gave his own account of what happened at the cabin and if the story placing Launspach within view of the shooting scene is true, the coroner's inquest on April 24 should have provided an accurate description of events. However, the *Medford Mail Tribune* reported the next day: "The coroner's inquest . . . failed to bring out any new facts or to conclusively clear up the story of the revolver duel . . ."⁹ No official transcript of this inquest survives.

August Singler was regarded as a man whose ". . . most striking characteristics were his industriousness, optimism and integrity."¹⁰ Perhaps, as a *Medford Mail Tribune* article published the next day stated, "The true story will probably never be know."¹¹ Perhaps, the only important fact is a respected man died ". . . while in the performance of his official duty."¹²

1. *Medford Mail Tribune*, April 24, 1913, p. 1. (This location, approximately one mile from the present Jacksonville city limit, was confirmed using the tax assessment records for the period of 1904 to 1917.

2. *Medford Mail Tribune*, April 23, 1913, p. 2.

3. Launspach is referred to as John in two of *The Medford Sun* reports dated April 12, and as George in all *Medford Mail Tribune* stories as well as most subsequent *Sun* accounts.

4. *The Medford Sun*, April 23, 1913, p. 1.

5. *Medford Mail Tribune*, April 23, 1913, p. 1.

6. *The Medford Sun*, April 23, 1913, p. 6.

7. *Medford Mail Tribune*, April 23, 1913, p. 2.

8. *The Medford Sun*, April 23, 1913, p. 6.

9. *Medford Mail Tribune*, April 25, 1913, p. 5.

10. *The Medford Sun*, April 24, 1913, p. 6.

11. *Medford Mail Tribune*, April 24, 1913, p. 5.

12. *The Medford Sun*, April 25, 1913, p. 1.

lowing surgery late that night, he had approached the cabin with his revolver drawn and was attempting to read the warrant when Jones pulled his own revolver and fired. Wounded through both lungs, Singler fell, emptying his revolver into his assailant as he dropped. He made his way down the hill, unaware he had killed Jones, and told Launspach that his own wound was fatal.¹⁵ The doctors who removed the bullet from Singler's chest pronounced the operation a success,¹⁵ but Singler's prediction proved to be more accurate and he died at 8:35 the morning of April 24, moments after signing his last will and testament.¹⁶

August David Singler's funeral was one of the largest in Medford history.¹⁷ "So great was the crowd at the church that only half could be accommodated," one source reported, and the funeral procession to the I.O.O.F. cemetery stretched nearly twelve blocks through city streets lined with "hundreds" who stood quietly with "bared heads." In response to a proclamation by the mayor "... every business house in town, from bank to cigar stands, was closed"¹⁸ and Judge Tou Velle ordered the flags at the courthouse flown at half-mast for thirty days.¹⁹

ENDNOTES

1. Zita (Singler) Maddox oral history, Southern Oregon Historical Society file number 178 (hereafter referred to as SOHS 178), p. 2.

2. SOHS 178, p. 2. A reference is made on this page only citing ill health as another reason for the trip; no further mention of illness or subsequent recovery is made

in this or other available documents.

3. Ibid.

4. Singler was active in the Redmen's Lodge, the Woodmen of the World, and the Knights of Columbus, and was the third member to join the local Elks Lodge. It should be noted that though several references are made to his membership in the Woodmen of the World, a retraction printed in *The Medford Sun* of April 27, 1913, page 8 indicates Singler was a "Modern Woodsman but not a Woodsman of the World."

5. *The Medford Sun*, April 24, 1913, p. 6.

6. *The Medford Sun*, July 23, 1911, p. 1, p. 6.

7. *Medford Mail Tribune*, December 22, 1911, p. 1.

8. *Ashland Record*, April 17, 1912, p. 3.

9. *Medford Mail Tribune*, January 7, 1913, p. 1.

10. *Medford Mail Tribune*, January 15, 1913, p. 1.

11. SOHS 178, p. 9.

12. *Medford Mail Tribune*, January 7, 1913, p. 1.

13. *The Medford Sun*, April 23, 1913, p. 6.

14. *Medford Mail Tribune*, April 24, 1913, p. 5.

15. *The Medford Sun*, April 24, 1913, p. 6.

16. Ibid.

17. *Medford Mail Tribune*, February 18, 1979, p. 6a.

18. *The Medford Sun*, April 26, 1913, p. 6.

