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A House with a Name

Whitehouse & Price: Inland Empire Architects

John Holland Remembers: Growing up in the Bovill Depot

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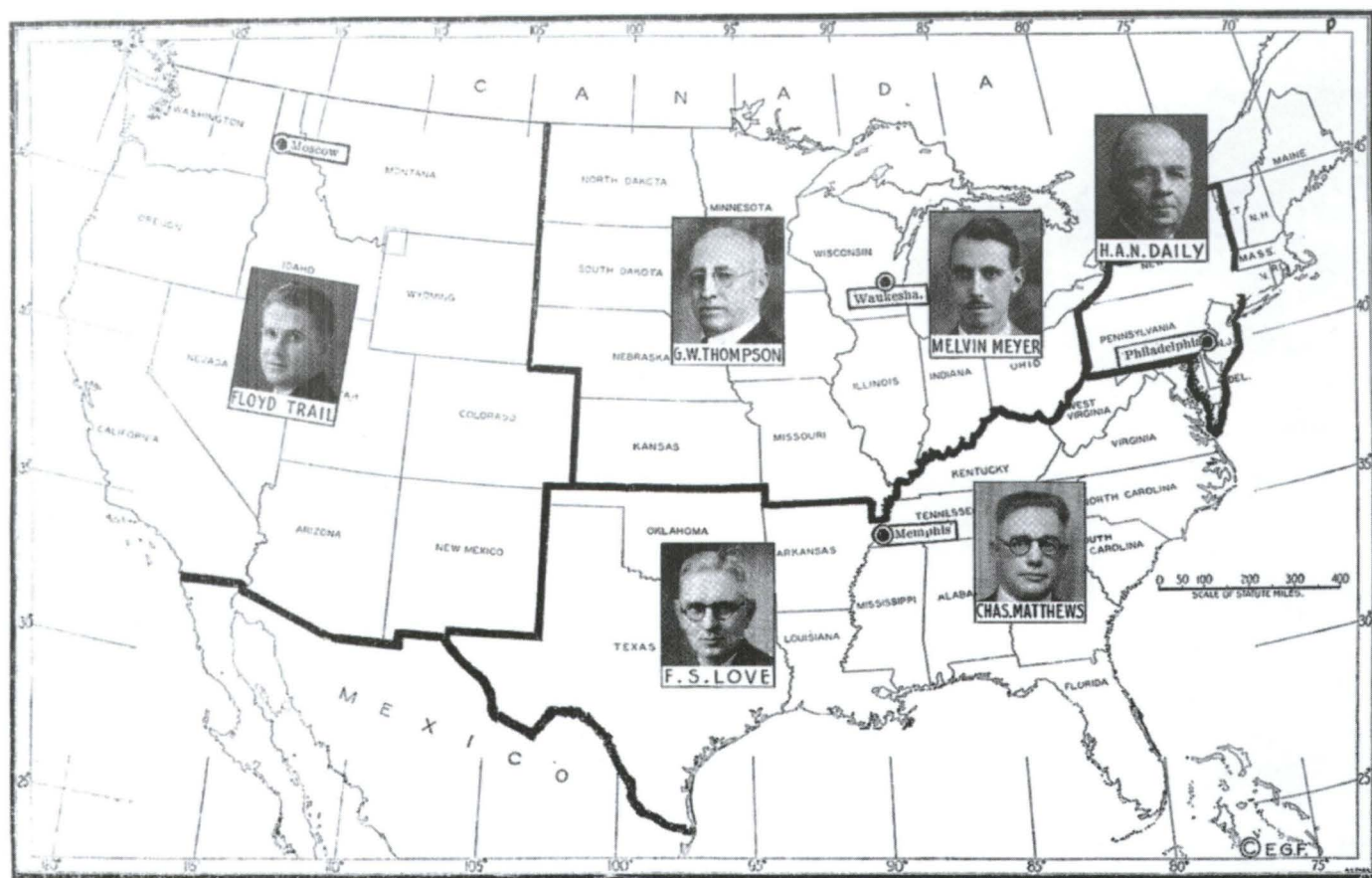
LATAH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Washburn-Wilson Seed Company

PEA AND SEED EMPIRE On the Palouse

by Jeff Horton

In 1871, the founding families of Moscow, Idaho began settling on and around the Palouse, a region of the northwestern United States that covers parts of eastern Washington, northern Idaho, and eastern Oregon. Little did these pioneers realize that in the early 1900s two families would come together to create a seed company that would become one of the largest employers in the area, expand across the United States, and affect world events. This is the story of the Washburn-Wilson Seed Company.



OUR REPRESENTATIVES
who serve the Seed and Canning Trade

At one time, the Washburn-Wilson Seed Company had a sales force that promoted its products throughout the United States (Image in Information and descriptions of pea and bean varieties, Washburn-Wilson Seed Co., Moscow, Idaho, [1947]).

Author's Note:

Chuck Lytle provided the author with a vast amount of information about the people and events relating to the Washburn-Wilson Seed Company. For three generations, the Lytle family worked in some capacity for the company and its subsequent owners. Chuck's grandfather, Will Lytle, whose career began in 1935 and ended in 1955, worked in Twin Falls, Idaho and Salinas, California as a buyer for the Washburn-Wilson Seed Company. Chuck's father, Bill Lytle went to work for Washburn-Wilson Seed Company in 1945 and spent time in various parts of the United States as a buyer, general manager, and vice president for the company until 1977. In 1976, Chuck went to work for Dumas Seed Company, which had secured the business once owned by the Washburn-Wilson Seed Company. Chuck retired in 2006. It is through his grandfather, father, relations with the Wilson family, fellow employees and his own work at the seed company that Chuck was able to supply this information.

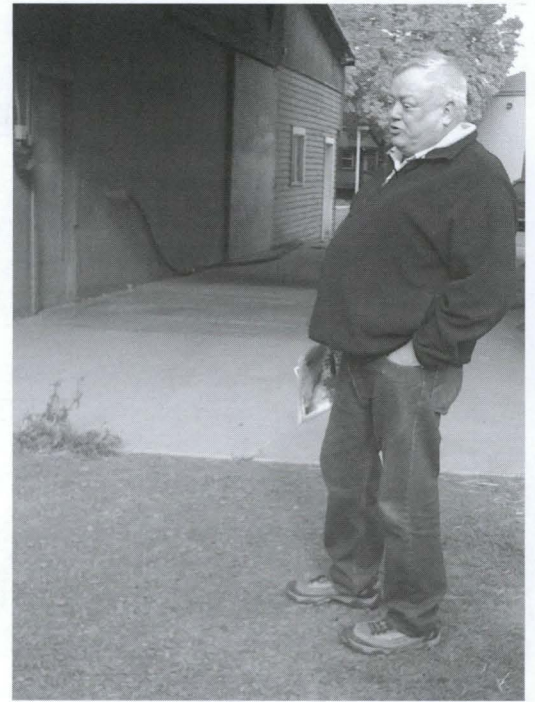
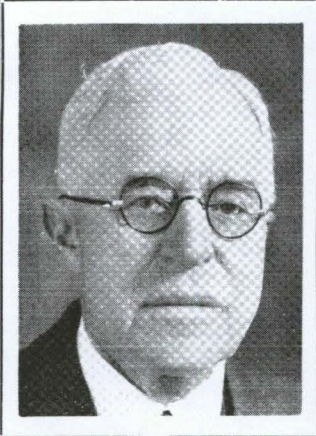
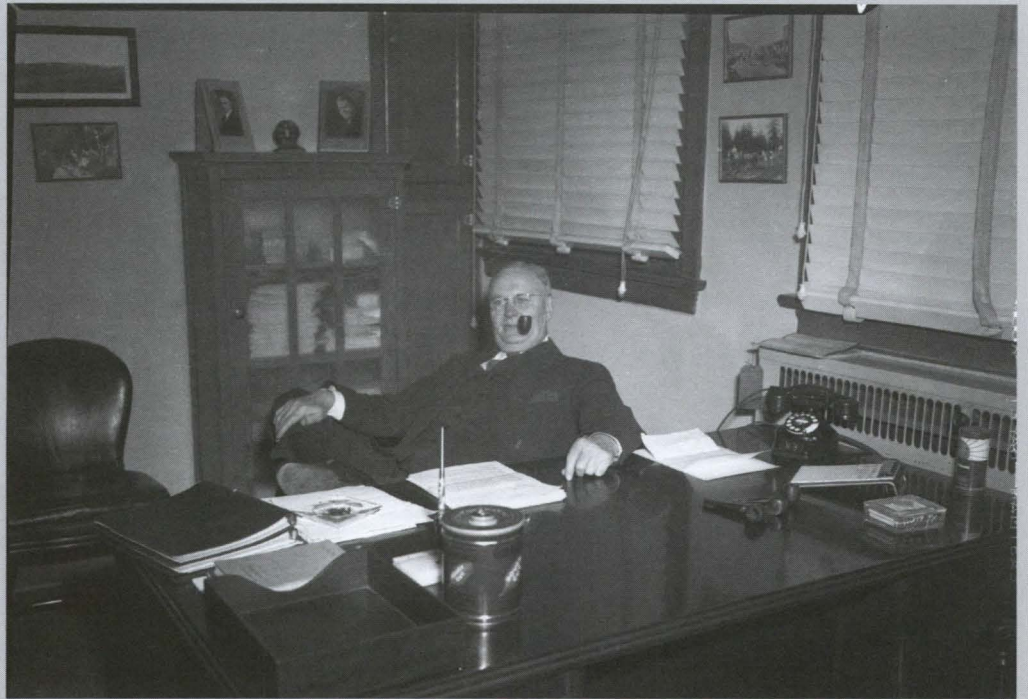


Photo: In the spring of 2009, Chuck Lytle guided the author and Latah County Historical Society staff Dan Crandall and Ann Catt through the now-vacant Washburn-Wilson plant on the southeast corner of A and Almon streets in Moscow. In 2007, the US Pea & Lentil Trade Association recognized Chuck Lytle's 30 years of service to the industry with a Lifetime Membership Award.



There are two significant people in the Washburn-Wilson Seed Company story: Melvin E. Washburn and Herman N. Wilson. Together, they created a company that reached across the United States and affected the world.



Above left: Melvin Washburn; above: Herman Wilson

Melvin E. Washburn was born in December 1856 in Iowa. According to the 1860 U.S. Census, the Washburn family lived in Harrisburg, Iowa. It is possible that Melvin was born there where his father owned and farmed land. Sometime between 1860 and 1880, the Washburn family moved to Prairie, Iowa. There, Melvin met and married Kittie in 1882. Her last name is unknown. They had their first child, Martha "Mattie" in January 1883. Sometime between 1882 and 1900, Melvin and Kittie Washburn moved to Sidney, Nebraska. His occupation there is unknown. The couple's final move occurred between 1900 and 1906 when Melvin and Kittie brought their family to the Moscow area.

Herman N. Wilson was born on November 23, 1877, in Huntsville, Illinois. His father, Ulysses Wilson, was a farmer. While Herman's formal education is unclear, he did attend Knox College in Galesburg, Illinois. After college, he taught school for three years in Schuyler County, Illinois. Not much is known of his occupations and

travels from then until 1906 when, on May 8, Herman married Melvin Washburn's daughter, Mattie.

Early in their marriage, Herman and Mattie moved to St. Maries, Idaho, where, according to Chuck Lytle's mother, Herman delivered supplies to loggers and miners in the Bovill and Clarkia areas. Chuck remembers his mother telling him how Herman packed "big cooking stoves" by balancing them on each side of the horse.

