

---

# LATAH LEGACY

THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE LATAH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

---



Ralph and Alma Lauder (Alma Keeling). c. 1906

BEGINNING IN THIS ISSUE: THE UN-COVERED WAGON

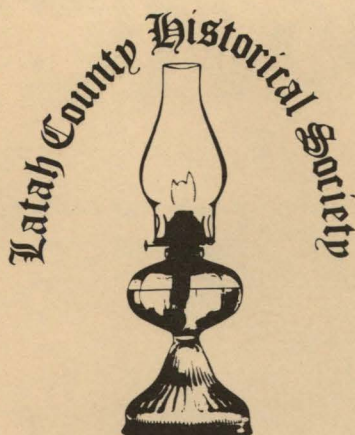
---

Summer 1983

\$1.50

---





Published quarterly by the Latah County Historical Society, 110 S. Adams, Moscow, Idaho 83843. Subscriptions included in annual membership dues.

Vol. 12, nr. 2

## CONTENTS

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| History and description of Troy, Idaho, newspapers, by Don Erickson. (Part two) . . . . . | p. 1  |
| The First Moscow High Football Team, by George Fallquist . . . . .                        | p. 9  |
| The Un-Covered Wagon, by Alma Taylor-Lauder Keeling. (Part one). . .                      | p. 13 |
| Book Review . . . . .   | p. 23 |

## The Latah County Historical Society

Director: Carol Young  
Curator: Debora Kruger  
Librarian: Chris Talbott  
Coordinator of Volunteers: Holly Meyer

### Latah Legacy

Editor: Stan Shepard  
Assist. Editor: Mary Reed  
Book Review Ed.: Keith Petersen  
Typist: Kathleen Probasco

### Newsletter

Carol Young and Keith Petersen

### Board of Trustees

President: Everett Hagen  
First Vice President: Mary Reed  
Second Vice President: Duane LeTourneau  
Secretary: Merideth Monserud  
Treasurer: Leonard Ashbaugh  
Past President: Roger Slade  
Leora Stillinger  
Donna Bray  
Steve Talbott  
Cindy Blue  
Stan Shepard  
Laura Bartell



# HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION OF TROY, IDAHO, NEWSPAPERS

by Don E. Erickson

(Part two)

F. G. Nutt published the Troy Weekly News a little over a year before Peterson returned in November, 1933, as editor and publisher of the paper. Peterson changed the name of the paper, so that the masthead read, "Latah County Press: Formerly published at Deary, Idaho; Published Friday of Weah [sic] Week at TROY, LATAH COUNTY, IDAHO: J. C. Peterson, Editor and Owner, Subscription Price, Per Year, 50¢." <sup>25</sup> Previously the subscription price had varied between \$1.00 and \$2.00, and this could well be the lowest price the paper ever sold for in its history. (The error in the masthead, "Friday of Weah Week," was printed for five issues before it was corrected.)

Peterson started off with a bang. Not only did he change the name of the paper, but he added a few new type faces, used larger headlines -- some were two columns, a feature that had disappeared from the paper gradually. News was put back on the front page. A full editorial page blossomed out on the page where Nutt had previously had only an occasional remark. A precise change took place in the style of writing and the news coverage -- for the better.

His popularity with the Troy people, the entirely new paper, and the low subscription price were the main reasons for the generous response the town gave Peterson when he returned as editor. In his second number, Peterson ran a boxed article: "Your response is encouraging. The generous recognition being accorded the Press in its new start is one of the most gratifying things we have experienced in

many years. . . . The subscriptions are rolling in -- if they keep coming at the same rate during the coming weeks we are going to have the biggest subscription list that any paper has ever been able to boast." <sup>26</sup> One short paragraph under local personals stated that F. G. Nutt had remained with Peterson and at least worked in the office for a while. A few issues later Peterson wrote, "If the readiness with which the people are enrolling on our subscription list can be taken as a mark of approval, the Latah County Press is by no means a journalistic failure. We have been writing subscription receipts every day this week, some for two years." <sup>27</sup>

In January, 1934, Peterson abandoned the style make-up that had been with the paper for so long. The old style paper was six columns wide and 20 inches deep. He went to five columns and 18 inches in depth. He did away with the ready print and published fewer pages. Even with the smaller paper and fewer pages, Peterson got more local, state and national news and editorials in the paper than Nutt had with the larger size paper.

The reason for the liberal subscription offer was that the editor wanted to send the Press to all paid up subscribers of the old Troy Weekly News. But the post office would not register the Press as second class matter because regulations require that papers must have a bona fide, paid up subscription list to receive this privilege. In February, Peterson announced that the subscription price would be advanced to \$1.00 in March, and he



urged his customers to file their subscription while the price was still low. In announcing the hike in price, he hinted that the paper was going to make some magazine club offers as an added attraction.

Peterson had evidently been questioned about his paper's policy, and he was quick to reply in one issue stating that he was completely independent, but that he reserved the right to say what he pleased, when and how he pleased. He also started a forum in 1934 and invited residents to voice their opinions to be printed in the paper. He accepted no unsigned letters and assumed no responsibility for what others had to say in their letters. An example of the definite stand Peterson took and the opinion he voiced follows: "This paper is irrevocably opposed to that pernicious system of collecting public revenue known as the sales tax."<sup>26</sup>

That the paper had influence in the community is illustrated when Peterson ran a short news item suggesting to the people of Troy that they needed a town band. He pointed up that the town had the instruments and the talent. Suggestions were also made as to the good they would perform on such occasions as evening concerts during the summer, and playing for the Fourth of July and the fair that fall. Two months later the town had a band.

Crazy contests attracted the editor's attention also. Getting the idea from a contemporary, the Kendrick Gazette, the Press started a campaign to see who could bring the largest hen's egg to the paper office. A free six-months subscription was offered, but the main goal of the contest was to beat Kendrick. Troy evidently lost, but the largest egg received measured 6 and 7/8 inches by 8 and 1/4 inches and weighed 5 ounces.<sup>29</sup>

Drives put on by the paper seemed to be the common thing. Some of the things Peterson agitated for were the band, a public library, a sewer project, park, wading pool, horseshoe pits, the community fair, and Troy in general. "Tell

the World About Troy and Troy Community," and "For Troy and the Troy Community" were his slogans. He wrote: "That has always been and always will be the slogan of this paper, and never an issue of it goes forth that does not in some manner try to show proof of its interest in the home town, and the home community. . . . This paper has a circulation of nearly 500, nearly all around Troy."<sup>30</sup>

In June, 1936, Peterson went back to using ready print and changed the size of the paper back to the old style of 6 columns, 20 inches deep. The paper ran from four pages to eight and sometimes ten. During the mid part of 1936, the paper appeared to suffer a slump or slight regression in crusades and the flood of Troy propaganda. Editorials, too, seemed to slack off a bit. The regression might be illustrated by a notice that some time later ran for several issues: "Please . . . Subscribers to the Press who know themselves to be in arrears are requested to make settlement. We must keep in good standing with Uncle Sam. Only a few are behind -- we thank you."<sup>31</sup> With the turn of 1937, however, Peterson takes up his enthusiasm again in publicizing Troy, the community and everything in general.