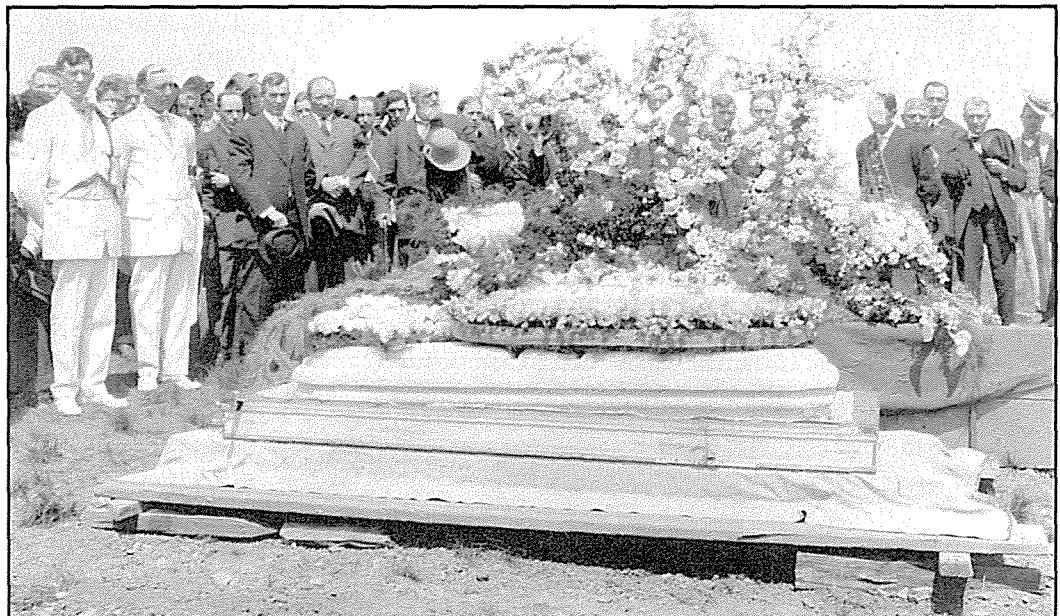
19. *Medford Mail Tribune*, April 26, 1913, p. 6.

20. *The Medford Sun*, April 24, 1913, p. 1.

Thanks to Carol Harbison and Karalee Newberg of the Southern Oregon Historical Society Research Library, Diane Walker and William A. Singler (grandchildren of August and Rose), and Rich Thelen of the Southern Oregon Archives for their assistance in locating materials for this story.

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Crowds turned out for August Singler's internment in Medford's IOOF cemetery. Photo courtesy Diane Walker





For the Record

Celebrating 200 Years of Congress

Earlier this year, historian David McCullough gave this speech before Congress in honor of the 200th anniversary of that legislative body. The original transcript appeared in the Congressional Record.

Simon Willard was never a member of Congress in the usual sense. Simon Willard of Roxbury, MA was a clockmaker early in the 19th century and he did it all by hand and by eye.

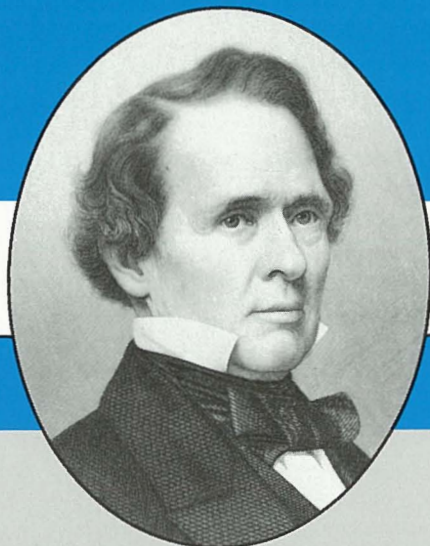
"In cutting his wheel teeth," reads an old account, "he did not mark out the spaces on the blank [brass] wheel and cut the teeth to measure, but he cut, rounded up and finished the teeth as he went along, using his eye only in spacing, and always came out even.

"It is doubtful," the old account continues, "if such a feat in mechanics was ever done before, and certainly never since."

The exact date is uncertain, but about 1837, when he was in his eighties, Simon Willard made a most important clock. I will come back to that.

On a June afternoon in 1775, before there was a Congress of the United States, a small boy stood with his mother on a distant knoll, watching the battle of Bunker Hill. That was Adams, John Quincy Adams, diplomat, senator, secretary of state, and president, who in his lifetime had seen more, contributed more to the history of his time than almost anyone and who, as no former president ever had, returned here to the Hill to take a seat

By
David McCullough



The plain truth is historians and biographers have largely neglected the history of Congress.

Joseph Lane

One of Oregon's earliest senators was Joseph Lane, also the territory's first governor and an early territorial delegate. A controversial character, Lane was a firm Confederate supporter in Oregon, then a declared free state. However, he worked diligently for settlers' rights and sought fair treatment for the local Native Americans.

Born to South Carolina farmers, Lane left home at fourteen to work in a variety of positions in Indiana—county court clerk, state legislator, farmer, flatboater—until the United States declared war on Mexico in 1847. After serving with distinction, showing leadership and courage, he was elevated to the position of brigadier general.

Following the creation of the Oregon Territory on August 13, 1848, President James K. Polk appointed Lane the first territorial governor.

During his short tenure as governor, Lane initiated the system of public schools, improved the territorial roads and ordered surveys of the south channel of the Columbia River. He completed the first census of the state's ten counties, and made careful reports on the locations and numbers of Native American groups. Shortly after Lane resigned the governorship in 1850, Sam R. Thurston, the first territorial delegate to Congress, died and Lane was appointed his successor.

From his position in Washington, D.C., Lane worked for military support for Oregon settlers, payment to Indian Wars volunteers, and appropriations for roads. In Oregon, he completed treaty negotiations with the Rogue Indians and set up the Table Rock reservation. And he ordered the establishment of Fort Lane to protect the Indians on the reservation.

Lane won reelection to his seat as delegate in 1855 and 1857. Following the declaration of statehood in 1859, he became one of the new state's first two senators.