When Herman and Mattie returned to Moscow is not known, but it is known that by 1910 Melvin was operating a seed store in Moscow. Lost in the fog of history are the exact details of the founding of the Washburn-Wilson Seed Company. According to

Chuck Lytle, Melvin supplied the financing for the venture, and Herman, the foresight and innovation. An article about the company in the October 5, 1960, edition of the Moscow newspaper *Daily Idahonian*, reports that the Washburn-Wilson Seed Company started in 1916 and "expanded rapidly after the First World War."

By 1929, the company was firmly established as a national supplier of a variety of agricultural products. Advertisements from the firm's 1929 catalog display color and black-white images of the many seeds that the company offered for sale. The company's slogan was "Our Seeds Grow Friends."

Our Seeds Grow Friends



WASHBURN-WILSON SEEDS

DISTRIBUTED BY

Garfield Union Whse. Company

Garfield, Washington



As peas and lentils became more prominent in Palouse agriculture in the early 1930s, Washburn-Wilson turned its focus to testing new varieties and growing, buying, processing, and selling these products. In fact, according to the October 5, 1960, *Idahonian* article, Washburn-Wilson was the first company on the Palouse to process peas.

Washburn-Wilson Seed Company also produced many promotional materials and cookbooks that had photos of families enjoying foods made from Washburn-Wilson Seed Company products. One cookbook has recipes for dishes made with peas, beans, lentils, barley, and rice. In addition, the company placed advertisements in magazines with nationwide circulation, such as *Good Housekeeping*, *Woman's Day*, and *Ladies Home Journal*.

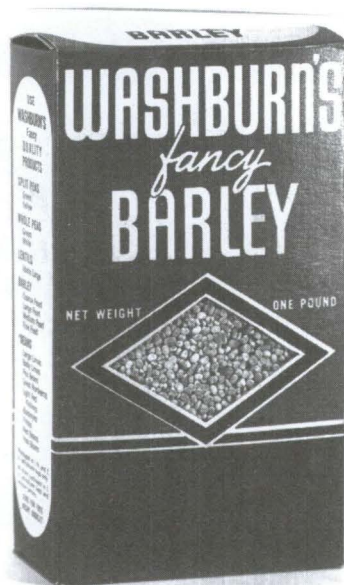
From its base in Moscow, Washburn-Wilson Seed Company established itself as one of the largest seed companies in the nation with subsidiary plants in several areas of the country. According to an article in the *Spokane Daily Chronicle* from July 22, 1931, "Washburn-Wilson Seed Company sells seed peas in nearly all of the eastern states," and Chuck Lytle recalls the places

where he knew the company had major offices, including Salinas, California; Horseheads, New York; Chicago, Illinois; and Ralston, Nebraska. Chuck also remembers that there was a testing field in Mexico.

While there were many important events that occurred during the history of the Washburn-Wilson Seed Company, several had a profound effect on Moscow and the company. These were receiving an award from the U.S. Department of Defense in 1944, withstanding a fire in 1945, averting a strike in 1946, and the bankruptcy of the company in 1960.

During World War II, all Americans were asked to help in the war effort. Many items, such as food, clothing, gasoline, and leather, were rationed, and individual Americans were encouraged to be self-sufficient through the planting of "Victory Gardens," for example. President Franklin D. Roosevelt said of these efforts, "Victory depends as much on our ability to produce food as our ability to manufacture guns, planes, and ships. Our army of farmers and processors are fighting an important battle on the home front."

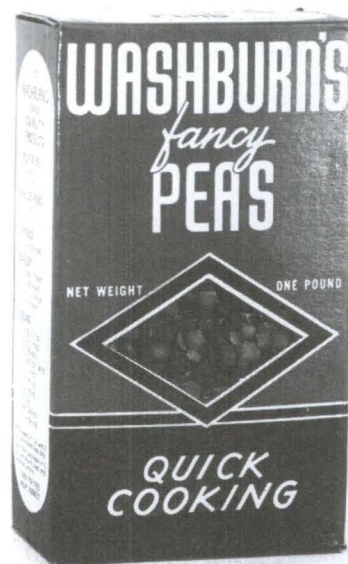
Above: This late 1940s display at the Moscow Foods grocery store promotes Washburn-Wilson bean, pea, and lentil products as perfect choices for Lenten meals (#92-867b, University of Idaho Library, Special Collections & Archives).



ADVERTISING IMAGES

From Washburn-Wilson Seed Company

Clockwise: Washburn's Fancy Peas packaging (#91-149, University of Idaho Library, Special Collections & Archives); the Moscow Foods checkout stand, 1940s, featuring a display for Washburn's Split Peas (#92-867a, University of Idaho Library, Special Collections & Archives); this advertisement for Washburn's Split Peas ran in the February 1944 issue of Woman's Day magazine; Washburn's Fancy Barley packaging (#91-148, University of Idaho, Special Collections & Archives)



That grand old fashioned
PEA SOUP!
NO POINTS Needed
Here's the
RECIPE

- 1 Cup Washburn's Quick Cooking Split Peas (Green or yellow)
- 2 quarts boiling water
- 1 ham bone or 1 pound beef brisket
- 1 onion, cut in pieces
- Salt and pepper

Rinse split peas in cold water; drain and simmer in boiling water 45 minutes to 2 hours with ham bone or brisket and onion. Add more water, if necessary, while cooking. Season to taste. Rub through a sieve, if desired. Serves 6 to 8.

As homey a pea soup as ever grandma made! Rich and robust and filled with real pea goodness. A whole and hearty meal in itself, every spoonful a real taste delight. That's the kind of a feast you can enjoy with Washburn's Quick Cooking Split Peas. Here's a product you'll be as proud of as we are.

Quality? Grown in the one area where peas grow best.

Nourishing? One of the richest sources of essential protein, also high in minerals and Vitamin B₁.

Economical? A full pound serves 12 and costs very little.

Ration Points? You don't need ANY.

Here's one of America's biggest wartime food values. You'll also find that with Washburn's you easily make many new, delicious and nourishing dishes that will help you keep a good American table.

Often still more economical if your purchase includes two 1 lb. packages.

WASHBURN'S
 QUICK COOKING • NO SOAKING
SPLIT PEAS

KEEP BUYING WAR BONDS



In addition to individuals, companies contributed to the war effort. For the Washburn-Wilson Seed Company, this meant helping to produce C- and K- rations for the military. The U.S. Department of Agriculture and the War Food Administration recognized companies for their efforts. In September 1944, the Washburn-Wilson Seed Company received the Achievement "A" Award recognizing its effort to produce high quantity and quality products, for being innovative, and for cooperating with the government.

The award also acknowledged the company's effective management, good labor relations, safety record, low absenteeism, and establishment of health standards and sanitation provisions. A celebration was held in Moscow's East City Park to commemorate the company's recognition. The company was given a flag to fly during the war, and each employee was awarded a pin.

Less than a year following the celebration in East City Park, a substantial part of the building housing the company's operations was destroyed in a fire. On July 7, 1945, around 5:00 a.m, friction from a barley pearling machine located on the top floor of the four-

story plant triggered several small explosions among an accumulation of oil and dust. The damage caused was valued at \$200,000-\$250,000. Herman Wilson awarded Chief Carl Smith and the Moscow volunteer fire department \$1,000 in appreciation for the quick response and effort put forth by the firefighters.

A year after the fire, in 1946, there was an effort to unionize seed company workers in the Moscow area. An article in the *Spokane Daily Chronicle* from Tuesday, July 23, 1946, discusses the potential problems that might occur for the Palouse harvest if an agreement could not be reached. The Washburn-Wilson Seed Company was the first in the area to reach an agreement with the union and helped avert any problems with harvest.

The company began to falter in the 1950s as Herman Wilson became less and less involved with its management. When Herman decided to retire, his son and namesake, Herman "Bud" Wilson, took over the running of the company, but his heart wasn't in the seed business. What he really wanted to do was move to California to own a Continental dealership. After



Employees and friends of the Washburn-Wilson Seed Company celebrate the company's Achievement "A" award with a ceremony in Moscow's East City Park.



Bud left for California, his father came out of retirement to bring his son-in-law, Robert "Bob" Felton, to run the company. Bob, who was married to Herman's daughter Jean, was an attorney with little experience in the business. He would, though, see the Washburn-Wilson Seed Company through the transition to bankruptcy.

Perhaps most damaging was Herman Wilson's decision to sell the rights to the Washburn-Wilson Seed Company label to another company. The exact date of this action is not known. Without a recognizable presence in the market, the company lost its ability to generate revenue and opened the door for other seed companies to take advantage of the void left by the absence of the Washburn-Wilson Seed Company trademark. In addition, the company did not transition into international markets as well as other companies. As the company's fortunes declined, it became less and less able to meet its financial obligations, such as paying local farmers for the products they sold to the company.

In October 1959, the McDonnell Seed Company of Spokane purchased the Washburn-Wilson Seed Com-

pany. In July 1960, the McDonnell Seed Company declared bankruptcy. Three months later, on October 5, 1960, the U.S. District court, acting upon the firm's petition that it was bankrupt, placed the Washburn-Wilson Seed Company in receivership.

On Halloween, "a combine of the Klemgard Pea Processing Co. of Pullman, Carl Boyd, William Boyd & Sons, pea producers of the Pullman area, Crites Moscow Growers, Inc., and Morton Swanson, Palouse grower" bought the assets of the Washburn-Wilson Seed Company, according to a December 1, 1960, article in the Moscow newspaper *Daily Idahonian*.

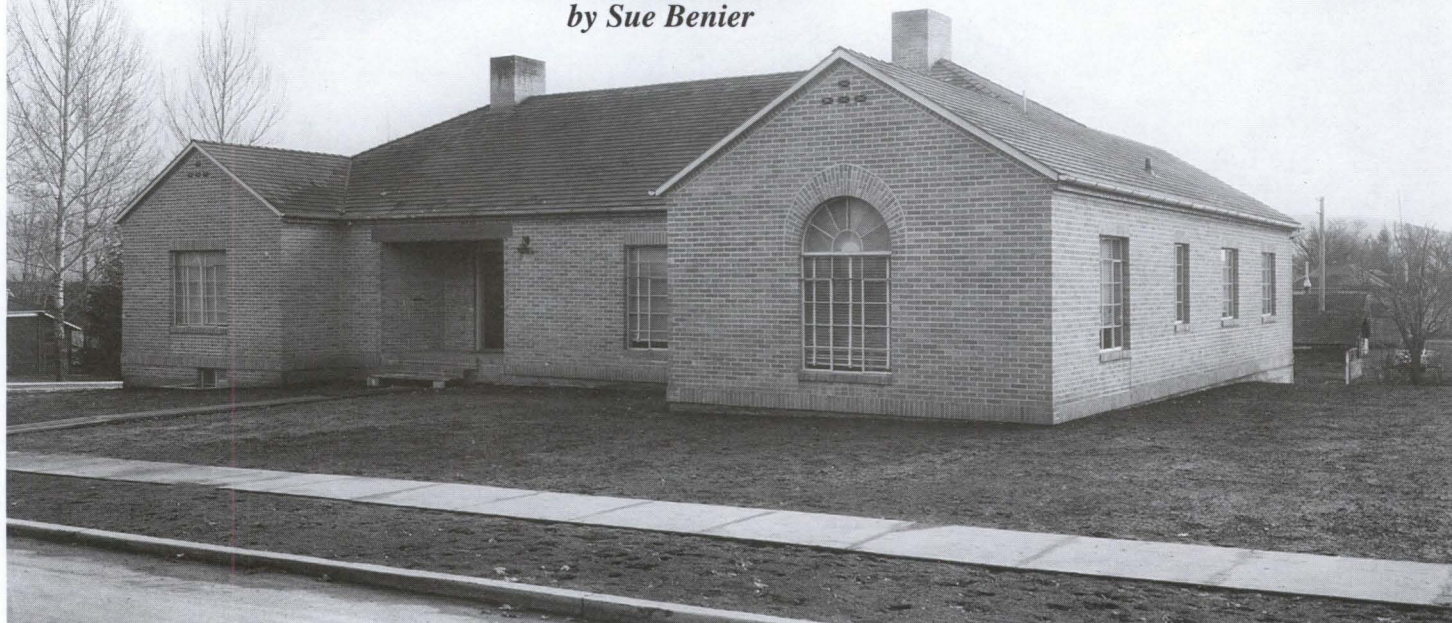
Before the year was out, the combine had formed a new corporation with Ed Dumas (a member of the Klemgard firm) president; Merrill Boyd, vice president; and Claude K. Irwin, Secretary-Treasurer. When the new corporation's officers decided to do business as the Dumas Seed Company, the story of the Washburn-Wilson Seed Company came to a close. ♡

Jeff Horton is a social studies educator who is interested in local history. He has taught in the Colton School District and the College of Education at the University of Idaho.