In Sept. 1937, Clifford C. Smith bought the paper from Peterson. Smith had served in the mechanical department of the Moscow Star-Mirror for eight years before coming to Troy. Peterson describes Smith as a "young man with energy, ability and experience." Like most other people who decide to try their turn at editing a small-town weekly paper, Smith had a desire to operate a newspaper of his own after working under other editors. The new editor described his policy as follows: "We have no political axe to grind and our political aspirations are nil. Our political policy is non-partisan -- dedicating each issue of the Press to your enjoyment and the upbuilding of community interest."<sup>32</sup>

Smith too, started his new reign with many changes. Probably the greatest improvement was the installation of a linotype, giving Troy its first machine-set news-





Troy, Idaho. Main St. with cars, early twenties.

paper. For a few issues before Smith took over the paper, it came out with machine-set type. This was done at Moscow on a Linotype and then taken to Troy for printing. New display type was also installed, giving the paper a complete new dress from body type through the display sizes and rules used for bordering ads. The new editor doubtless brought many ideas and styles with him from working on a daily paper. Datelines were used for out-of-town stories. The files were kept in chronological order. More local pictures were used, and larger headlines dotted the front page.

Soon after Smith bought the paper, he had a close call to a fire. A melting pot was left on, and the over-heated element set fire to some papers nearby. The flames from the papers attracted the attention of a passerby, who got a pass key, cut the wires to the element and put out the small fire. This type incident happens to most printing plants at some time or another.

The Latah County Press under Smith, as a rule, carried eight pages. Ready print was used the rest of the year, but in 1938 it was dropped as a common practice and used only occasionally. As usual, the ready print carried one full page of comics, national and international news and many pictures, as well as national advertising. Society, farm markets, churches, school, the University, and some state issues were the usual page one stories. The subscription price was soon raised to \$1.50, but lowered back to \$1.00 in 1941. Smith carried an active editorial page, but it was slanted more toward the local scene than formerly. In fact, the whole paper was slanted locally. There was little propaganda meant to publicize Troy to anyone who would read it, but a very good coverage of local events and personal interests developed. The paper usually carried an "Around Town" column, but in 1940 it was changed to "Seen and Heard," which was merely a new name for the personal town gossip. The talk under the new column, however, included more jest-



ing, jokes, and generally some fun poked at what people did and said. This new type column evidently was well received by the people, for the townspeople must have turned in the items regularly. Certainly the paper couldn't have spent the time gathering the many incidents by itself.

Another new idea was a "Who Am I" column, started in 1941. This feature described some local old timer with a personality sketch and left the question open at the end for the reader to guess. The previous week's mystery person was identified in the following week's column. A subscription campaign was also launched. This campaign was well organized compared to previous ones the paper had known. Points were given for renewals, new subscriptions, and back subscriptions. A scale was set up and prizes such as a radio, bicycle, mixer, watch and cameras were given for a certain number of points gained. What was probably something different for Troy people was the Christmas edition of 1938. The paper sported a four-color border of Christmas figures and greetings around pages one and four.

In March, 1944, Smith was called to serve in the armed forces during the war. He ran this story in the Press:

Suspend Paper Next Week, Army Wants Publisher to put an end to war: feels he should comply.

Troy will be without a paper soon, for the first time in the memory of most residents. In fact, not since the early days when this community was known as Vollmer and the paper known as the Vollmer Vidette has this area been without a paper, sometimes good, sometimes bad, and sometimes of an indifferent quality.

Reasons for suspending are that Uncle Sam is short of men. . . .

Incidentally, if we get to Tokyo we promise to bring back a personal souvenir for each of our subscribers who are paid in advance - all five of them.<sup>33</sup>

This writing illustrates the homey quality that characterized Smith's paper. In his last issue before he went off to war, Smith described the paper a bit. When he took the paper over, a press run of 290 would suffice, but by March 1944, the circulation had grown to 500. The story in this last issue is as follows:

In the physical process of making up a paper we melt lead and cast it into lines for each line of type. It requires about 1,500 lines for each paper and each line averages about 35 letters. In all we have cast 525,000 lines of type, pounded out over 18 million letters and melted about 45 tons of lead to put out the almost 350 editions totaling 1,400 pages. If all the stories were pasted together in a strip of paper of one column width they would make a column one and a quarter miles long and it would take the average reader 40 days to read it all if one read an average of eight hours a day.

. . . Many times we have withheld some items that could have gone into the paper -- such as times when youths have gone afoul of the law and other petty misdemeanors. Our policy on this was that the added publicity would do no good to the one involved and might help him to find it easier to adjust his ways.<sup>34</sup>

The "Seen and Heard" column was headed "Alas, the Last Seen and Heard, faithful actors perform in this column for last curtain call." The entire back page of the last issue was ruled off into 22 ads carrying personal messages. All the ads were solicited without the editor's knowledge. He was told of the plan only the day before press day. All this is a good indication that Smith was well liked by the Troy people, although part of the response was probably from the fact that he was going off to war.

But Smith was only gone for five and one half months, and on Sept. 7, 1944, the "Seen and Heard" column was headed "At It Again." Smith explained his return on the editorial page: "It seems that



the army came to the conclusion shortly afterwards that a fellow over 30 just isn't worth much as a buck private and reversed its attitude toward enlisting this age group."<sup>35</sup> Smith only stayed with the paper for two months, however, and then sold the Press in November, 1944, after seven and one-half years of ownership.

H. D. Phelps and his wife then took over the paper. Phelps had worked on a number of papers in Colorado and Wyoming, serving as editor and publisher of one. Mrs. Phelps was able to operate presses and the Linotype, and had been a reporter on a few papers. The masthead carried it this way: "H. D. Phelps, J. S. Phelps, Owners and Publishers, H. D. Phelps editor." Phelps stated his policies in his first issue as being independent, with an honest

effort to print facts on both sides of any question that was published. Anything that was his opinion was reserved for the editorial page, which usually carried only one editorial per issue, and sometimes none. Editorials were very irregular, but when he did write one, Phelps usually had something important to say.

Four issues after taking over, Phelps changed the nameplate, condensing it to a four column width. The previous style stretched the name across the entire top of the paper. A smaller nameplate gave the editor more variety in makeup, and he used this with new headline type to an advantage. Boxed stories and larger headlines also dressed up the paper until it looked very newsy even if the over all news coverage was less than previously.