With the increasing tensions preceding the Civil War, the national Democratic Party split between supporters of Stephen A. Douglas and John C. Breckenridge. Lane was nominated for vice-president on the Breckenridge ticket. However, the divided Democratic Party was no match for Republican unity. Abraham Lincoln won the presidency decisively, triumphing in every non-slave state, including Oregon.

Following Lincoln's inauguration, Lane returned to his home near Roseburg. He sat out the Civil War years with only his wife, Polly, and their farm animals for company. Joseph Lane died quietly in 1881, at the age of 81.

in the House of Representatives, in the 22nd Congress, and thrilled at the prospect. And it was here that this extraordinary American had his finest hours.

Adams took his seat in the old House—in what is now Statuary Hall—in 1831. Small, fragile, fearing no one, he spoke his mind and his conscience. He championed mechanical “improvements” and scientific inquiry. To no one in Congress are we so indebted for the establishment of the Smithsonian Institution. With congressmen Lincoln of Illinois and Corwin of Ohio, he cried out against the Mexican War, and for eight long years, almost alone, he battled the infamous gag rule imposed by southerners to prevent any discussion of petitions against slavery. Adams hated slavery but was fighting, he said, more for the unlimited right of all citizens to have their petitions heard, whatever their cause. It was a gallant fight and he won. The gag rule was permanently removed.

Earlier this year, at the time of the inaugural ceremonies, I heard a television commentator broadcasting from Statuary Hall complain of the resonance and echoes in the room. What resonance. What echoes.

John Quincy Adams is a reminder that giants come in all shapes and sizes and that, at times, they have walked these halls, their voices have been heard, their spirit felt here. Listen, please, to this from his diary, from March 29, 1841:

The world, the flesh, and all the devils in hell are arrayed against any man who now in this North American Union shall dare to join the standard of Almighty God to put down the African slave trade; and what can I, upon the verge of my seventy-fourth birthday, with a shaking hand, a darkening eye, a drowsy brain, and with all my faculties dropping from me one by one, as the teeth are dropping from my head—what can I do for the cause of God and man. Yet my conscience presses me on; let me but die upon the breach.

And how he loved the House of Representatives:

It was Congress that paid for Lewis
and Clark and for our own
travels to the moon.



The forms and proceedings of the House, this call of the State for petitions, the colossal emblem of the Union over the speaker's chair, this historic Muse at the clock, the echoing pillars of the hall, the tripping Mercuries who bear the resolutions and amendments between the members and the chair, the calls of ayes and noes, with the different intonations of the answers, from different voices, the gobbling manner of the clerk in reading over the names, the tone of the Speaker in announcing the vote and the varied shades of pleasure and pain in the countenances of the members on hearing it, would form a fine subject for a descriptive poem.

Some nights he returned to his lodgings so exhausted he could barely crawl up the stairs. In the winter of 1848, at age eighty, after seventeen years in Congress, Adams collapsed at his desk. A brass plate in the floor of Statuary Hall marks the place.

He was carried to the Speaker's office and there, two days later, he died. At the end Henry Clay, in tears, was holding his hand. Congressman Lincoln helped with the funeral arrangements. Daniel Webster wrote the inscription for the casket.

Many splendid books have been written about Congress: Harry McPherson's *A Political Education*; Allen Drury's *A Senate Journal*; Alvin Josephy's *On the Hill*; and *Kings of the Hill* by Representative Richard Cheney and Lynne V. Cheney; *Rayburn*, a fine recent biography by D.B. Hardeman and Donald Bacon; and *The Great Triumvirate*, about Clay, Webster, and Calhoun, by Merrill Peterson. Now, in this Bicentennial year, comes volume one of Senator Robert Byrd's monumental history of the Senate.

But a book that does justice to the story of Adams' years in the House, one of the vivid chapters in our political history, is still waiting to be written, as are so many others.

Our knowledge, our appreciation, of the history of Congress and those who have made history here are curiously, regrettably deficient. The plain



Binger Hermann

Long-time congressional representative Binger Hermann was one of the most respected southern Oregonians of his time. Born in 1843 in Maryland, he arrived in Oregon with his family shortly after the declaration of statehood in 1859. After admission to the bar, he set up law practice in Roseburg and soon became active in political circles.

By 1866 Hermann won election to the state legislature, and also served as deputy collector of internal revenue for southern Oregon, as receiver of public monies at the U.S. Land Office in Roseburg, and as a colonel in the Oregon State Militia.

Later, the Roseburg Republican was elected to two lengthy series of terms in the U.S. House from 1885-1897 and again from 1903-1907. During his sixteen years representing Oregon districts, Hermann aided in the passage of many state river and harbor appropriations and for the establishment of lighthouse and lifesaving stations along the coast. He authored the Indian Depredation Act providing payment for damages by hostile Native Americans to settlers and their property during the Indian Wars. And on numerous occasions he mailed exotic plants from the U.S. Botanical Gardens to southern Oregon photographer and horticulturalist Peter Britt. These plants and flowering shrubs thrived in the Britt gardens, were propagated and shared with other Rogue Valley residents, and became part of the lush southern Oregon landscape.

A literary man, Hermann also researched and wrote a book on the Louisiana Purchase which reanalyzed that agreement and its role in westward expansion. Until that time, America claimed ownership of the Oregon Territory and Pacific lands based upon that historic purchase. After considerable research and detailed argument, Hermann showed that the Louisiana Purchase did not extend to the Pacific Ocean and that this country's claim to Oregon was through exploration and settlement. As a result, official maps and school texts were changed.