Above: On July 7, 1945, Washburn-Wilson's Moscow plant was nearly destroyed by fire (#91-139b, University of Idaho Library, Special Collections & Archives).

A House with a Name

by Sue Benier



My husband and I bought the brick house at 717 East B Street in Moscow from the McElroys, but it is called the Chinn House. When Martha Carter's parents owed it, it was known as the Bolles House. The Moscow community bestows names kindly. This we know.

Perhaps every house has secrets. Rumors of buried treasure have surfaced from various accounts. Deep in the basement my husband and I discovered two prizes – part of a brass sign and house plans – each asks its own questions. (Thank you, former owners, for leaving behind these treasures!)

An 8-inch by 6-foot brass plaque split lengthwise with black lettering “S CLOCKS JEWELRY” asks, “What did the rest of the sign say, where are the missing parts, when and where was it used?” One theory is that the sign came from Charles Bolles’ downtown Moscow business, the Corner Drug and Jewelry Store. Wouldn’t it be great to find proof in an old photograph?

On page 7 of the set of 10 houseplans (with several duplicates) is an elevation for a “secret door.” On the same page is an “X” over one of the drawers in the dining room closet that caught mail from the slot on the porch. On page 2 is an elevation for a never-built Maid’s Room, for the clothes chute Martha’s parents closed off so her brothers wouldn’t crawl inside, and a telephone turntable. In the lower right corner of each blueprint is the following lettering: “C. E. Bolles, Residence, Moscow, Idaho, date (but left blank), Job #1098,

Whitehouse & Price, Architects, Hutton Building, Spokane, Washington.” The blueprints tell a story but leave clues for another. Who were these architects? Were they significant? What else did they design? Where can we see other projects today?

The University of Idaho Library holds a document that dates the Bolles house project in 1935. The house’s lineage is straightforward, but how long its owners occupied it is approximate: Bolles, 30 years from 1937 to 1967; Carter, 22 years from 1967 to 1979; Chinn, 24 years from 1979 to 2003; McElroy, 3 years from 2003 to 2006; Benier, 3 years and counting – the house being known by two of the owners’ names but not the other three. I suspect all enjoyed the wonderful Fort Russell neighborhood.

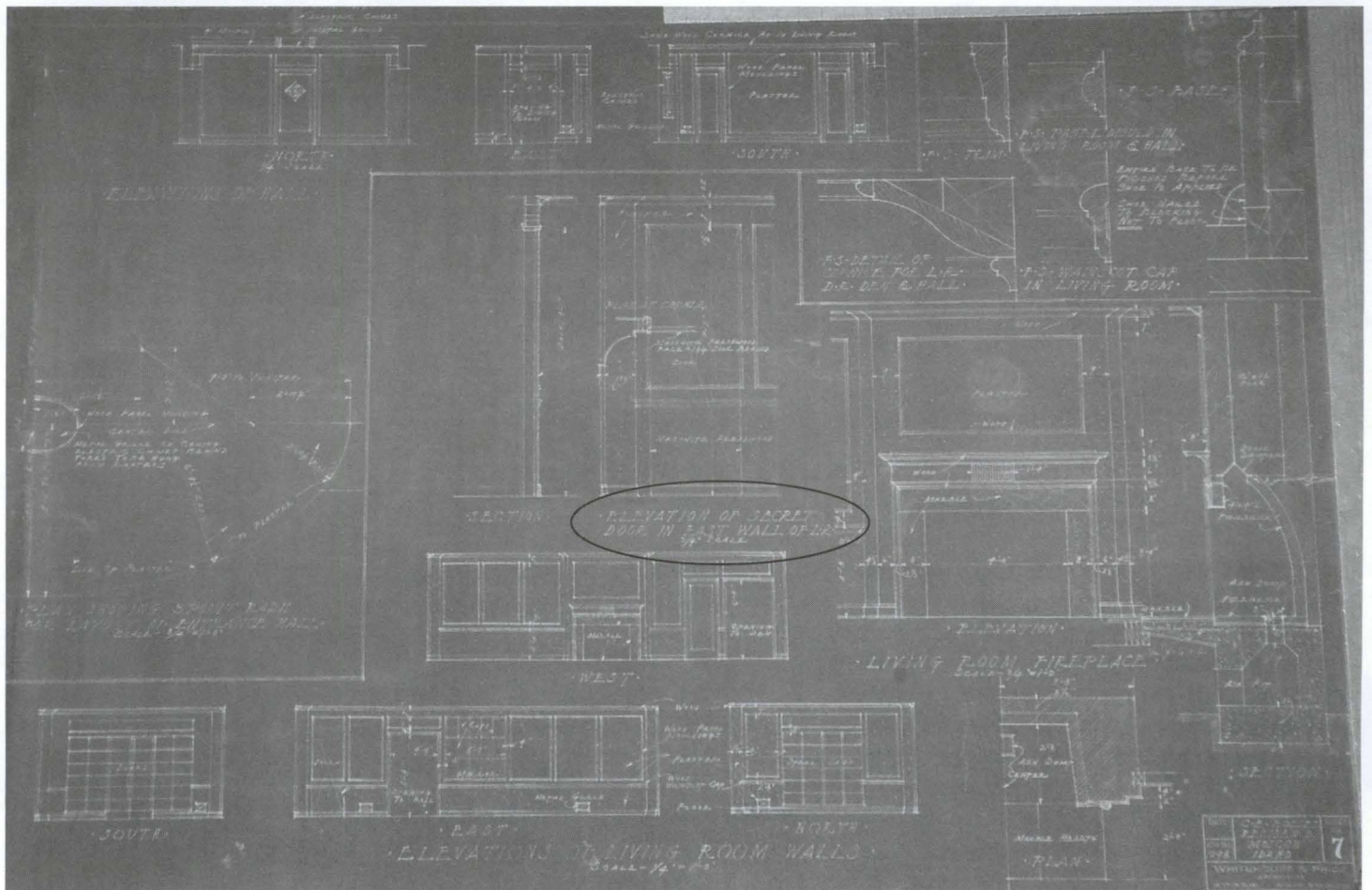
Chatting to a woman and her daughter the other day, the mother asked me where I lived. I started to say the Chinn House when the little girl piped up, “the Bug House...she lives in the house with the big bugs in the garden.” And she’s right. After a drought-tolerant xeriscape front yard makeover, I tucked in surprises for the neighbors, including jumbo plastic bugs spray-painted bright orange. I’m hoping folks will see the bugs and not my weeds! I hadn’t taken into account conjuring up a new name for the house. It’s not ours to choose. Time will tell. ☺

Sue Benier is an active community volunteer who enjoys gardening, photography and our local history.

Above: Charles and Marguerite Bolles residence, 717 East B Street, Moscow in 1937. Bolles commissioned the architectural firm of Whitehouse & Price, Spokane, to design the house.

A House with a History:

Below: The Bolles House today; upper right: current home-owner Sue Benier with her canine companion, Pip; center right: original owner Charles Bolles at his business, Moscow's Corner Drug and Jewelry Store; bottom: Page 7 of the 10-page set of blueprints for the Charles E. Bolles residence, Moscow. Note elevation of secret door in the east wall of the Living Room in the center of the plan (circled).



Job Number 1098 (1935): Charles Bolles Residence

When he commissioned the firm of Whitehouse & Price to design his family's house in 1935, Charles Bolles was not among the 20 million Americans left unemployed by the Great Depression. A pharmacist, Bolles owned and operated the Corner Drug and Jewelry Store on the northeast corner of Third and Main streets in Moscow (where Sisters' Brew is today).

While he did leave behind the blueprints for his house (and probably the remnants of a sign that may have decorated his downtown business: "Select your diamond where the street clock tells the time.") Bolles did not leave behind the personal documents that would explain how he could afford the services of an architectural firm at the midway point of the worst economic crisis the world has ever seen.

Although Bolles may have not suffered financial setbacks during the Depression, those constructing his home did. According to an anecdote preserved by Sue Benier, present owner of the house, as many as three contractors went broke while working on the house. The story goes that the builder who completed the lath and plaster work failed to pay the electric bill. When the power was inevitably turned off, the work froze and had to be removed and redone by another contractor.

Top right: Mrs. Charles (Marguerite) Bolles in her home; bottom right: the elegant oval hall inside the Bolles residence.

1935

Events & Happenings

While contractors were building a beautiful home for Charles and Marguerite Bolles, these events were occurring at national and local

- ◆ The Emergency Relief Appropriation Act is passed, providing funding for the Works Progress Administration created by presidential order.
- ◆ The National Recovery Act is declared unconstitutional.
- ◆ The Social Security Act is passed.
- ◆ Temperatures in Chicago reach as high as 109°.
- ◆ Chemist Wallace H. Carothers develops nylon.
- ◆ Huey Long is assassinated in Louisiana.
- ◆ Alcoholics Anonymous begins in New York.
- ◆ Kitty Carlisle stars with the Marx Brothers in *A Night at the Opera*.
- ◆ Advertising copywriter Leo Burnett creates the "Jolly Green Giant."
- ◆ Hard liquor and four percent beer are again available in Idaho. A reporter for the *Kendrick Gazette* editorializes that a combination of the two will deliver a "first class jag."
- ◆ Moscow's 4th Street between Adams and Van Buren is vacated to make room for the new high school, and Hugh Bovill dies in Oregon.
- ◆ In its newspaper advertisement, Dr. Elliott's Veterinary Supply of Genesee suggests *Vitamineral* for mares.



Whitehouse & Price: INLAND EMPIRE ARCHITECTS

by Julie R. Monroe

In 1914, two transplanted Easterners, Harold C. Whitehouse and Ernest V. Price, established the architectural firm of Whitehouse & Price in Spokane, Washington. During their long and prolific partnership, the two men, and their firm's associate architects, designed hundreds of buildings throughout the Inland Northwest. The firm's commissions included homes, school buildings, hospitals, courthouses, performance centers, commercial and government buildings, churches (and a milk bottle) in communities throughout Washington, Idaho, Montana, and Oregon.



Architect's drawing of Pi Beta Phi house, northeast corner of College and Deakin avenues on the University of Idaho campus, c. 1925 (#2-10-03, University of Idaho Library Special Collections & Archives, Moscow, Idaho).