The Troy Garage, c. 1918



Two other things that Phelps did were to raise the subscription price back up to \$1.50 and pour a concrete floor in the office. The process of putting in the new floor disrupted the paper's schedule for a few weeks. Phelps did not use ready print, but used many more local pictures and filler articles to fill the paper. Usually the paper had four pages up until 1947, when the six page paper became more regular than the four page paper.

Also in 1947, the paper started using a "Weekly News Analysis" that was distributed by the Western Newspaper Union. This regularly took up two columns on the left side of page one, which cramped the editor's style of makeup. After Phelps had upped the price again to \$2.00, he added a slogan in 1947 that ran regularly under the nameplate: "Voice of the White Pine Empire." Phelps published the paper up through 1953, when he died suddenly of a heart attack in the early morning at his home. He had not been in good health for several months before his death. After his death Dec. 14, 1953, the paper said, "-----'30'-----, Long newspaper career comes to close for Harry Phelps."<sup>36</sup> His wife had died in April, 1950.

Upon Phelps' death, his daughter and son-in-law, Dorothy and Ellis Anderson, ran the paper for three months. During this time, no name was printed in the masthead. The paper was then sold from the H. D. Phelps estate to E. M. Poe, who came from Othello, Wash., with 25 years of printing experience. Poe took over the paper in March, 1954, without any statement of editorial or news policy. The Press was probably sold for a quite reasonable price, and the general feeling in Troy is that Poe only bought the paper with the intention of making some fast money and then leaving town.

This belief finds much support in the fact that Phelps [Ed note: This should read Poe] was rather nominal in his news coverage and that he seldom wrote any editorials showing interest in the community. The few editorials that were written showed no positive beliefs or stands, and were written in a meek manner as if he was

afraid he would stir up some controversy. The paper carried many filler pictures, and sometimes a full page of nothing but pictures, with captions, neatly spaced and arranged on a full page white background.

A little over a year after he bought it, Phelps [Ed. note: Poe] discontinued the paper. On August 4, 1955, the paper carried a big "THIRTY" in three inch letters centered at the top of the front page. A story said:

We are suspending publication with this edition. The hour-dollar ratio of the Latah County Press does not justify carrying on.

We have tried since last November to sell the Press as a going business but without success.

We appreciate the cooperation of all the communities covered with our publication. We especially want to thank the businesses who made the paper possible and our faithful correspondents.

The equipment has been sold to an out-of-state company.

The building has been sold to Ruthford and Ernest Erickson of Erickson's Foods and Lockers.

The Poes will move to Spokane where he will be employed as a printer.<sup>37</sup>

The fact that Poe had been trying to sell the paper only a few months after he purchased it also shows that his interests were not in Troy. All the equipment was sold in a packet deal to a plant in Republic, Wash. There were many ads in the last issue, but only one was a personal ad about Poe's departure. What little space there was left for news was filled with filler pictures. The one ad about Poe's departure was a very short, impersonal and possibly sarcastic ad from a Moscow firm. The ad said, "To Mr. and Mrs. Poe, We are sorry to see you leave. You have been good neighbors." The advertiser? Queen City Printing Co. of Moscow.



Charles Stellmon and his wife, Peggy, took the name of the paper and started publication again on Nov. 27, 1957. Stellmon had to start from scratch, for all he had was the paper's name. He had previously worked for the Moscow Daily Idahonian. Acquiring equipment piece by piece, Stellmon has built the paper into a paying business in a little over a year's time.<sup>39</sup> He got type from the Pullman, Wash., Herald, and two presses and a Linotype from a Spokane company. At present, the plant includes a Cranston, drum-cylinder press, on which the paper is printed, a Linotype, one open press, a Kelly job press, saw, casting box and melting pot, cutter and a good supply of type. To-date, Stellmon has less than 20 issues to publish before gaining the right to publish legal advertising. Idaho laws require a paper to publish 78 (one and one-half years) continuous issues before this right is given.<sup>40</sup> A good response was given the Stellmons by the Troy people and businesses when the paper was started. Receipt books were set out in town stores and the first few hundred subscriptions came in immediately when people heard they were going to have a paper again. Now the Press is a four page weekly with a press run of about 750. A good supply of advertising in the paper and job work seems to assure the continued success of the paper.

Undoubtedly the most prominent editors of the paper during its nearly 65 years of history were P. L. Orcutt, J. C. Peterson, and C. C. Smith; with Peterson the most important of these three because he edited the paper at three different times and probably for the largest total number of years of any editor. These three are described in the fullest detail. Orcutt spent little of his time with news and stirred up much controversy. His paper was mostly editorial in importance. J. C. Peterson had a good balance of both, covering many local and state issues. Peterson's paper was very newsy, constructive and filled with propaganda about Troy. Clifford Smith was completely local in news coverage and editorial policy. A good coverage of local news

was first in importance, and a somewhat less dynamic, yet, nonethe-less constructive editorial policy rounded out Smith's paper. Except for a short period when it was Republican, the paper has traditionally been independent, saying what it pleased on anything it pleased. The paper was probably in the height of its glory during the town's high peak of prosperity in the early 1900's. In comparison to the times and the size of the town, the paper was probably close to outstanding during this time. Since the time of Peterson, the paper has never reached quite the peak of importance it once held. Although the paper has no libel suits in its history, it could very well have had some while Orcutt was editor. Typically, the paper has always boosted Troy and the surrounding community, striving for improvements and developments in resources as well as importance.

#### NOTES

1. Ina Peterson, History of Troy. This history was run in chapters in the Latah County Press during the fall of 1958.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid. This source gives the establishing year at 1894, but Ayer's Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals consistently records 1895 as the date the paper was established.
6. Troy Weekly News, Jan. 27, 1905.
7. Ibid., Feb. 10, 1905.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid., Feb. 24, 1905.
11. Ibid.



12. Ibid., Jan. 5, 1906.
13. Ibid., Oct. 5, 1906.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid., Sept. 21, 1906.
16. Ibid., July 14, 1905.
17. Certificate of Assumed Name filed in the Latah County Court House, Moscow, Idaho.
18. Personal interview with Mrs. C. M. Grove, Moscow resident.
19. Troy Weekly News, June 2, 1932.
20. Ibid., Aug. 11, 1932.
21. Ibid., Sept. 29, 1932.
22. Ibid., Nov. 10, 1932.
23. Ibid., Nov. 24, 1932.
24. Schlosser's name appears twice, but it is doubtful he had control of the paper at two different times. This is merely a conflict in sequence presented by two different sources that are both used in this paper.
25. Latah County Press, Dec. 21, 1933.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid., Dec. 28, 1933.
28. Ibid., March 1, 1934.
29. Ibid., April 26, 1934.
30. Ibid., June 10, 1937.
31. Ibid., June 3, 1937.
32. Ibid., Sept. 16, 1937.
33. Ibid., March 2, 1944.
34. Ibid., March 9, 1944.