After completing his last term, Hermann returned to his law practice in Roseburg. He died in 1926, and lies buried in Roseburg's Masonic Cemetery.



Charles L. McNary

Today, Charles Linza McNary's name adorns a dam, an airport, a high school, and a golf course in his native state. Sen. Richard L. Neuberger once remarked that McNary was to Oregon what Thomas Jefferson was to Virginia. Certainly, for many years Oregon's prominent statesman was also one of this country's leading foreign policy advisors and a leading progressive among the Republicans.

Born in 1874 on a farm near Salem, McNary decided early on a career in law, although he never lost his interest in agriculture. He attended Stanford University in California and practiced law in Salem. While a dean of Willamette University from 1908-1913, he worked passionately to turn Willamette's stumbling law department into one of the most respected law schools on the Pacific coast. During this time he also conducted numerous horticulture experiments, developing the Imperial prune and varieties of prize cherries and walnuts, and establishing the first commercial filbert orchard. Thanks to McNary's early efforts, the filbert, or hazelnut, is now an important Oregon crop and is designated the state nut.

After a short stint on the Oregon Supreme Court, McNary was appointed to replace Sen. Harry Lane, who died in office in 1917. During that politically tense year, McNary supported President Woodrow Wilson's war policies, lobbied for government purchase of such Oregon farm products as potatoes, vegetables and prunes, and fought against war profiteering. Well-respected and successful, McNary was reelected in 1919 and served five successive terms.

McNary wrote legislation protecting national forests and national interests. He launched the battle for farm relief, advocated public ownership of hydroelectric power, voted for a peacetime draft during the pre-war buildup of Nazi Germany and supported the organization of the United Nations. His common sense and skill at compromise earned the respect of politicians of both parties.

Although a Democrat, President Franklin D. Roosevelt wanted the Republican McNary as vice-president on a bipartisan wartime ticket. Instead, in 1940 the Oregon senator was convinced to take that position with FDR's Republican opponent Wendell Wilkie, though McNary dismissed the vice-presidency as "a damn totem pole."

Wilkie won most of the Midwest states, but narrowly lost Oregon and the rest of the nation. McNary returned to his Senate minority leadership position.

In late 1943, doctors examined an ill McNary and discovered a malignant brain tumor. He died several months after an unsuccessful surgery.

truth is historians and biographers have largely neglected the subject. Two hundred years after the creation of Congress, we have only begun to tell the story of Congress—which, of course, means the opportunity for those who write and who teach could not be greater.

There are no substantial, up-to-date biographies of Justin Morrill of Vermont, author of the Land Grant College Act; or Jimmy Byrnes, considered the most skillful politician of his day; or Joe Robinson, the tenacious Democratic majority leader whose sudden death in an apartment not far from here meant defeat for Franklin Roosevelt's court-packing scheme; or Carl Hayden of Arizona, who served longer in the Senate than anybody—forty-one years.

We have John Garraty's life of Henry Cabot Lodge, Sr., but none of Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr. Search the library shelves for a good biography of Alben Barkley or Speaker Joe Martin and you won't find one. They don't exist. The only biography of Senator Arthur Vandenberg ends in 1945, when his career was just taking off. The twentieth-century senator who has been written about most is Joe McCarthy. There are a dozen books about McCarthy. Yet there is no biography of the senator who had the backbone to stand up to him first—Margaret Chase Smith.

"I speak as a Republican," she said on that memorable day in the Senate. "I speak as a woman. I speak as a United States Senator. I speak as an American. I don't want to see the Republican Party ride to political victory on the four horsemen of calumny—fear, ignorance, bigotry and smear."

We have books on people like Bilbo and Huey Long, but no real biographies of George Aiken or Frank Church.

Richard Russell of Georgia, one of the most highly regarded, influential figures to serve in the senate in this century, used to take home old bound

Congress, for all its faults, has not been the unbroken parade of clowns and thieves and posturing windbags so often portrayed.



copies of the Congressional Record to read in the evenings for pleasure. He loved the extended debates and orations of older times and would remark to his staff how strange it made him feel to realize that those who had once counted for so much and so affected the course of American life were completely forgotten. You wonder how many who pour in and out of the Russell Building each day, or the Cannon Building, have any notion who Richard Russell was? Or Joseph Gurney Cannon? There is no adequate biography of either man.

As speaker of the house and head of the Rules Committee, Uncle Joe Cannon, of Danville, Illinois, once wielded power here of a kind unimaginable today. He was tough, shrewd, profane, picturesque, and a terrible stumbling block. It was the new twentieth century. The country wanted change, reform; Uncle Joe did not. "Everything is all right out west and around Danville," he would say. "The country don't need any legislation."

When a bill came up to add a new function to the U.S. Commission of Fish and Fisheries, making it the U.S. Commission of Fish and Fisheries and Birds, Cannon protested. He didn't like adding "and Birds" — "and Birds" was new and different and therefore unacceptable.

The insurrection that ended Cannon's iron rule, a revolt in this chamber in 1910, was led by George Norris of Red Willow County. There have been few better men in public life than George Norris and few more important turning points in our political history. Yet today it is hardly known.