Born in Somerville, Massachusetts in 1884, Whitehouse came to Spokane in 1907 where he worked for the architectural firm of John K. Dow. In 1911, he left Spokane to complete his studies at Cornell University. After graduating in 1913, he returned to Spokane, where he lived until his death in 1974. Like Whitehouse, Price graduated from Cornell University with a degree in architecture and arrived in Spokane in 1911. Price was born in New York in 1885 and died in Spokane in January 1975. The firm of Whitehouse & Price existed until Price retired in the mid-1960s.

The influence of Whitehouse, Price, and their staff architects extends well beyond Spokane. A list of the firm's jobs in Sally B. Woodbridge's book, *Building Through Time: The Life of Harold C. Whitehouse, 1884-1974*, shows that the firm was involved, in some manner, with buildings throughout Latah County, including Deary, Genesee, Moscow, Potlatch, and Troy.

Job number 537 is identified as the Deary High School (1924) and job number 1084 as "Deary Idaho School Add" (1935). Jobs in Genesee are number 245, "Genesee School (1920-23); number 1135, again

"Genesee School" (1936), and number 1854, "Gym-Balcony Genesee School" (1945). There is one job listed for Potlatch: number 2016 "Potlatch School" (1948) and four for Troy: number 206, "Troy School" (1920-23); number 985, "Troy School Add" (1934); number 1330, "Troy Idaho Grade School" (1937); number 1446, "Troy Hotel Remodel (1939).

If the legacy of Whitehouse & Price in Latah County had been limited to only the school buildings of rural Latah County, it would have been impressive enough. However, the firm was also involved with scores of buildings in Moscow. Among the Moscow jobs listed in the Woodbridge book are some very recognizable names and places: Neely Garage (1925), Russell and Whitworth schools (1926), First National Bank and Latah County Courthouse (1928), Moscow Hotel marquis (1930), Charles E. Bolles residence (1935), Moscow Episcopalian Church (1937), David's Store (1939), Presbyterian Church (1939), Moscow [Gritman] Hospital (1939), Estes residence (1940), and Union Oil Gas Station (1945).



The completed University of Idaho Home Economics Building designed by Whitehouse & Price (#1-123-2 University of Idaho Library Special Collections & Archives, Moscow, Idaho).



St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Moscow, July 1948. The job list of Whitehouse & Price includes three for Moscow's Episcopal Church, the first undertaken in 1937 and the other two in 1959 (#92-1467, University of Idaho Library Special Collections & Archives, Moscow, Idaho).

In Moscow, the greatest concentration of extant Whitehouse & Price buildings is on the University of Idaho campus. Beginning in the 1920s and continuing through the 1950s, the architects of Whitehouse & Price provided designs for new structures and for additions to existing ones. In 1923, the firm drew plans for a new women's dormitory that would later bear the name of Mary E. Forney, wife of the University's first acting president, James E. Forney, in recognition of her services to the University and to the state of Idaho. Designs for two private student residents, Pi Beta Phi and Kappa Alpha Theta, followed in 1925 and 1926, respectively.

In the 1930s, Whitehouse and Price designed the University's Infirmary and another dormitory, Willis Sweet Hall. Completed in March 1937, the Infirmary was fireproof, soundproof, well equipped, highly practical and beautiful, according to an article in the March 1937 issue of *University of Idaho Bulletin*. That same issue reported that Willis Sweet Hall was completed and occupied by "fortunate and happy students." Like the Infirmary, Sweet Hall was described as fireproof and soundproof. The August 1937 *University of Idaho Bulletin* featured the Hall's "model kitchen" designed by Robert F. Greene, then Proctor of Men. University

president Harrison Dale would name Greene Director of Dormitories in 1944.

During most of the 1940s, Whitehouse & Price was busy with wartime commissions, such as Farragut Naval Training Station in Bayview. The firm returned to the UI campus after World War II, providing designs for two buildings and an addition: the Home Economics Building (occupied 1953), Library (occupied 1957), and the Administration Annex (occupied 1951).

When the University Library building was in its conceptual stages, the firm of Whitehouse & Price had become Whitehouse, Price, Deneff, and Deeble, and Lee Zimmerman had been University Librarian for three years. Zimmerman, who replaced the first University Librarian Belle Sweet, participated significantly in the planning of the library building. In November 1951 he and Ernest Price visited new library buildings on campuses throughout the East and Midwest; the "architect concentrated on studying construction detail and the Librarian on functional planning," Zimmerman writes in "An Invitation and An Opportunity – A Description of the New University of Idaho Library Building," in the December 1956 edition of *Bookmark*, the University Library newsletter.

In 1958, Whitehouse & Price took on two minor jobs in the University of Library, but after that, no other University of Idaho jobs are included in the job list published in the Woodbridge book.

Decades later, the University Library and many other Whitehouse & Price buildings on the University of Idaho campus and in the towns of Latah County remain in use. The structures may have undergone some form of remodeling to accommodate technological innovations, but the essence of their original de-

signs is still present. View a Whitehouse & Price building today, and you may become "conscious of a feeling coming out of the past, you don't have to turn your back on it if it carries an answer for today." (Harold C. Whitehouse as quoted in *Building Through Time: The Life of Harold C. Whitehouse, 1884-1974.*)

Julie R. Monroe is a local historian who helped document the use and significance of two University of Idaho buildings prior to their demolition, the University Classroom Building and the Gault-Upham Residence Halls.

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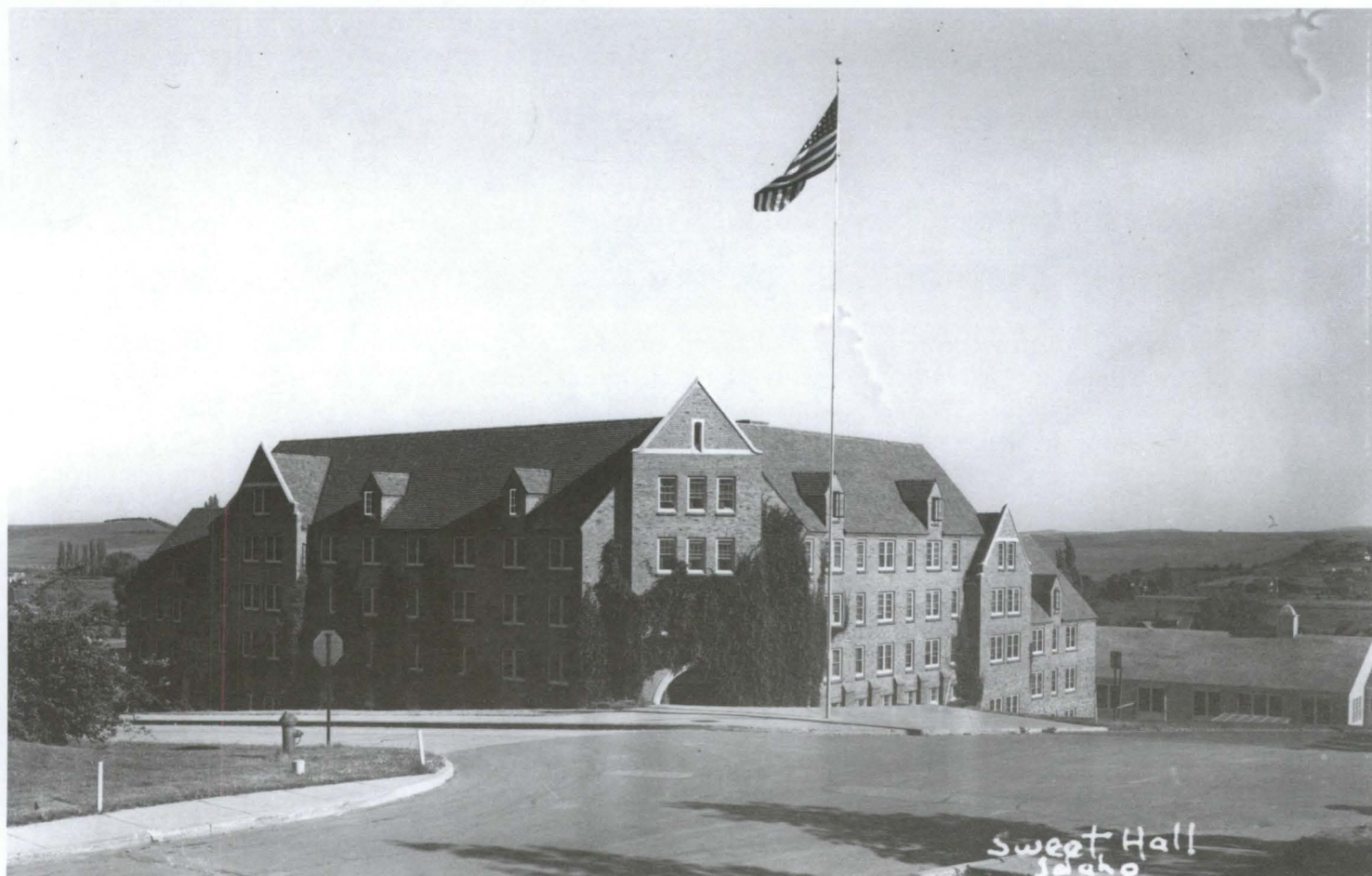
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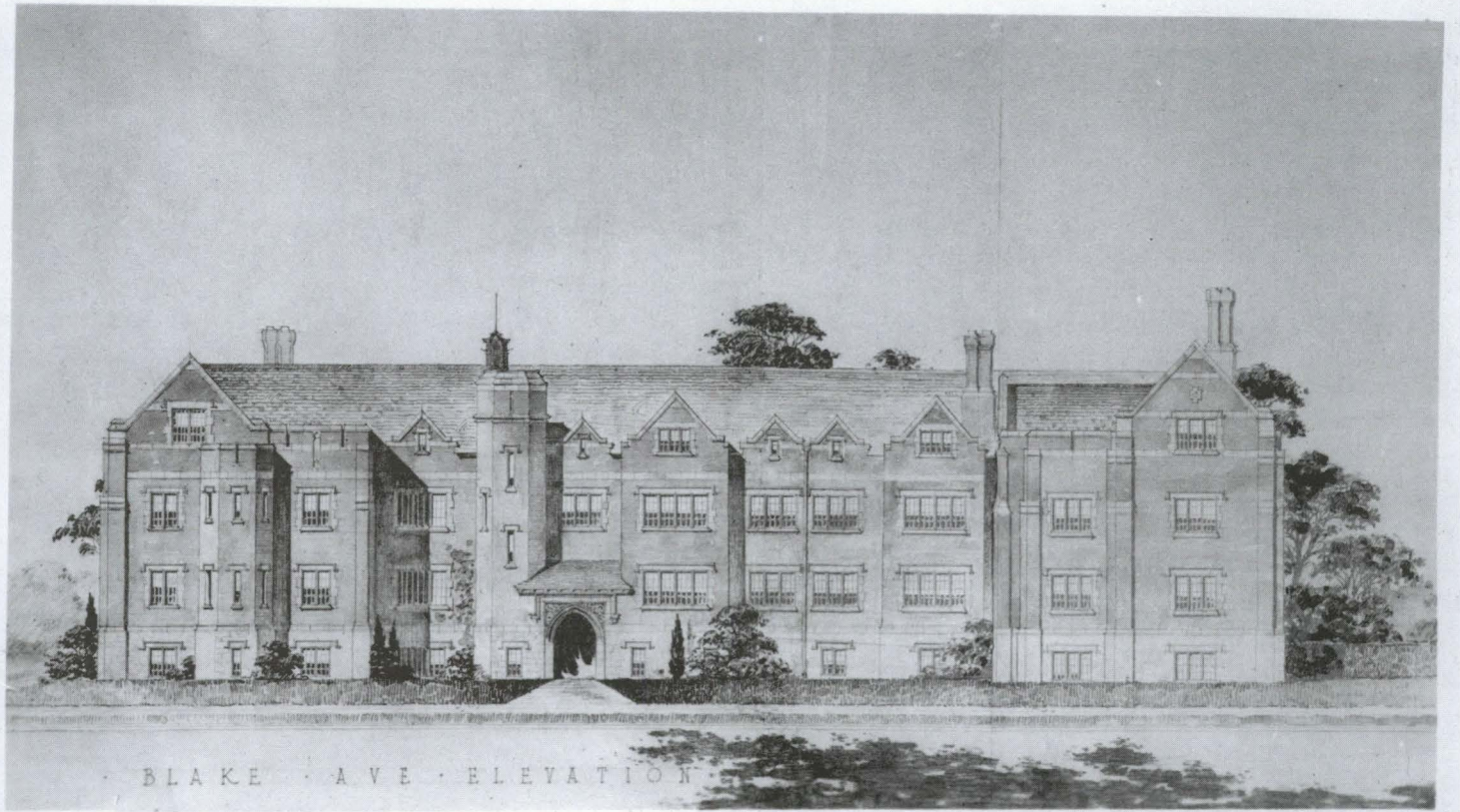
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Above: When first occupied in 1937, Willis Sweet Hall was a men's dormitory. Its namesake was a Moscow attorney and politico credited with being one of the founders of the University. Although Sweet, who died in Puerto Rico in 1925, wrote the legislation that created the University of Idaho, he never did get around to introducing the bill to the legislature. That job fell to Genesee farmer John Brigham (#1-75-08, University of Idaho Library Special Collections & Archives, Moscow, Idaho).