35. Ibid., Sept. 7, 1944.
36. Ibid., Dec. 17, 1953.
37. Ibid., August 4, 1955.
38. Ibid.
39. Personal interview with Charles Stellmon, publisher, Latah County Press, Troy, Idaho.
40. Idaho Compiled Statutes, Sec. 2340, as cited in Publication and Printing Laws of the State of Idaho, p. 5.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ayer, N. W. and Sons, Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals, Newspaper Advertising Agents, Philadelphia.
- Correspondence with Clifford C. Smith, N. 3024 Laura Rd., Millwood Branch, Spokane 6, Wash.
- Latah County Courthouse records and documents.
- Latah County Press files, Troy, 1932 to present. Files for the earliest papers and between 1907 and 1932 were not available.
- Personal interviews with Mrs. C. M. Grove, 428 E. 7th St., Moscow; Charles Stellmon, publisher, Latah County Press, Troy; and other Troy residents.
- Peterson, Ina, History of Troy, 1934.
- Publication and Printing Laws of the State of Idaho, W. D. Gillis, ed., Idaho State Editorial Association, 1930.
- Troy Weekly News files, University of Idaho Library, 1904-1907.



## The First Moscow High Football Team

by George "Swede" Fallquist,  
M.H.S. 1916

The Gustaf Fallquist family with eight children first arrived in Moscow in October of 1901. I was the seventh child and four years old. Finding no suitable property to purchase in Moscow, we visited friends in Troy and while there found what was wanted so we settled there. We were from Minnesota.

During the next ten years we spent some of the time in Troy and some in Moscow. This was due to the fact that three of my sisters had found jobs in Moscow, but my two older brothers started a small brick yard in Troy. My father passed away in Troy in 1902. This caused my mother and we three younger children to spend some time with the sisters and some with the brothers.

A typical year was 1905 when I was in the third grade in Moscow. My teacher was Emma Edmundson. She was an excellent teacher. She was a widow with three children. The eldest of these was Clarence "Hec" Edmundson who became famous as a track and basketball star at Idaho. Later as coach of track, he built one of the few track teams at Idaho to defeat W.S.C. and also some excellent basketball teams. Later at the U. of Washington he repeated those successes in track and basketball as coach. The sports Pavilion in Seattle bears his name. His younger brother Clifford was not so well known but was also a fine athlete in football and basketball. The youngest child was Winifred, a handsome and very talented young lady. In that class I recall as my friends Howard "Happy" Hatfield, Art Almquist, Teed Heath, Milton Rhodes, and Gilbert Batey. In Troy later, a very dynamic Superintendent of Schools by the name of Hannah Marie Johnson practically single-handed restructured the school system. Starting

with a small four-room frame school building with two grades in a room and one teacher teaching all the subjects, she soon sold the voters on the idea of taking down the old building and putting up a nice new brick structure. There was one class to a room and increased staff to handle the teaching load. An inspired teacher as well as administrator was Miss Johnson. The Fallquist children were fortunate to benefit by this increased excellence in the school. But soon it was back to Moscow again to finish elementary, high school, and, for some, the University.

But let's go back to that 1905 year. That was the year that Idaho was undefeated in football and were Northwest League champions. That league was composed of the U. of Idaho, U. of Oregon, U. of Washington, Whitman, the Washington Agricultural College and the Oregon Agricultural College. The two agricultural colleges have since become state universities. Idaho was a small school with only a couple of hundred students at that time but they had some fine athletes. And none were on the fantastic scholarships of today.

The reason I digress from my main topic to talk about the university sports is that a group of us young boys used to love to watch the Varsity athletes practice and we idolized them. Thus it came about that by the time we got to high school we simply had to have a football team. It was in our blood and had to be obeyed.

Some of the men who built Idaho into greatness were "Gub" Mix, a brainy star quarterback in 1901, and later team manager, and George "Cap" Horton, one of the best fullbacks and an excellent punter. Even with the old heavy poorly shaped pigskin football he could kick 50 yards.



Johnnie Middleton, the super signal caller of that 1905 team and a genius at calling the right play and making execution flawless, was the Engineer of that great team. And there was "Teddy" Roosevelt, a giant tackle and also a fine baseball player. Gus Larson, the big Swede, and "Herc" Smith, so called because he resembled the Hercules of mythology. He could do anything needed in football or track. Elmer Armstrong, a great halfback, and Ed Snow, the best center in the entire Northwest. Later on came Rodney Small, probably the finest all-around athlete ever at Idaho. In football he could run, punt, place kick, or play a terrific defense. In baseball, play any position, basketball offense or defense. Then Jas Montgomery who held the 100, 220, and 220 hurdle records for years. One could fill a book of the surprising things these men accomplished for Alma Mater. How could any growing lad watch men of such caliber and not become inspired to try to emulate their deeds?

And that is what brought it all about. Prior to 1913 Moscow High had tried to get something going, but there was no place to practice or play the games, no coach, no money for equipment or organization to set these things up. Baseball and track and basketball required comparably little money. The kids bought their own suits and shoes and supplies. But it takes money to make football go as many colleges are finding out today. But by 1913 there were some eager beavers arriving in high school who thought football a way of life.

Then it happened! There was a big shakeup in the Moscow Schools. A new superintendent, Mr. Chas. Henry, and a new high school principal, John H. Rich, along with a group of new teachers came on to turn things around and generate real enthusiasm for our schools. One of the first things Mr. Rich did was look up all the bigger boys, some of whom had dropped out of school. At a special dinner where he picked up the tab at the Moscow Hotel, he pleaded with us all to help him build an athletic program, as well as to improve the academic levels of our school. He