How much more we need to know about the first Congress when everything was new and untried!

How much we could learn from a history of the Foreign Relations Committee!

Imagine the book that could be written about the senate in the momentous years of the New Deal! Think of the changes brought about

then. Think of who was in the Senate—Robert Wagner, Burton K. Wheeler, Hugo Black, Claude Pepper, Barkley, Huey Long, Tom Connally, Vandenberg, Taft, George Norris, Borah of Idaho, and J. Hamilton Lewis, of Illinois, a politician of the old school who still wore wing collars and spats and a pink toupee to match his pink Vandyke whiskers.

It was "Ham" Lewis who advised a newly arrived freshman senator named Truman from Missouri; "Harry, don't start out with an inferiority complex. For the first six months you'll wonder how the hell you got here, and after that you'll wonder how the hell the rest of us got here."

For some unaccountable reason, there is not even a first-rate history of the Capitol, nothing comparable say, to William Seale's history of the White House. This magnificent building grew in stages, as America grew. It is really an assembly of different buildings, representative of different times, different aspirations, and the story should be told that way.

We are all so accustomed to seeing our history measured and defined by the presidency that we forget how much of the story of the country happened here.

Besides Congress, the presidency seems clear, orderly, easy to understand. The protagonists are relatively few in number and take their turns on stage one at a time.

Congress, by contrast, seems to roll on like a river. Someone said you can never cross the same river twice. Congress is like that—always changing. Individuals come and go. Terms overlap. The stage is constantly crowded. The talk and the rumpus go on and on. And there is such a lot of humbug and so much that has been so overwhelmingly boring.

But let no one misunderstand, and least of all you who serve here: we have as much reason to take pride in Congress as in any institution in our sys-

tem. As history abundantly shows, Congress, for all its faults, has not been the unbroken parade of clowns and thieves and posturing windbags so often portrayed. We make sport of Congress, belittle it, bewail its ineptitudes and inefficiency. We have from the beginning, and probably we always will. You do it yourselves, particularly at election time. But what should be spoken of more often, and more widely understood, are the great victories that have been won here, the decisions of courage and vision achieved, the men and women of high purpose and integrity, and, yes, at times genius, who have served here.

It was Congress after all that provided the Homestead Act, ended slavery, ended child labor, built the railroads, built the Panama Canal, the interstate highway system. It was Congress that paid for Lewis and Clark and for our own travels to the moon. It was Congress that changed the course of history with lend-lease and the Marshall Plan, that created Social Security, TVA, the GI Bill, the Voting Rights Act, and the incomparable Library of Congress.

It is not by chance that we Americans have built here on our Capitol Hill, side-by-side with the center of government, our greatest library, a free and open repository of books and without limit on viewpoint, in every language, from every part of the world.

In 200 years, 11,220 men and women have served in the House and Senate, and while the proportions of black Americans, of women, of Hispanic and Asian Americans, and Native Americans have not, and do not now reflect the country at large, it is nonetheless the place where all our voices are heard. Here, as they say—here, as perhaps we cannot say too often—the people rule.

We need to know more about Congress. We need to know more about Congress because we need to know more about leadership. And about human nature.



Maurine B. Neuberger

Outspoken and resourceful, Maurine B. Neuberger will long be remembered for her contributions to both state and national government.

Once the former public school teacher, writer and photographer was elected to the Oregon House of Representatives, she soon demonstrated her concern both for the consumer and for the public good. In the early 1950s, a strong dairy industry lobby opposed the sale of precolored margarine in order to protect butter sales. As a result, Oregonians had to buy white margarine together with small, separate packets of yellow food coloring and mix it themselves. In order to lift the ban on colored butter substitutes, Neuberger appeared before the House in a striped apron with steel mixing bowl in hand and demonstrated the aggravating process of mixing the margarine and coloring. The ban was lifted.

Neuberger was elected as a Democrat to the U.S. Senate in 1960 to fill the vacancy caused by the death of her husband, Richard L. Neuberger. She was elected to a full term beginning in 1961.

As a U.S. Senator, Neuberger supported bills to ease tax burdens on working mothers paying child care and to examine Vietnam War policies. She was thwarted in her efforts to establish a national park in the dunes on the Oregon Coast, owing to opposition by the late Sen. Wayne Morse. But perhaps Neuberger's chief triumph was recognizing the hazardous effects of cigarette smoking and taking a firm stand against the tobacco industry. Together with New York Sen. Robert Kennedy and Montana Sen. Mike Mansfield, she urged legislation requiring warning labels on cigarette packages.

Choosing not to run for reelection, Neuberger devoted herself to lecturing on consumer affairs and women's rights and teaching courses in American government at Boston College, Radcliffe Institute and Reed College.

She is now retired and lives in Portland.

We may also pick up some ideas. Considering the way defense spending has been handled in recent years we might, for example, think of reinstating an investigating committee like the Truman Committee of World War II, which saved billions of dollars and thousands of lives.

If we are unwilling to vote the taxes to pay for the war on drugs, to save our country, why not sell bonds as we did in two world wars? It is hard to imagine anyone not wanting to buy a bond to win the war on drugs.

Above all, we need to know more about Congress because we are Americans. We believe in governing ourselves.

"The boy should read history," the first John Adams wrote to his wife Abigail about the education of their son, John Quincy. History. History, history. We must all read history, and write and publish and teach history better.