Page 15, top right: 1923 Whitehouse & Price drawing for the University's second dormitory, Forney Hall. Financed by Moscow businessmen operating as the University of Idaho Building Association, the dormitory originally housed 110 students in suites of two studies, a sleeping porch, and a dressing room, designed for four students. The building's dining room seated 125 (#1-60-1, University of Idaho Library Special Collections & Archives, Moscow, Idaho). Page 15, bottom right: Forney Hall exterior (#1-61-16, University of Idaho Library Special Collections & Archives, Moscow, Idaho).





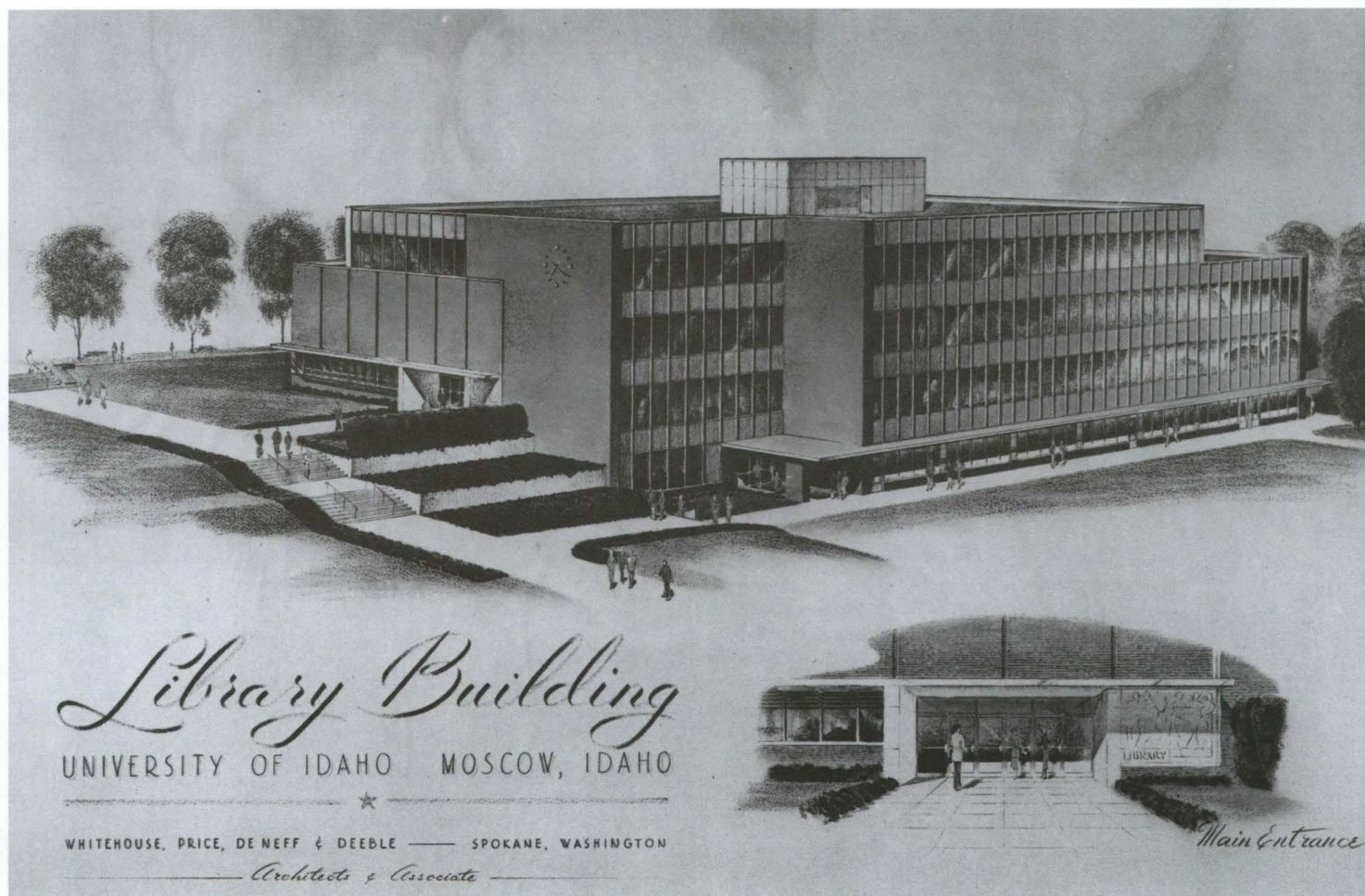


Above: Original home of the Kappa Alpha Theta sorority on the University of Idaho campus; it was designed by Whitehouse & Price in the early 1920s (#2-10-3, University of Idaho Library Special Collections & Archives, Moscow, Idaho).

Page 16, top left: Infirmary interior (#1-74-10, University of Idaho Library Special Collections & Archives, Moscow, Idaho);
Bottom left : *Dedicated on June 12, 1937, the Infirmary was financed with funds from the Public Works Administration. When it was first occupied, the structure featured out-patient rooms, emergency and major surgeries, a patient sun porch, and quarters for nurses and other employees (#1-74-5, University of Idaho Library Special Collections & Archives, Moscow, Idaho).*



Left to right: Inspecting plans for the new Home Economics building on the University of Idaho campus are J.E. Buchanan, University president; George Gagon, University engineer; E.H. Nelson, construction manager for H. Halverson, Inc.; Howard Gates and E.L. Bartlett of Whitehouse & Price, 1953 (#1-123-01, University of Idaho Library Special Collections & Archives, Moscow, Idaho).

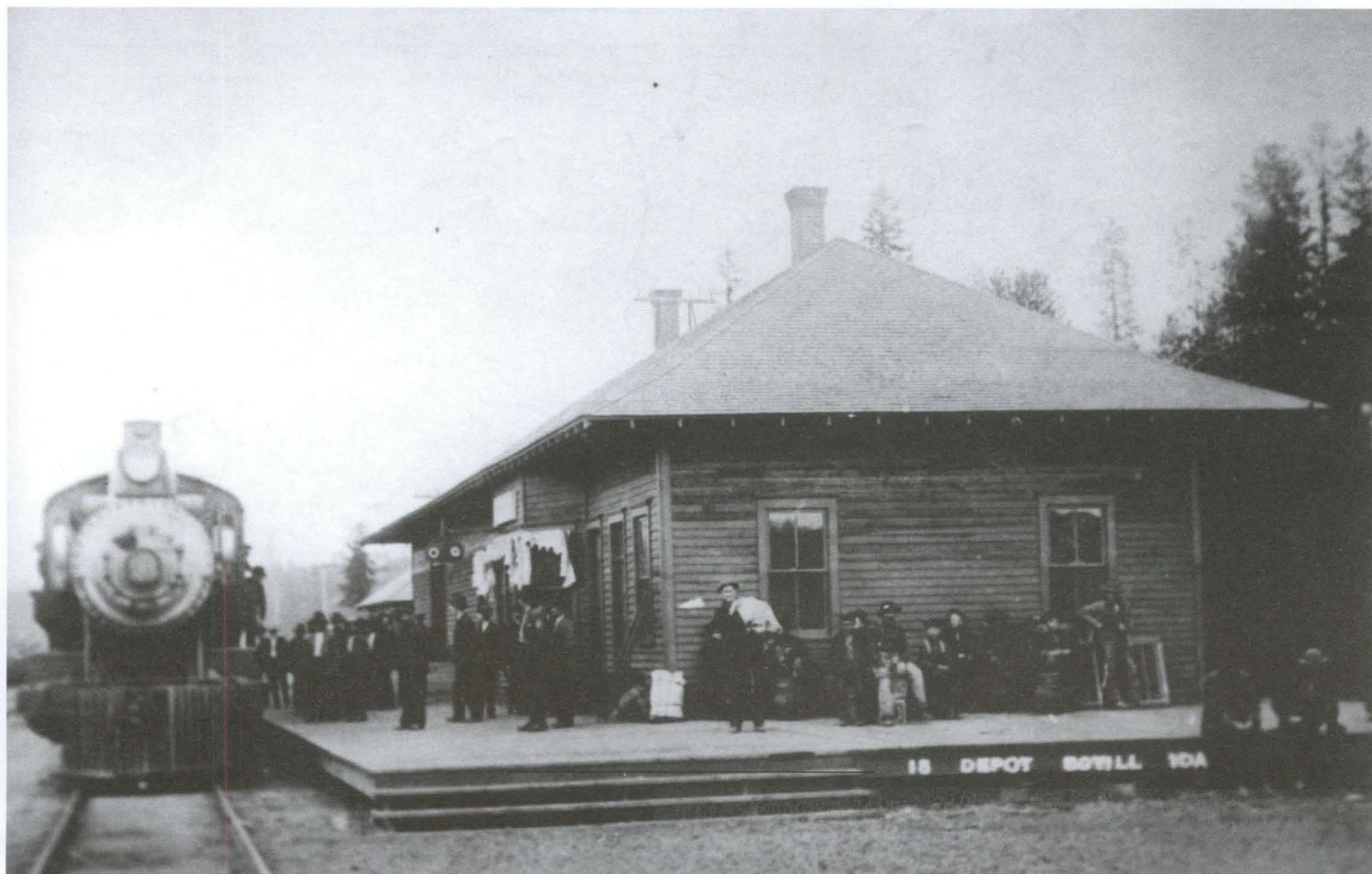


The University of Idaho Library was dedicated by Governor Robert E. Smylie on November 2, 1957. An October 1953 University press release announcing the Library's opening described the building as the "latest in library design. Diffused lighting makes reading easier, air-conditioning makes study more comfortable and also prolongs the life of the books, and special sound-proof typing rooms keep the clatter of typewriters from distracting other students" (#1-122-01, University of Idaho Library Special Collections & Archives, Moscow, Idaho).