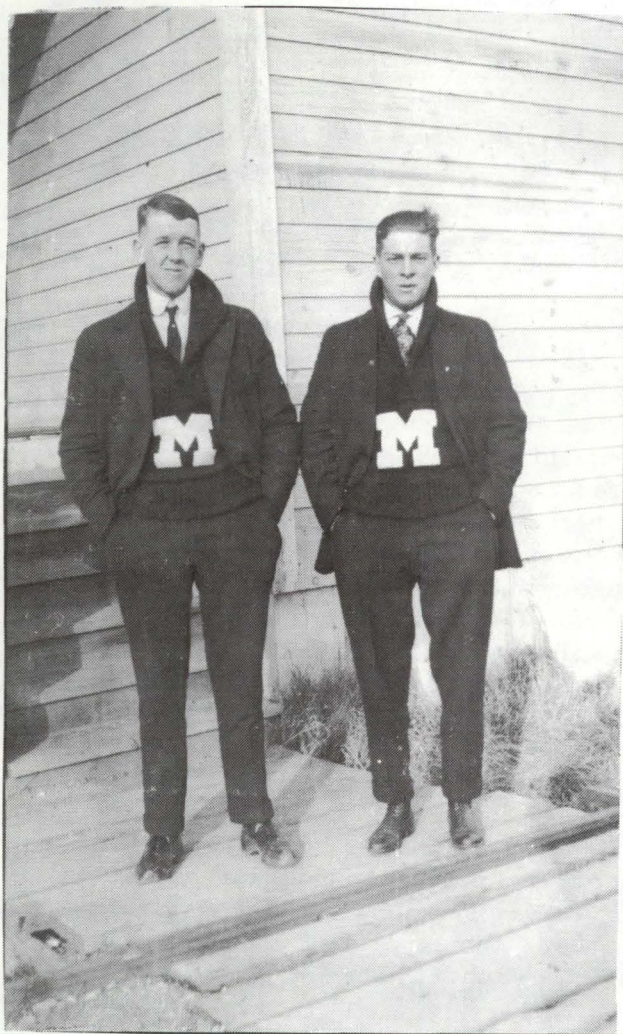
promised us a coach, new football suits, a student body with dues and financial support--the works, and he made good on every word.

Although the Spalding Company could not deliver our suits that fall we managed to get together enough equipment and buy some footballs. Albert Knutson, a former star fullback at Idaho, came in as math teacher and coach of athletics. Everything fell into place. We had only a short time to practice when a group of alumni led by Jack Browne offered to play us a game. This became more of a scrimmage than game but helped us to jell quickly as a team. Before long the Sophs at the Varsity wanted a game as warm up for their game with the Freshmen. This was quite a game and we were again successful by 17 to 12. By now we were beginning to execute like a real team, so when Lewiston High offered us a game at Lewiston we accepted eagerly. But again money was short for transportation and meals, etc. So we cried for help and Geo. Loomis, father of Dudley Loomis, a player, and Ward Gano (by now a successful farmer south of town) volunteered to take us down in their cars. By returning right after the game, no meals would be required so to Lewiston we went for our first big game for Moscow High. The Lewiston grade at that time was really steep and a test for a car. Something different from today's perfectly engineered highway.

We met Lewiston on the Normal School field and in a hard fought game came away with a 0-0 tie game. A couple of weeks later a game was scheduled with Oakesdale High at the Sixth Street Fair Grounds Field in Moscow. By this time Coach Knutson's fine coaching was beginning to pay off and we sent Oakesdale home after a 35 to 0 trimming. In this game our lightning-footed little quarterback, Cece Ryan, electrified the crowd by tearing off large chunks of yardage and open field punt returns. Our final game was a return game with Lewiston at Moscow. This time we came up winners to the tune of 9-0. A



touchdown by "Corney" Cornelson and field goal by "Swede" Fallquist did it. And that was the first regular scheduled football season for Moscow High. We had really started to roll and could hardly wait to start the 1915 season.



George Fallquist (left), and Clyde "Buck" Hunter

When the 1915 season opened we were reinforced by two seasoned players: "Moose" Witbeck, a big tackle from North Central in Spokane, and Walt Morelock, a hard-hitting fullback from the Oakesdale team which we had defeated the year before.

We opened against Colfax High in Colfax. Resplendent in new red and white uniforms with tan pants and fine equipment, we really looked and acted like a good team. In a hard fought game we were winners 7 to 6. Ryan again, the smallest boy on the field, was the star scoring the touchdown. We then scheduled a game with the W.S.C. Preps on Roger Field in Pullman. Several of the Prep players were of Varsity caliber but we gave them a tough battle before going down to defeat 6 to 3.

About that time a very sad accident occurred at the University in Moscow. An inexperienced student eager to help build a good team at the U. was in a hard head-on tackle and suffered a broken neck and died right there on the field. Never have I seen morale so low in Moscow. When Idaho meet W.S.C. a week later, they lost 41 to 0. Practically every one in town was ready to quit playing football. Of course the Varsity had scheduled games which could not be dropped, but the parents of the high school team felt we should drop football at least for the balance of the season. The squad finally agreed. So basketball practice started early that year. But the morale for all sports remained low for several years.

The personnel of that 1914 team was as follows: Captain Bill Bolles and Chuck Gerlough tackles, Dudley Loomis and George Fallquist guards, Lynn Forrest center, Conrad Ostroot and Fay (Cat) Hartman ends, Cece Ryan quarterback, Clayton Keane and Louis "Boot" Shuh halfbacks, and Boyd "Corney" Cornelson fullback. Subs: Fritz Stewart, Hod Decker, Mel Beddall, Charlie Jabbora, Gene Settle, Harold Collins, Howard "Drom" Campbell, and Teed Heath. Albert Knutson Coach. This was the squad that started a fine sports program at good old Moscow High. Increasingly the program improved over the years and has recorded many fine records that put M.H.S. at the top of schools in their class and at the same time brought out the very best character and academic talents of the entire student body.





Dudley Loomis, won letters in Baseball, Basketball and Football. He was killed in an aeroplane accident at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, in World War I. The Moscow Legion Post is named after him.

Unlimited credit must go to Mr. Chas. Henry as superintendent for a complete restructuring of the academic system by hiring top-notch teachers and installing a first-class curriculum. While doing this he never lost sight of the need to challenge and excite the students. Learning became something eagerly sought for and proudly acclaimed.

John H. Rich was the finest principal I ever met. A brilliant student at Iowa and a staunch advocate of clean sports and strong bodies housing a well trained brain. He had an exceptional personality that made every student admire him and want to follow his orders. He could read our minds like a book. Discipline was never a problem. Two very fine great men!

George Fallquist is now retired and lives in Santa Rosa, California

#### COW FOR SALE.

Owing to my gaining a position as clerk and general overseer in a large store in the city, I will sell at my residence in township 38, range 5 west, according to government survey, one crushed raspberry colored cow, age six years. She is a good milkster and is not afraid of the cars or anything else. She is a cow of undaunted courage, and gives milk frequently. To a man who does not fear death in any form she would be a great boon. She is very much attached to her home at present, by means of a trace chain, but she will be sold to anyone who will agree to treat her right. She is one fourth shorthorn and three fourths hyena. Purchaser need not be identified. I will also throw in a double barreled shotgun which goes with her. In May she generally goes away somewhere for a week or two and returns with a tall red calf with long, wobbly legs. Her name is Rose, and I would prefer to sell.

BILL PLUMMER

Moscow Mirror  
4 March 1887, p. 3



## THE UN-COVERED WAGON

by Alma Lauder-Taylor Keeling

(Part 1)

In 1975, Mrs. Alma Taylor-Lauder Keeling, second generation of Moscow pioneers published a limited edition of her memoirs under the title, "The Un-covered Wagon." There have been requests that this work be made more available to the public, and the Publications Committee has recommended that these reminiscences be published serially in the Latah Legacy. We herewith present part 1 of these memoirs - which may be slightly edited to save space. Copies of the original publication may be found at the Moscow-Latah Public Library, the Latah County Historical Society, and the University of Idaho Library (the latter copy does not circulate, but may be read on the premises).