How can we know who we are and where we are headed if we don't know where we have come from? How can we call ourselves patriots if we know little of our country's past? Who are those people in the old bound volumes of the Congressional Records? What moved them? What did they know that we do not?

Our past is not only prolog, it can be bracing. In Emerson's words, "The world is young: the former great men [and women] call to us affectionately."

I have decided that the digital watch is the perfect symbol of an imbalance in outlook in our day. It tells us only what time it is now, at this instant, as if that were all anyone would wish or need to know. Which brings me back to Simon Williard.

In the years when the House of Representatives met in Statuary Hall, all deliberations were watched over by the muse of history, Clio. She is there still over the north doorway. She is riding the winged "Car of History," as it is called, keeping note in her book. The idea was that those who sat below would take inspiration from her. They

We are all so accustomed to seeing our history measured and defined by the presidency that we forget how much of the story of the country happened in congress.



would be reminded that they too were part of history, that their words and actions would face the judgment of history, and that they could count themselves part of an honorable heritage.

Clio and the Car of History are by the Italian sculptor Carlo Franzoni of Carrara. The clock in the foreground is by Simon Williard. It was, as I said, installed about 1837. Its inner workings, cut freehand by Simon Williard, ticked off the minutes and hours

through debate over the gag rule, the annexation of Texas, the Mexican War, tariffs, postal service, the establishment of the Naval Academy, statehood for Arkansas, Michigan, Wisconsin, matters related to immigration, the Gold Rush, statehood for California, the fateful Kansas-Nebraska Act, and the final hours of John Quincy Adams.

It is also a clock with two hands and an old-fashioned face, the kind that shows what time it is now, what time

it used to be, and what time it will become.

And it still keeps time. On we go.

David McCullough is the author of numerous books, including The Johnstown Flood (1968), The Great Bridge (1972) and The Path Between the Seas (1977). His recent biography of Theodore Roosevelt, Mornings on Horseback, won the American Book Award.



From the Collections

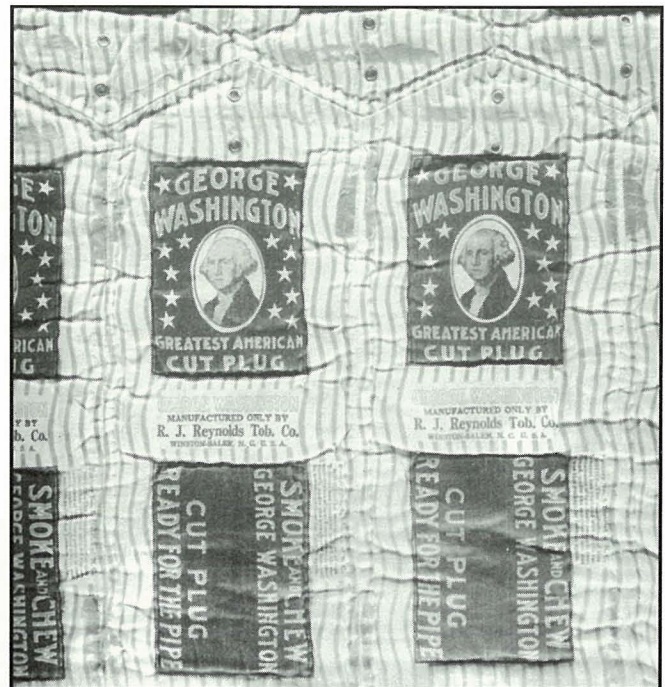
I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated by succeeding generations as the great anniversary festival. It ought to be commemorated as the day of deliverance, by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires, and illuminations, from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward forevermore.

So wrote John Adams to his wife Abigail in a letter expressing his feelings about the Fourth of July. For over 200 years, Americans have accepted Adams' invitation to make each Independence Day a great display of patriotism. Flag-waving and wearing red, white and blue on the Fourth may only be surpassed today by the great swelling of national pride exhibited at the modern Olympics.

Through the years, the colors red, white and blue have adorned everything from Fourth of July parade floats to costumes to picnic table decorations. Following this tradition, Alice D. Allen, of Cove, (Union County) Oregon, created a patriotic tobacco pouch quilted for her brother F. E. Corpe and presented it to him on July 4, 1932.

Individual sacks of George Washington plug tobacco, laid open, are pieced together in a basic block pattern (detail shown at right). Blue rectangles with images of Gilbert Stewart's portrait of Washington are surrounded by a background of red and white stripes. The words "Greatest American Cut Plug" and "Smoke and Chew . . . Cut Plug Ready for the Pipe" are printed on what would have once been the front and back sides, respectively, of the tobacco pouch. (Muslin pouches were used for packaging plug tobacco before today's common tobacco tin.)

The unusual quilt was donated in 1968 by Mrs. Margorie Nicoson, of Prineville, Oregon. Allen was her grand-



mother, Corpe her great uncle.