John Holland Remembers: GROWING UP IN THE BOVILL DEPOT

by Thomas E. Burg

Editor's Note: In 2008, railroad historian Thomas E. Burg interviewed John Holland, son of Joseph J. Holland who worked in Bovill as joint station agent for the Washington, Idaho & Montana Railway (WI&M) and Milwaukee Road from 1925 until 1966. Mr. Burg's interview with John Holland was published in the May 1, 2008, issue of *The White Pine Route Quarterly*, a publication of the Washington, Idaho & Montana Railway History Preservation Group, Inc. Much of the following article comes from this interview.

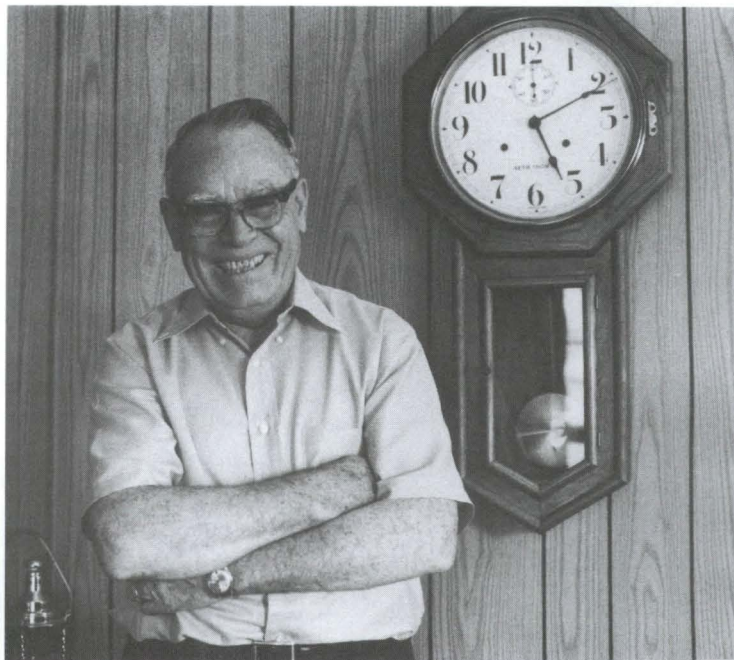


The Washington, Idaho & Montana Railway (WI&M) depot in Bovill in 1910. The WI&M, incorporated in 1905, was a subsidiary of the Potlatch Lumber Company. According to Judith Nielsen in her introduction to the inventory for the WI&M manuscript collection at the University of Idaho Library, "Although the main purpose of the railway was hauling logs for Potlatch Lumber Company, it also provided a market outlet for the farmers of the area and carried a heavy tonnage of grain, vegetables, and livestock. It also renewed interest in the mining potential of the Palouse region" (#12-029, University of Idaho Library, Special Collections & Archives).

Bovill was established as the junction point between the WI&M and Milwaukee Road in 1910. On May 30 of that year, excursion trains brought the executive officers of both railroads, as well Idaho's new U.S. Senator, William E. Borah and his wife Mary McConnell Borah, to Bovill to celebrate the connection of the two lines. The Milwaukee's Elk River branch entered Bovill from the north (the last two miles on WI&M trackage rights). South of the depot, the Milwaukee line climbed upgrade toward Elk River, while the WI&M followed the Potlatch River downgrade for several miles before climbing out of its valley.

By 1925, when Joseph J. Holland began working as station agent, the depot at Bovill, which had been built by the WI&M upon its arrival in 1907, served both railroads, and the agent effectively worked for both at the same time. Holland was born in Elkton, South Dakota on December 30, 1900. In April 1912, Joe and his family moved to the Gull Lake and Shaunavon area of Saskatchewan, Canada. In July 1919, he left Saskatchewan for Spokane where he learned railroad telegraphy at the Spokane Telegraph Institute.

After graduation, Joe worked as a relief operator for the Great Northern. In June 1921, Joe took a similar position with the Spokane & Inland Empire, where he served at several of the Inland's depots. Another of Joe's relief locations was Palouse, Washington, where



This photo of Joe Holland comes from the historical society's photograph collection and may have been taken for a local newspaper at the time of Joe's retirement. It is very possible that the clock in the background is the Seth Thomas clock that graced the Bovill depot.

he met and married Marion, the daughter of depot agent Seth Thomas Scott. While on assignment at Moscow, Idaho, Joe was offered the position of agent for the WI&M and Milwaukee at Bovill, which he accepted

beginning on April 13, 1925. After 41 years and three months' of continuous employment, Joe retired in July 1966 at the age of 65. Following the death of Marion on May 7, 1972, Joe moved from Bovill to Spokane. He died there on October 3, 1983.

In Bovill, the Holland family lived in a house on Pine Street situated in the middle of the block between the theater and the Catholic Church. Joe and his wife Marion reared a family of four boys and one girl: Joseph James, Robert Francis, Maurice Eugene, Marion Jean, and John Patrick who was born on Easter Sunday April 5, 1931. John's only living sibling is Maurice ("Dutch") of Clarkston, Washington. John attended school in Bovill through the eighth grade, which was the highest grade then taught in the community. He completed his schooling in Spokane where he graduated from Gonzaga High School and then from Gonzaga University.

John's earliest memories are of Bovill's big flood in 1932-34. He also clearly remembers much about downtown Bovill, with its bank on the corner, Delia Crawford's drug store, Jimmy Gilroy's beer parlor, and the Spokane Hotel where old Pat Malone, the legendary Bovill town marshal, sat all day smoking in a chair in the lobby of the hotel.

H. 11-28 1,000,000 Form 537

Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad Company

Mr. W.P. Warner,
Divn. Frt. & Pass. Agent,
Spokane Wash.

Bovill Idaho
Jan., 21st 1931.

Will you kindly revise and return the enclosed WB from Emeryville Cal., covering 1 box air brake material.

67 1/2 139 1/2
16 1/2 54
237
mod.
197 1/2
J. J. Holland
Agent.

RECEIVED
Spokane, Wash.
JAN 22 1931
C.M. ST. P. & P. R. R. CO.
D. F. & P. A.

MAILGRAM.

Bovill Idaho, Feb., 8th 1950

Mr. J.R. Reagen, D.F.P.A.;
Spokane Wash.

Will you kindly furnish freight charges on the following shipment:
2 cases lock safety lockers 64 pounds from San Jose Calif., to Bovill Idaho routed SF Caden UP Spokane CMT&P., say if all increases are included or not. We have no tariff covering these points.

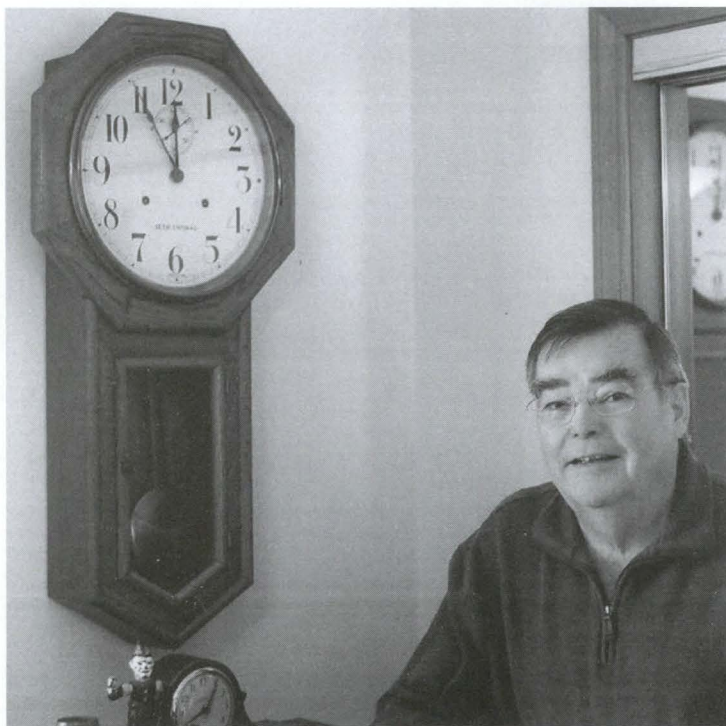
J. J. Holland
Agent

The chair arm received a deep groove from his repeatedly striking matches in the same place. On down the block were the barber shop, a grocery store, a tavern, and the A.K. Parker dry goods and general store. John passed all of these on his way from school to the depot.

The depot contained a main waiting room, frequented by lumberjacks, and a ladies' waiting room that became a storeroom. When John was in grade school, his mother began helping his father at the depot. She set up a hot plate and table in the ladies' waiting room and cooked hot meals there. While there was a great deal of down time for a small town agent, Joe always had to be in the depot and worked long hours.

With the extra time on his hands, Joe got involved in public service and at various times served as city clerk, police judge, mayor, school board chairman, justice of the peace (often holding court in the depot itself) and was secretary-treasurer of Highway District No. 4. During the Great Depression, he was a relief director, and during World War II, chief registrar for the Selective Service in the Bovill precinct. In addition, Joe was a notary public for 34 years, did income tax calculations for everyone in town, and to cap it all off, sold Majestic brand radios.

Son John still has one of Joe's radios, his telegraph "bug" purchased from Spokane Radio Company in



John Holland in his Spokane Valley Home. John worked for over 50 years for Garco Construction and retired in 2006 on his 75th birthday. The clock shown in the photo was given to John's father upon his retirement. Joe and John Holland are the only people to have wound this clock in over 80 years, except for two occasions when it was serviced.



From John B. Miller's The Trees Grew Tall: "A crew of volunteer laborers. Left to right: Dudley Hobbs, Harry Long, unidentified, unidentified, Jimmy Gilroy, Minnis Anderson, Buck Chambers, Henry Malloy, Pete David." Date of photo is unknown (#12-152, University of Idaho Library, Special Collections & Archives).