## CHAPTER 1: GOODBYE, OLD HOUSE!

As I write this I feel very pensive tonight, for an old historic landmark has just been bulldozed down to make way for progress! But Progress can sometime carry with it a bit of pain.

Today I drove out to our Latah Nursing Home (recently rechristened Latah Convalescent Center) to see what I could see. I had heard that my Grandfather Taylor's pioneer home next to the Nursing Home was being torn down, and I wanted to see it just once more. I was too late! All I saw was a flat, muddy spot where the home had stood. The old willows surrounding the house--which Grandfather himself had planted--have been left standing, and I presume will be allowed to live out their lifetime unless some ambitious architect of the future decides they cramp his style. Then they, too, must go!

I picked up a large, flat, native rock from the mud patch and brought it home in the back of my car--a sort of echo from the past! I knew this rock had been either a part of the foundation of the house which my Scotch-Irish stone-mason Grandfather had laid up, or else a rock from the fireplace in that front parlor which I remember so well from my childhood. Whenever I have driven out to see friends at the Nursing Home, I have marvelled that the old house was still standing after all these years. The Nursing Home was built on a part of my Grandfather Taylor's original homestead of 1871.

I had read in our local paper that the county commissioners had purchased the property next to the Nursing Home--to some day build an addition to the Home, I surmised, knowing they always have a long waiting list. But it was a real shock to me when I learned that the old house was being demolished!

How many of my early childhood memories gather around that rambling, white clapboard home of my mother and her pioneer parents! The outside had been scarcely recognizable (to me) for a number of years, for the long porches on two sides of it had been torn down and the outside clapboard covered with brown insulating siding. Also, it had been made into a duplex for rental purposes inside.



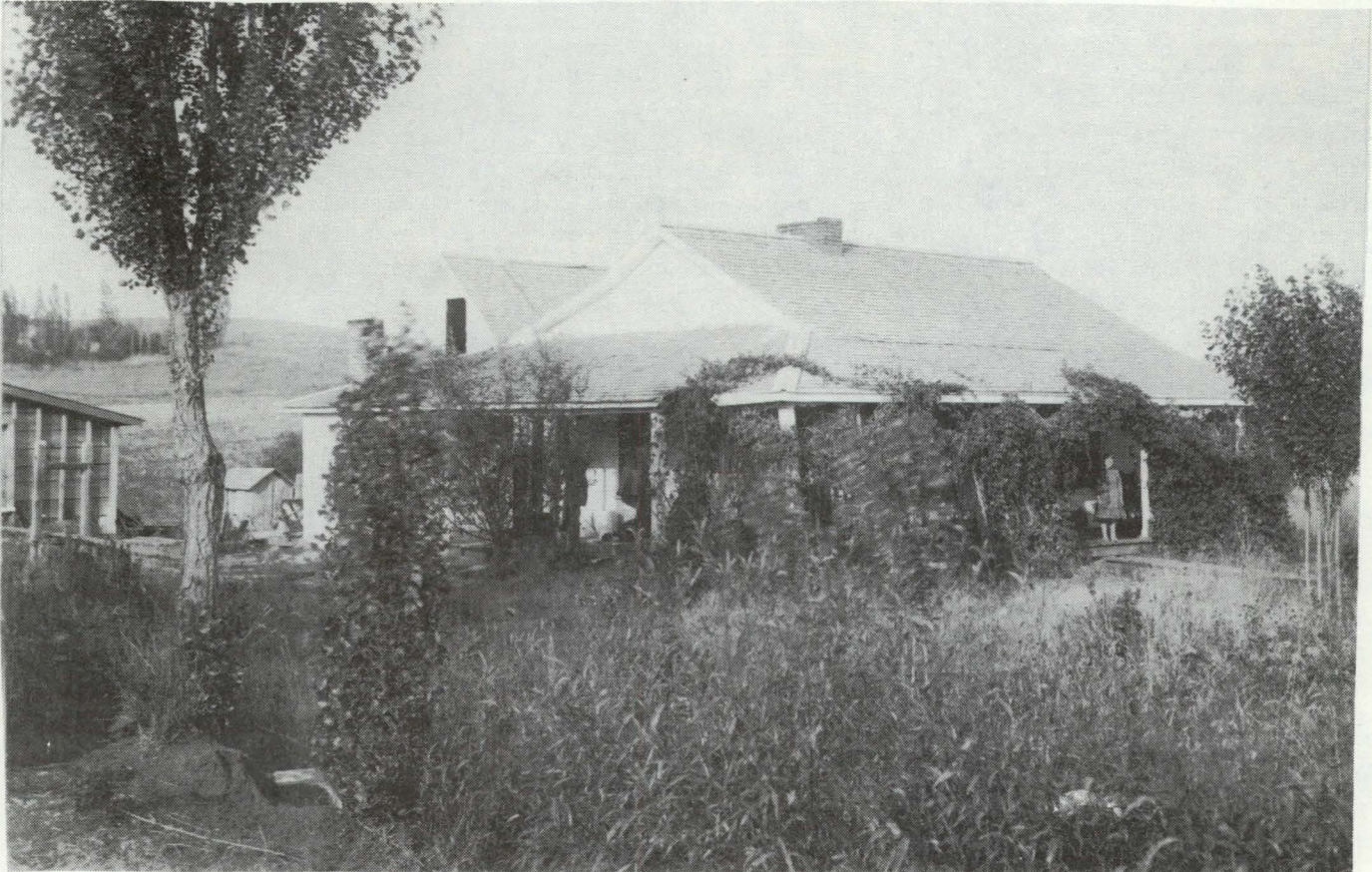
A few years ago I was emboldened to knock on the front door of this house, and a nice little lady answered. At her inquiring look, I introduced myself and told her this had been my pioneer Grandfather's home (and my Mother's) around which hung so many memories of my childhood, and that I had, for a long time, experienced a nostalgic desire to see it again from the inside. She graciously invited me in.

"It looks familiar," I said. "Behind that west wall is a stone fireplace built by my Grandfather, and later replaced by a parlor stove." She agreed that she had been told there was a fireplace somewhere. Pointing ahead, I said, "That step-down led to Grandmother's long kitchen where I have eaten many a delicious meal as a child." She invited me to step down.

Walking the length of the kitchen westward, I said, "This other step-down was from Grandmother's spare bedroom where I always left my wraps when I came to see her." She agreed that it was still a bedroom.