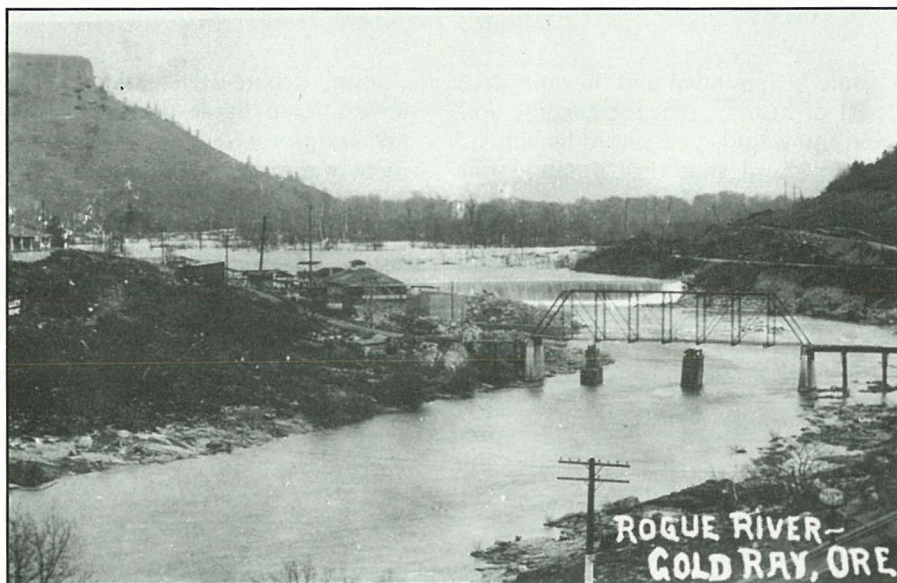
The Southern Oregon Historical Society houses numerous objects that, owing to limited exhibit space, are not often seen by visitors. We hope that featuring items in each issue of the *Table Rock Sentinel* will provide an enjoyable and educational view of the scope of its collections.

Then and Now

Hydro-electric power first came to the Rogue Valley via the Gold Ray Dam. It was built by brothers Colonel Frank H. and Dr. C. R. Ray to supply the Braden mine, which they owned, with electric power. After construction had commenced, the Ray brothers soon realized a need for power in the nearby towns of Medford, Ashland, Grants Pass, Jacksonville and Central Point. The dam plans were quickly revised to expand the power plant's capacity to 1200 kilowatts.

Following two years of construction, the hydro-electric plant first generated power in 1904 and continued to supply electricity to some Rogue Valley residents until 1970. It was originally named Condor Water & Power, a precursor to Pacific Power & Light.

In 1942 a portable fish counting station was installed on the north bank of the Rogue River at Gold Ray Dam. When the waters were high, the station was disassembled and moved up river. Eventually, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife built a permanent submarine-type station at the site.

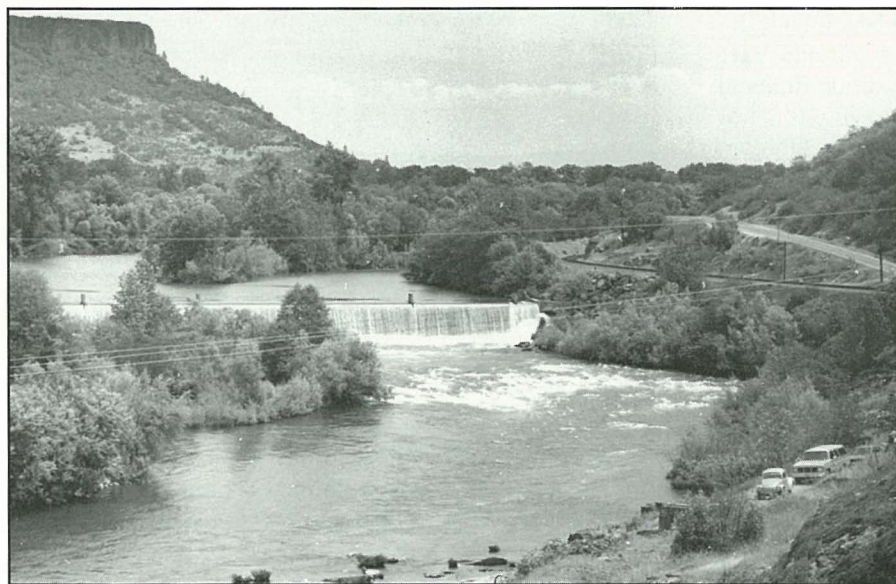


The flood of 1955 damaged the gates which had to be rebuilt, and flooding again in 1964 destroyed the iron bridge spanning the Rogue at Gold Ray. The power plant shut down in 1970, the last rope-driven hydro-electric plant in the county to do so. In 1972 PP&L deeded Gold Ray Dam to Jackson County.

Although there was some interest in the last 1970s and early '80s in re-

establishing a power plant at the dam to raise revenue for the county, officials chose to move cautiously. A feasibility study was called for to determine both economic and environmental impact of a new plant. The proposal was dropped in 1981 when a bill in the state senate was defeated owing to fishermen and environmentalists seeking protection of the fish and wildlife in the area.

Today the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife runs the fish counting station at Gold Ray Dam, keeping track of the numbers, types and habits of fish traveling the Rogue waterways.



In 1904, an iron bridge spanned the Rogue River at Gold Ray. It was washed away in the 1964 flood.

SOHS #12505

Today, Gold Ray Dam (left) functions as a fish-counting station.
Photo by Pinky Schnack

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Through September 1989

There's No Place Like Home: Ashland Residential Architecture This panel exhibit traces the evolution of architectural styles in Ashland from the pit houses of the native Americans through the log cabins and early framed buildings to contemporary homes including geodesic domes. Swedenburg Cultural Resource Center.