*The date of this photo of the Bovill depot is not known. According to John Miller in his book, *The Trees Grew Tall*, from left to right are Dick McDonald, John Scott, and possibly Harry Roach. John Holland remembers when he was growing up in Bovill that the upstairs of the depot (telephone number 25) was primarily storage. In earlier times, though, it had been Dick McDonald's dairy office, according to John's father. The first door of the depot was to the ladies' waiting room; the second door, labeled "Trainmen's Door," went into a small compartment that contained a train register and switch key for when the agent was not present (#12-127, University of Idaho Library, Special Collections & Archives).*

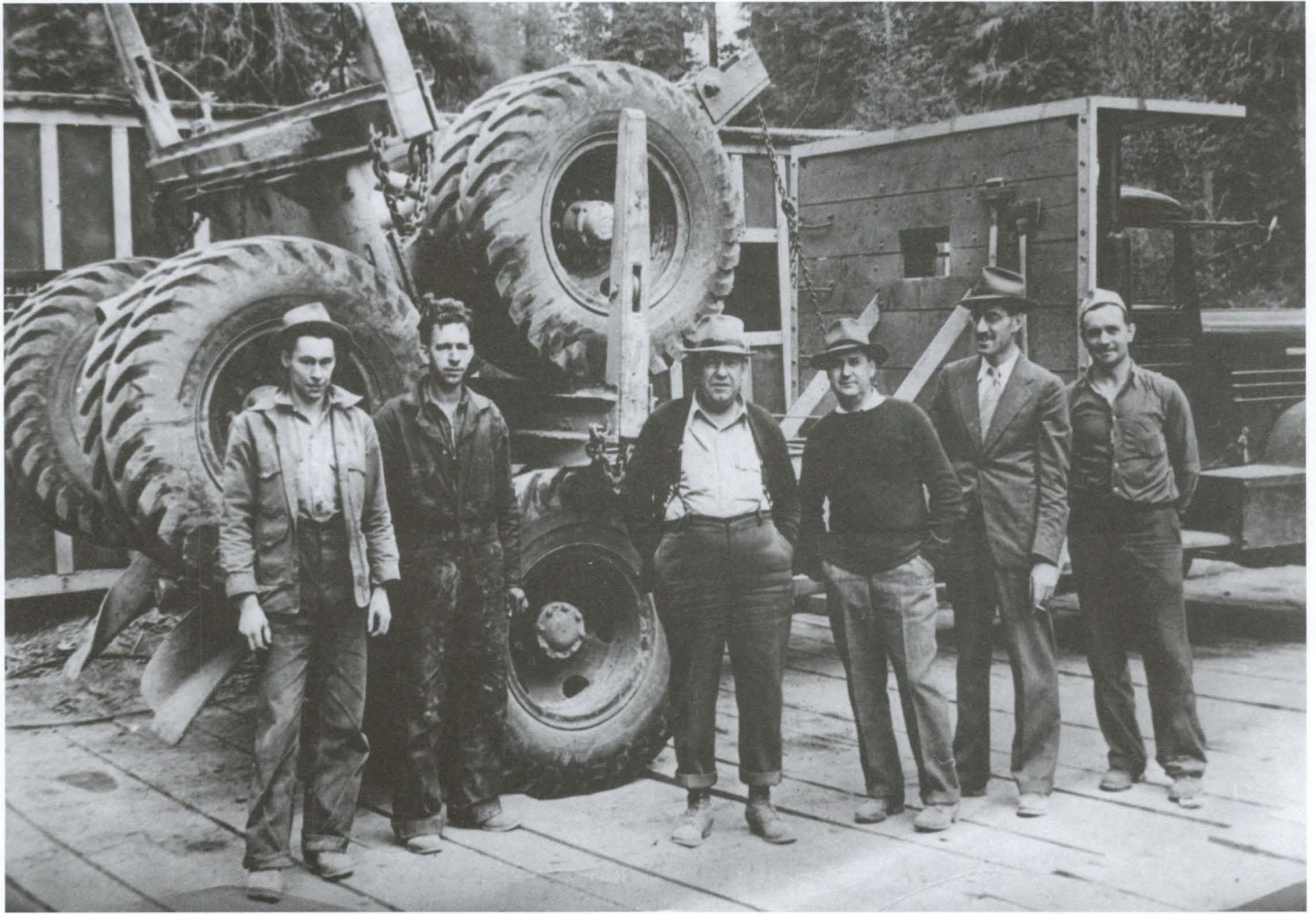
1921, and the Seth Thomas clock that hung on the depot wall throughout his father's tenure as agent. He also has the Bovill depot's ticket case, Wells Fargo seal, and mail bag crimper, as well as his father's collection of railroad passes, some of which he was able to use as a family member when he came home on weekends from school in Spokane.

The years of World War II were eventful on the Bovill home front. During the war, Marion Holland, who knew telegraphy from growing up the daughter of an operator and spending so much time around the depot with her husband, applied for work as a relief operator (without Joe knowing). She took the test and was hired to work alongside her husband in the Bovill depot. Every day Joe walked to work, and Marion drove. Four months short of her ten years of service, she was laid off by the Milwaukee in an attempt to prevent her from qualifying for retirement benefits. Joe manipulated his work days so they had to call her back enough

to get her ten years. Both Joe and Marion sent and received code and would tap private messages to each other at the dinner table, causing John to attempt to learn code.

Sometime in the 1940s, burglars stole the Bovill depot safe, and despite a Railway Express tag that read, "This safe is not locked," blew it open. Evidently, the burglars couldn't read and must have been litterbugs, too, because the safe ended up in the Potlatch River south of Bovill, where it stayed for many years.

In 1945, Joe developed a serious stomach ulcer and was required to eat only soft foods and have snacks of crackers and milk at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. He carried a paper sack with a jar of milk and the crackers from home each morning and afternoon, causing the townspeople wondering what Joe had in the sack. During the summers of 1946 and 1947, John Holland worked on the Milwaukee section gang under foreman Pop Neely replacing ties from Bovill to the Neva tunnel.



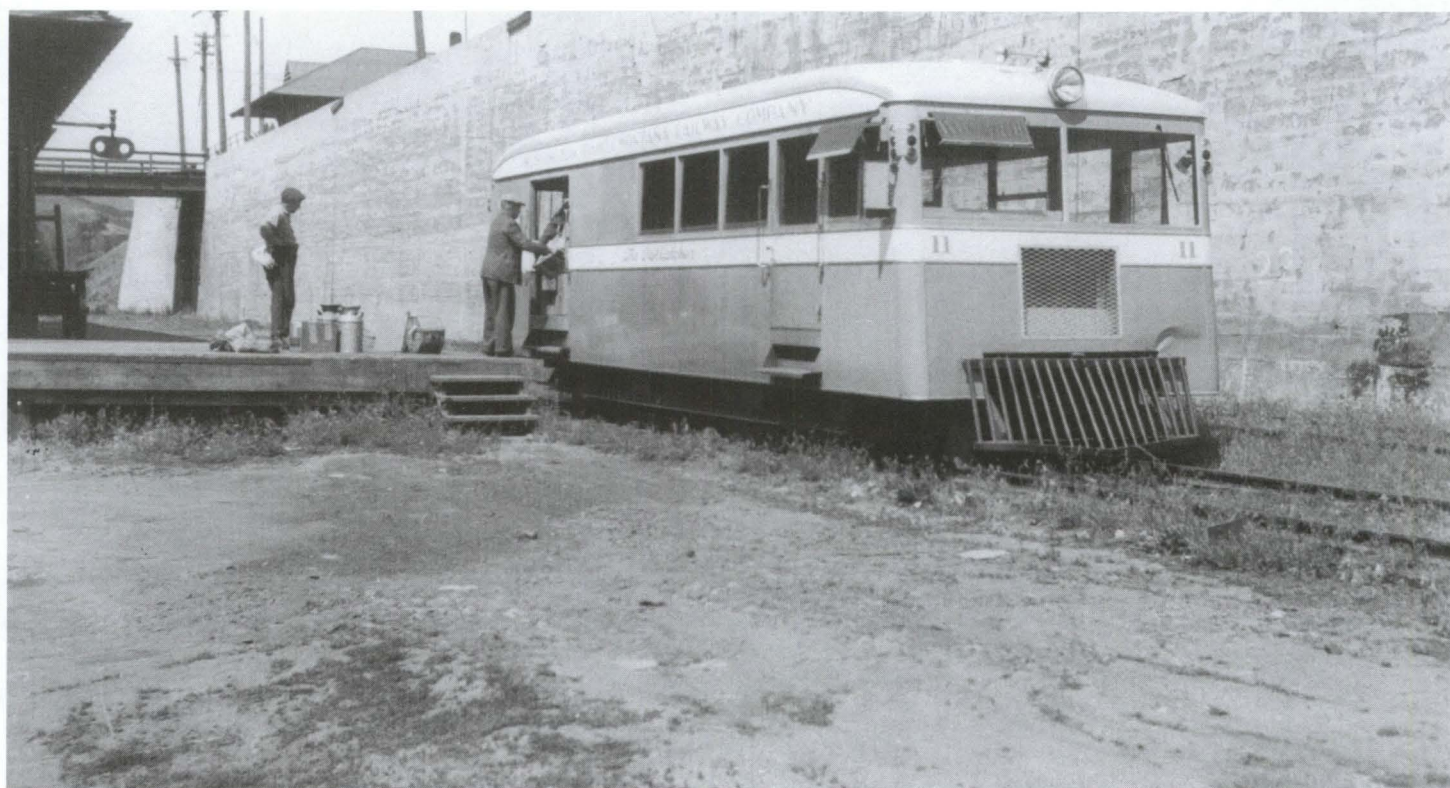
*John B. Miller in his book *The Trees Grew Tall* identifies three of the men in this photo. Second from left: Johnny Zagelow; third from left: C.G. Nogle; fourth from left: Julius Crane. Date of photo is unknown (#12-201, University of Idaho Library, Special Collections & Archives).*

After the war – on Christmas Day 1947 or 1948 – the people of Bovill responded to the frantic whistling of the WI&M locomotive at the depot. Brakeman Jack Andrews had slipped on the bottom rung of a flatcar step, and his leg went into the wheel truck beneath. He was brought, badly injured, into the depot. Lucille Denevan, a nurse, applied a tourniquet and asked if anyone had a knife. John had received a new pocket knife for Christmas, and Lucille used it to finish the amputation. Andrews survived the makeshift surgery and was eventually taken to the hospital in Potlatch.

During his childhood and youth, John heard of the legendary residents of Bovill: timber cruiser William Helmer; Clair Nogle, who was very active in town business, especially in logging; and T.P. Jones, Potlatch Lumber Company Woods Superintendent. John delivered the morning newspaper to the Jones residence and always had to place it under the doormat with headline showing so that Mrs. Jones could read it when she came to get the paper.

Bill Helmer lived in retirement in the Davis Boarding House on the street where the Hollands lived. When he died, Helmer left varying percentages of his estate to about 25 different Bovill families. Joe Holland was his executor. The Hollands' next-door neighbor was Doc White, the veterinarian who cared for the Potlatch logging horses.

John also recalled the colorful railroad equipment that passed through, from the Milwaukee mallet locomotives to the WI&M "Bug" and "Potlatcher." When Claude Davis arrived in Bovill with the Potlatcher, John jumped it and went around the "wye" with him. He especially remembers this because Davis was able to handle the switches by himself while the idling Potlatcher coasted through them. Bill Helmer had a 1937 Terraplane with electric transmission, which gave the WI&M the idea of using this transmission on the Potlatcher. It did not work satisfactorily and was removed, and the shop forces installed a standard transmission with special linkage so that Davis could shift from five to six feet away from the transmission.



Top left: according to John B. Miller in his book *The Trees Grew Tall*, these two gentlemen are timber cruisers William Helmer (left) and Eddie Erickson. Date of photo is unknown (#12-177, University of Idaho Library, Special Collections & Archives); top right: according to Keith Petersen in *Company Town: Potlatch, Idaho and the Potlatch Lumber Company*, Tom P. Jones was "one of the strong, hardworking Minnesotans" William Deary brought "West to tame Idaho's forests." Jones was the company's first logging superintendent (#13-02077, University of Idaho Library, Special Collections & Archives, c. 1910); bottom: built in 1937, the Potlatch was designed with the specific purpose of delivering mail to communities located along Washington, Idaho & Montana Railway lines. WI&M officials worked with Fairmont Railway Motors in Fairmont, Minnesota to adapt an existing Fairmont design to the railway's needs.

John and his mother frequently rode the Potlatch to Palouse where her father was Inland (later Great Northern) agent and lived on the hill above the substation across from the depot. When they arrived at the WI&M's Palouse depot, they ascended to the Inland's track level, John taking the steps and his mother riding the baggage elevator. This was after Inland passenger service ended in 1939. He recalled that right behind the Great Northern depot was a pea factory with a siding from that railroad. The whole area was covered with cinders from his grandfather emptying them from the depot's coal stove. A ramp led down to WI&M (ground) level.