Walking back eastward from the way I had come, I pointed to a closed door and said, "This door also led to a bedroom." She said yes. Near that door was another closed door, and I remarked that this door led to an upstairs bedroom in the attic, and she said I was right. "And that door next to it, down the hall, led to an underground dirt cellar where Grandmother kept her pans of milk, and the vegetables from her big garden buried in sand for the winter." She was aware of the cellar under the house, now never used because of modern refrigeration.

Although the outside of the house had been so changed, I was glad to learn that the interior was basically the same as I remembered it as a child.



The William Taylor House



Obviously, the flagstone court just off the kitchen on the north had now been made into a room to go with the north half of the duplex. Here on this court of my childhood had been the "pitcher pump" to the well below, so handy right off the kitchen. I well remember the fun of priming the pump and bringing up a pail of water for Grandmother on occasion. (We still use the expression, "priming the pump," but I wonder how many young people of this modern generation know what we are referring to!)

Just beyond this court on the north was a small bedroom, and another tiny bedroom (just big enough for a bed and dresser) opening off from that. I assume that these two were for guests and their children, and that Grandfather had added them when he invited his son, Tom, to come and live with them and inherit the home place at their death. He had also added their own private sitting room and bedroom, and an east porch where he could sit and enjoy the shade in his declining years. They all cooked and ate together in the big kitchen, a nice arrangement for the two old folks "getting along."

I do not know when this pioneer home was built, but it must have been as early as 1876 or 1877. In mentioning this approximate date in the presence of an old timer, himself interested in pioneer history, he disagreed with me rather emphatically, saying, "No such thing! The railroad didn't even come in here until 1885!"

Yes, I know. That was the year my Mother and Father became engaged to be married, after Dad had quit laying tracks from Colfax to Moscow to bring in the O. R. and N. (Oregon Railroad and Navigation Company, later to become Oregon, Washington Railroad and Navigation Company, and still later the Union Pacific). "But," I reminded my old friend, "who said all the lumber had to be brought here by train in those early days? I have read in one reminiscent autobiography that the lumber to build his house here was hauled by wagon from Walla Walla!"

However, the "50th Anniversary Historic edition" of our local paper, the Daily Idahonian, printed in September, 1961, had this to say about sawmills and lumber for the region.

The first sawmill north of the Snake River was operated by Steward and Beach and was located six miles northeast of the present site of Moscow. [It doesn't tell us what year this mill came, nor how long it operated.] The second mill, located five or six miles east of town, was known as the Moore Mill. It furnished rough lumber for the homesteaders' simple houses built around 1876. The next mill in line of succession was brought in by ox-drawn wagon from Montana by R.H. Barton. This mill operated for two years, beginning in 1878. Most of the lumber used in Moscow construction came from this mill. . . . The first livery stables and the first hotel (The Barton House, located where the present Moscow Hotel now stands) were all built from this lumber.

That big, old, unabridged dictionary-sized book entitled History of North Idaho, now available at our City Library, records among the "firsts" of this region, William Taylor as "first contractor, stone mason and builder." So it is logical to assume that one of the first homes he built was his own, as soon as lumber was available in 1875 and 1876. With a family as large as his, this was imperative, for they must have outgrown the original log cabin long before.



## CHAPTER 2: THAT TERRIBLE DIPHTHERIA EPIDEMIC

Yesterday I drove out to our lot at the cemetery and copied this from the stone which marks our own first grave there: "George Taylor - born September 10, 1871 - died January 28, 1881."

I happen to know from my own Mother, who nursed him through his last illness, that he died in the upstairs bedroom of this same house which has just gone down the drain.

"Black diphtheria" had been sweeping the country from 1877 to 1880, and one chronicler says that fifty percent of Moscow's children died in this epidemic! The L. Has-kins family buried three small children in less than three weeks! Almost every family here lost one or more. The little boy, George, born in Walla Walla on the way to the log cabin in 1871, also fell victim to the disease.

It was logical that dependable fifteen-year-old Minnie, scarcely more than a child herself, should be isolated with him as his nurse.

Little George was burning up with fever, and piteously begging for a drink of water. But "medical science" (so-called) in that day had decreed "no water in case of fever." In light of our present knowledge which decrees the exact opposite, this is hard to understand. Did they assume that cold water taken into a hot body would crack something--like pouring cold water into a hot glass?

It just about broke his little nurse's heart to have to stand helplessly by and deny his cries for a drink of water! One day as she left the room to pick up something her Mother had left for her at the foot of the stairs, she returned to find the boy in his bare feet before an open window, shoveling snow into his mouth with both hands! Of course, he died, and I suppose "medical science" would have said, "It's the water."

This was the first death this sensitive little Minnie had ever seen, and this her baby brother to whom she had been a little Mother since he was a tiny infant! It was hard to take. But such was a common occurrence among the pioneers, and our cemetery is dotted with little graves from this epidemic and others which swept the country a few years later. There are three such graves in our own lot!

I assume that George's Father and his two older brothers, Will and Abe, with pick and shovel dug his grave in the frozen, snow-covered ground. I assume, too, that it was a rough home-made coffin that held the small body, for there were no mortuaries here then, and children all over the settlement were dying every day.

But little Minnie herself did not escape! She, too, came down with the dread disease. She told me that her hair all came out from the terrible fever and came in again in ringlets all over her head! I have heard others who knew her in the early days say she was a beautiful girl--and indeed she must have been, with her expressive blue eyes and her head covered with brown curls.

Once when I was commenting about her eyes and wishing out loud that she had bequeathed the same to me instead of the nondescript gray, she laughed and said that old Mrs. Deakin (the Irish Catholic Deakins for whom our Deakin Avenue is named) once remarked to a friend when discussing her, "The two eyes of her are beautiful to behold!" (As long as I knew her they always were, but I am sure even more so when she was a young, bright-eyed girl.)



All this sickness and death took place in the old home just demolished, but, of course, it was very new then. However, this was not the first home my Mother lived in when she came here as a child pioneer in 1871.

### CHAPTER 3: "WESTWARD HO!"

When Mother was but five years old, her Father, William Taylor, living on the outskirts of Chicago, heard the call of the Far West and the oft-repeated advice, "Go West, young man." But he was scarcely a young man at the time he decided to cast his lot with those early pioneers crossing the Plains to a yet untried country. He was, in fact, past fifty years old, already with a young married daughter and six other children! On the face of it, only an adventurous spirit of great courage would even have considered it. But William Taylor's "pioneer spirit," which had brought him from his native Ireland at the age of eighteen, with his family, now began to well up again! Such a small matter as a wife and seven children (with the eighth on the way) was not to deter him in the least when his mind was made up.