July 9

Children of *all ages* are invited to join us for the **10th Birthday of the Children's Museum** in Jacksonville (which was dedicated June 18, 1979). Special activities will include early traditional crafts and entertainment. And what's a birthday party without cake and ice cream?! Participation limited to the first 10,000, so come one, come all! Time: 12-6 p.m. Admission is free.

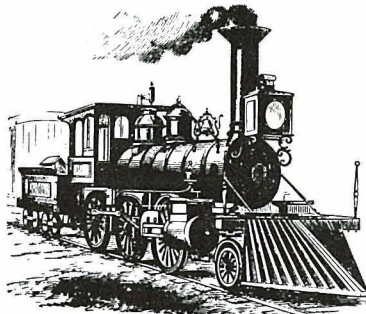
July 15-16

Weekend #2 for the opening of **The Willows**, the historic Hanley family farm outside of Jacksonville. Don't miss this opportunity to explore a

piece of Rogue Valley history that is truly unique! Admission: \$2.00 for adults, \$1.00 for children 12 and under; Society members: \$1.00 for adults, \$.50 for children 12 and under. Transportation provided from the Jacksonville Museum of Southern Oregon History. Time: 1-4 p.m.

July 19 and 21

A children's workshop, **Piece By Piece**, will introduce and explore the art, history, and traditions of quilt making. Both old and contemporary examples will be available for study. During the two days, participants ages 9 to 14 will piece and quilt their own block for use as a pillow cover or pot holder. Preregistration and prepayment of the \$4.50 fee (\$5.50 for non-members) is required by 5 p.m. Wednesday, July 12. Call (503) 899-1847, Ext. 227 for details.



July 24-27

All aboard for the Skunk Train, a four-day expedition including stops at the California State Railroad Museum in Sacramento, the Kelly House Historical Museum in Mendocino, and a winery in Napa Valley. Then on to Fort Bragg where participants will board the world-famous California Western Railroad's "Skunk Train." Fares for the trip range from \$262 to \$366 depending upon hotel accommodations. Registration deadline: Monday, July 17. Call (503) 899-1847, Ext. 214 for details.

July 26

The Southern Oregon Historical Board of Trustees will hold its monthly meeting at 7:30 p.m. at the Talent Public Library, 105 North I,

Talent. Members and the general public are invited.



August 9

Attention Jr. Historians . . . and all those who would like to be! climb aboard the **History Express** bus! Children ages 9 to 14 will enjoy this one-day mini-vacation packed full of history fun. Participants will depart at 8:15 a.m. from the Children's Museum in Jacksonville for an adventure to historic Box R Ranch, a working cattle ranch located 30 minutes east of Ashland. Hay rides and tours of a reconstructed pioneer town are included in the day's activities. Bring a sack lunch. Fee: \$13.50 for Jr. Historians, \$18.50 for non-members (the \$5 difference enrolls participants as a Jr. Historian for one year). Pre-registration and prepayment are required by 5 p.m., July 28. Call (503) 899-1847, Ext. 227 for details.

August 12

Join us for **History in Our Own Backyard**, a one-day adventure to historic Butte Creek Mill in Eagle Point, the Rogue River's Natural Bridge, and Crater Lake National Park where a park ranger will present a special historical program. A drive along the rim is always a pleasant way to spend a summer afternoon. Registration deadline: Friday, August 4. Fare: \$13.50. Call (503) 899-1847, Ext. 214 for details.

August 23

The Southern Oregon Historical Society Board of Trustees will hold its monthly meeting at 7:30 p.m. at the U.S. Hotel in Jacksonville. Members and the general public are invited.

All offices and departments of the **Southern Oregon Historical Society**, except the Swedenburg Cultural Resource Center, may be reached by calling (503) 899-1847. The telephone number for the Swedenburg Cultural Resource Center is (503) 488-1341.

Jacksonville Museum of Southern Oregon History, P.O. Box 480, 206 North Fifth St., Jacksonville, OR 97530. Open Mon.-Sun. 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Research Library in the Jacksonville Museum, P.O. Box 480, 206 North Fifth St., Jacksonville, OR 97530. Open Tues.-Fri., 2-5 p.m., Sat. 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Children's Museum, P.O. Box 480, 206 North Fifth St., Jacksonville, OR 97530. Open Mon.-Sun. 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Swedenburg Cultural Resource Center, 990 Siskiyou Blvd., Ashland, OR 97520. Open Tues.-Sat. 1-5 p.m.

Administrative Offices, Armstrong House, 375 East California St., Jacksonville, OR 97530. Open Mon.-Fri. 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Other Jackson County organizations associated with the Southern Oregon Historical Society are:

Woodville Museum, First and Oak Streets, P.O. Box 1288, Rogue River, OR 97537. Phone: (503) 582-3088. Open Tues.-Sun. 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Eagle Point Historical Society Museum, North Royal Ave. (near the Antelope Creek Covered Bridge), P.O. Box 201, Eagle Point, OR 97524. Open Sat. 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Gold Hill Historical Society, P.O. Box 26, Gold Hill, OR 97525



P.O. Box 480, Jacksonville, Oregon 97530-0480

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