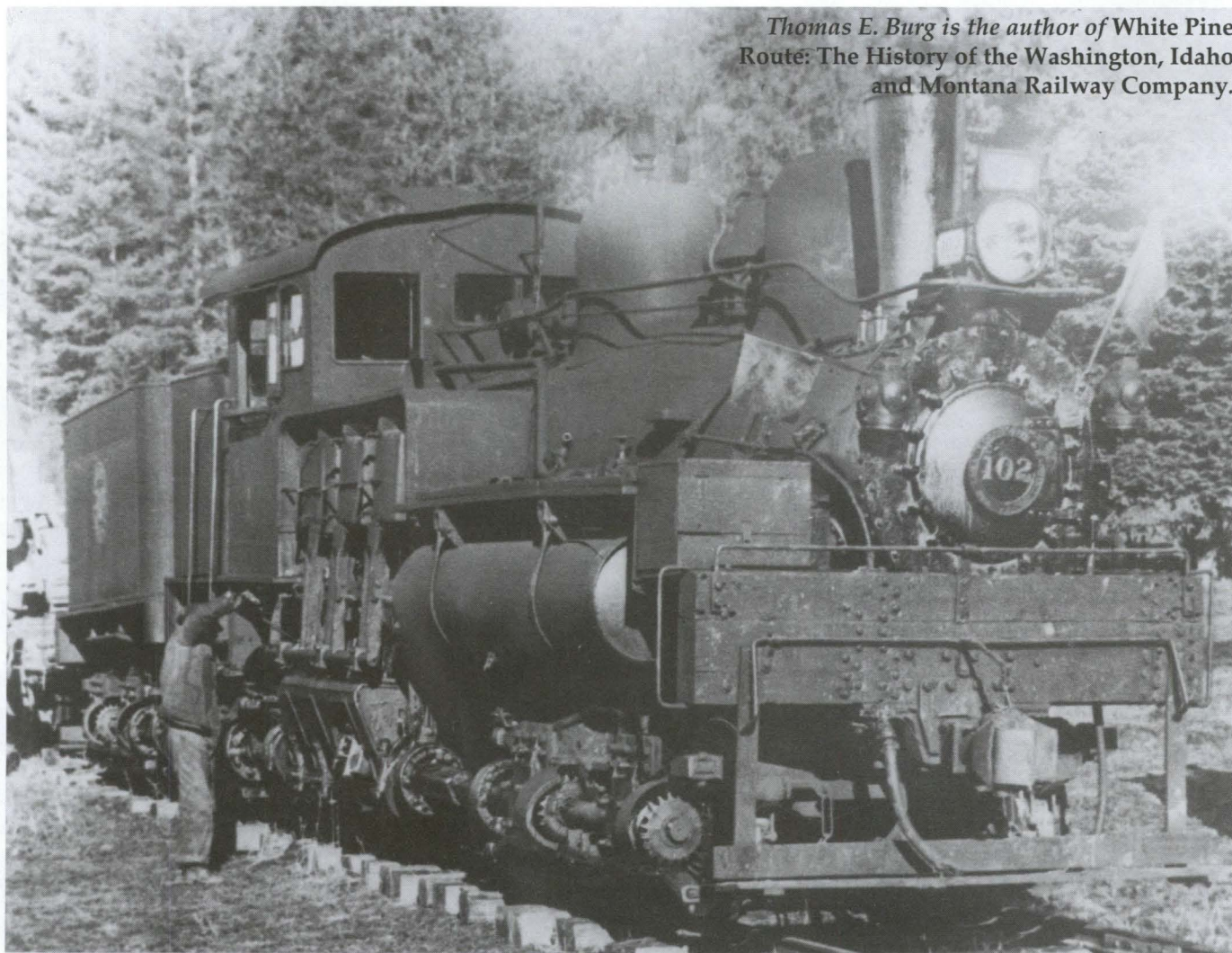
While the Potlatch motorman was on the right side, the driver of the "Bug" was in the conventional left hand driver's seat of the Studebaker auto from which it was constructed. Holland recalled that the "Bug" had a cargo door only on the right side, with seats for passengers lined up along the left side behind the driver, plus the front passenger's seat. Passengers entered through this right front door and climbed behind the driver.

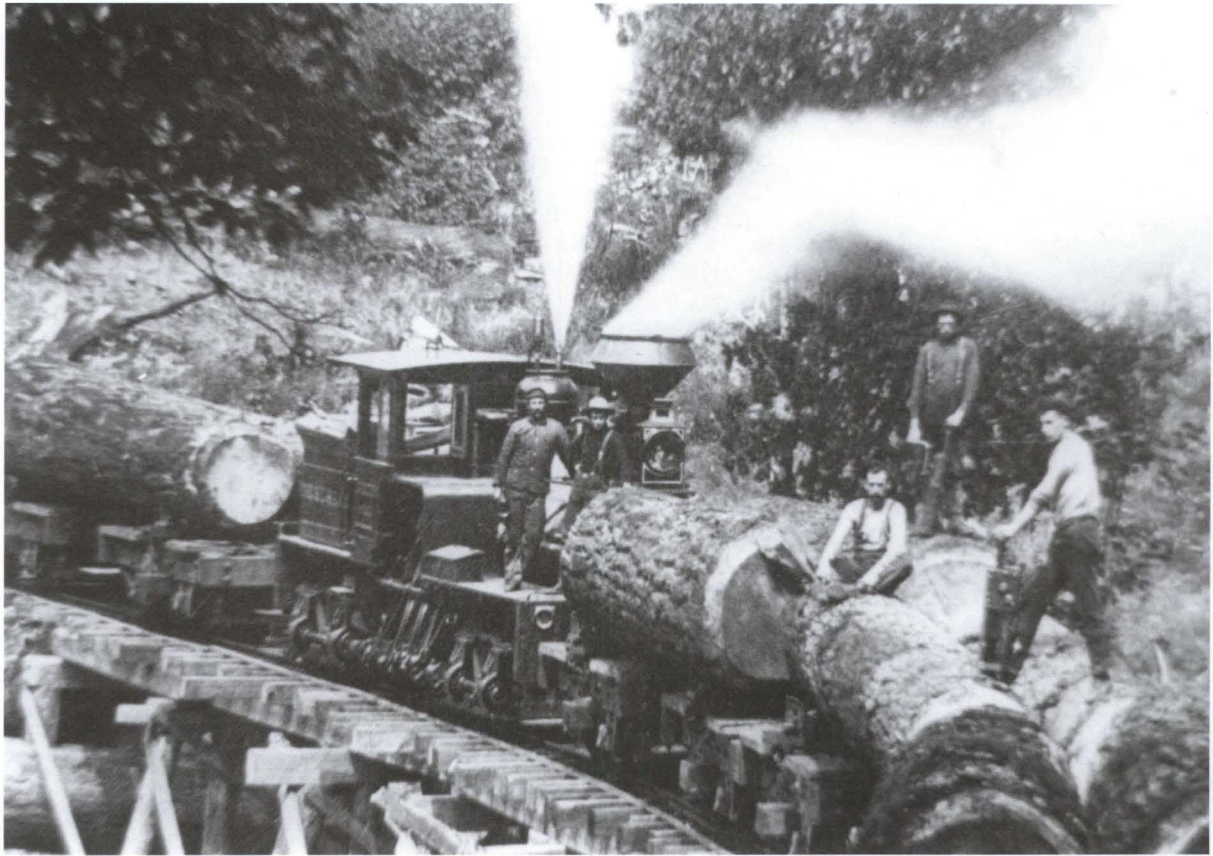
Early on, when Milwaukee trains headed south to Elk River, the crew had to "double the hill" from Bo-

vill to Neva, even with just empties. When the 2-6-6-2 mallet locomotives were assigned to this duty, they handled the hill with no more trouble. John describes the mallets as "huge," with the boiler front "countersunk." Once John rode one of the mallets toward Elk River and observed that the clearances were very tight. The Neva tunnel was so cold inside that even when it was in the 90's outside, you could not sit inside to eat your lunch. The water in the tunnel was ice cold and the best drinking water he has ever tasted.

Holland also remembered the shay locomotives that Potlatch used out of Bovill until about 1948. That summer John worked for Potlatch Forests, Inc. (PFI) repairing skidding cats; he remembers that one bay of the shop in Bovill was occupied by the last shay (note: probably PFI #200, retired about this time). The bearings were so bad that for each trip Byers Sanderson had to make new bearings out of Babbitt metal to get it to work. One time smoke watchers in the lookout towers of the Potlatch Timber Protective Association triangulated on a "fast moving" forest fire near the horse ranch at the foot of Neva Hill, only to find it was a shay putting out great quantities of smoke as it went about its duties. ☞

Thomas E. Burg is the author of White Pine Route: The History of the Washington, Idaho and Montana Railway Company.





PRESERVING THE WASHINGTON, IDAHO & MONTANA RAILWAY

The Washington, Idaho & Montana Railway History Preservation Group, Inc. (HPG) is an IRS 501c3 nonprofit Idaho Corporation formed in 1998, incorporated in the State of Idaho in 2000, to preserve the unique history of this northern Idaho railroad. Its mission statement is: "To locate, preserve, and archive all items of a historical nature relating to the history of the WI&M Ry.; to issue publications on this and related subjects; to encourage public interest in the history of the WI&M and Potlatch Lumber Company; and, to acquire objects and property appropriate for a museum and/or any of the purposes listed above."

Membership in the HPG is open to anyone anywhere, and since its inception, the HPG has had members from such locations as faraway as Canada, England, Czech Republic, and Australia. In fact, one of the HPG's more active members is from Australia and has twice traveled to Idaho for participation in HPG summer activities. There are several levels of membership; see the HPG Web site: www.wimryhpg.com. Member-

ship includes discounts on HPG merchandise and the all-color *White Pine Quarterly* (WPQ), official newsletter of the HPG. Membership in the HPG is available through the Web site or by writing to P.O. Box 547, Potlatch, ID 83855. Donations are tax deductible.

Most visible of the HPG's projects is the restoration of the WI&M Potlatch depot for public use. The depot's freight room is planned as a joint HPG/Potlatch Historical Society museum and interpretive center and has functioned as such during speeder ride events in 2008 and 2009. More information on the depot building restoration can be found on the depot blog site: <http://potlatchdepot.blogspot.com>. Also in Potlatch is the restoration and use of the last Bennett Lumber Products, Inc. (BENX) all-door box car, BENX #182. Located on HPG trackage on land adjacent to the depot, the car serves as an outdoor community stage for musical and other performances. It was completely repainted in its original colors in 2008. ♪

Left: Engineer Ed "Cannonball" Baker oils Potlatch Forests, Inc. (PFI) #102 (second) as it carries classification lights and flags of a work extra. The Lima Locomotive and Machine Works of Lima, Ohio, constructed this 70-ton, three-truck shay locomotive (construction #3077) in 1920 for the Winton Lumber Company. It later became Edward Rutledge Timber Company #5 and in 1931 became PFI #102 (second) in the companies' merger (#6-62-1 [left], #12-248 [above] University of Idaho Library, Special Collections & Archives).



*Bovill, Idaho in 1913. John B. Miller in his book *The Trees Grew Tall* identifies the buildings seen in this panorama: "Seen left center is the Opera House. Next to it is the Davis Boarding House built after the 1912 fire and at far left a saloon building that burned in 1914. In the distance (center) is the Catholic Church and to its right, the school. The dark building in the semi-foreground is the Chapin home. Toward the right is the square frame house which started as a brothel" (#12-079, University of Idaho Library, Special Collections & Archives).*



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