At the age of our average high school student, William had been trained as a stone mason in his native Ireland. But he had been hearing so much about a land of opportunity called America that he became obsessed with a desire to see for himself. So he saved his money and at only eighteen bought a ticket on a small boat headed this way over a traditionally "stormy Atlantic," bringing with him his trusty trowel with which he hoped to have a part in building the new homes which he heard were springing up all over the United States. I still have that trowel, well worn now, which I someday hope to donate to the Pioneer Historical Museum. I also have his old wooden steamer trunk with its enormous key and its iron handholds at each end. This chest crossed the ocean three times, as he once returned to Ireland to attend to some little errand for his adopted country which his daughter (my Mother) was hazy about. -

With a little help from Dad's hammer and Mother's paint brush, this steamer trunk became my "hope chest" when I was in high school. (My teasing older brother called it my "hopeless chest.")

Grandfather came west with a caravan of wagons in the spring of 1871, seeking a location for his future home. Some of the caravan left them in northern California, but others, obviously not interested in what was then an arid-looking country, pressed on. They passed through what is now our southern Idaho, and here others of the caravan remained. But, William Taylor was still not satisfied. Although from his boyhood a builder and stone mason, he must also have had some "farmer blood" coursing through his veins, for a farmer he turned out to be! So, with a few other seeking souls he went on until he came via Walla Walla to what is now our Moscow.

I myself once heard him say that when he looked on this fertile valley with its two-foot high bunch grass waving in the breeze, its beautiful purple mountains in the distance, and its two crystal streams flowing through the valley, he was intrigued by it all. But when he put down his shovel and turned up this rich, black loam, he said to his fellow-travellers, "This is the place for me!" Some, no doubt, went on, but William Taylor had found his future home. He staked out his homestead and made the proper arrangements with the government--and on this same homestead he died many years later in the home which he himself had built--the one which has just been demolished.



I would be interested now in knowing who, if any, of the caravan with which he was traveling remained here also, but that is too much for me to ask. I have always understood that my Grandfather was the fourth, or at the most the fifth, white man to settle here. My parents often spoke of George Tomer, Duncan Cameron, Bill Frazier, Angus McKenzie, and Henry McGregor, all pioneers of 1871. It is possible that at least some of this number helped William Taylor fell logs and build his log cabin so that he could send for his family to come to him. It is also very certain that Grandfather, being a stone mason and builder himself, helped many of these earliest pioneers build their own homes.

One chronicler has said, "The Paradise Valley settler was full of energy and his farm was phenomenally fertile. In one brief decade the character of the immediate surroundings was totally changed. The teepee of the Indian was swept away to make room for the business house, the schoolhouse, and the church."

When the log cabin, which was to be his family's home, was completed, William Taylor sent for his wife, Priscilla, and their children. They were to take the train as far as Ogden, Utah, the terminus of the railroad "out West" at that time. From there they were to come on by wagon to Walla Walla, Washington, then a thriving little town--but still over one hundred and thirty-five miles from what was to be their future home! Husband and Father would meet them in Ogden to pilot them to Walla Walla and their future home in the log cabin awaiting them.

The oldest daughter, Elizabeth, was then a recent bride of 21, so she and her young husband came along to look after Priscilla and her other six children. At Ogden the groom bought a large wagon and team of work horses, and the journey was begun. How long it took them to make that trip to Walla Walla, I never thought to ask. But it must have been many weary weeks over rough and often muddy roads in what is usually rainy September. But what a thrill it was to a bunch of eager children from the city of Chicago to feel that now they, too, were "pioneers!"

I have sometimes tried to visualize that long journey. I can see them stretched out at night under the stars, cooking by the side of the road for hungry children, and protecting themselves along the way as best they could from the inevitable September rains. How they ever piled ten people into those two wagons with all their necessary bedding, clothing, cooking necessities, etc., I should like to know!

Once when Mother and I were visiting a friend in Los Angeles, she--knowing Mother's pioneer background--suggested that we might like to see "The Covered Wagon," a full-length silent movie then being shown at the Chinese Theater in Hollywood. It sounded interesting, so we went. During a short pause I whispered to Mother, "Was yours a covered wagon?" I'll never forget the tone of voice in which she answered me, "No! It wasn't even covered!"

It didn't take much imagination to guess that this long and tedious journey was not all picnic! Certainly it was not for Priscilla Taylor, about to give birth to her eighth and last child. (Mother's birthday, September third, came while on this trip when she passed from five years old into six.) They reached Walla Walla just in time to beat the stork! Here, William Taylor arranged for housing, and here baby George was born.

After a few weeks when it was determined that all was well with Mother and child, they proceeded on their journey to the log cabin awaiting them in then non-existent Moscow.



Taking the two older boys with him (aged twelve and fourteen) and loading up his own wagon with supplies needed for the winter months ahead, he piloted them to their future home--while the young bride and groom chaperoned Priscilla and her other five children, now including the newborn infant.

Sometimes I almost shudder when I think of what was involved in all this! Taking a large family and a tiny baby a week's journey from the nearest town, where there would be no doctor, no drugstore, no grocery store, nothing! And to what? To a rough log cabin (overcrowded with such a family) with muslin drawn over the openings for windows and a thick old comforter for a door--and a cold North Idaho winter just around the corner! (It was by now nearly November, and that is usually the beginning of winter weather for us here.) But this was the stuff our pioneer forefathers were made of. Sometimes they won; sometimes they lost; but they went on. When I think of what these men, women, and children went through to "carve a home in the wilderness," that we, their descendants, might live in approximate luxury, I am truly thankful to God that I come of such hardy stock! And I am often ashamed of my own generation of "softies" who cannot put up with the slightest inconvenience without complaining!

For these pioneers of the 1870's there were no electric appliances, and, of course, no electricity; no gas or electric ranges and thermostatically controlled heat; no automatic washers and dryers; no steaming hot water from the tap; no wash-and-wear clothes; no cozy electric blankets to snuggle under on a below-zero night; no wall-to-wall carpeting; no fresh fruit and vegetables at the supermarket the year around; no telephone; no doctors, nurses, or hospitals if one became desperately ill; and certainly no radios or television to connect them with the outside world.

But there was always the tub and washboard over which one could break one's back pecking out a washing for a large family; also the harsh cakes of home-made soap (made from animal fat and the lye from ashes); always the blisters from hand-wringing a big wash; always the carrying of heavy pails of water from the spring or creek; always the slow heating of water on the small cookstove in five gallon coal oil cans with the one side cut out; always the semi-darkness of home-made candles when more light was needed than the coal oil lamp; always the back-freezing fireplace to keep warm by; and the stones heated in the fireplace, and well wrapped, to take to bed on a bitter cold night when the fire burned low! But this was pioneer life, and was expected. For these pioneers, this was all they had--or could expect to have--for years to come!

Such primitive living was what my little Pennsylvania Dutch Grandmother, Priscilla Mitchell, came to when she married an adventurous, but stable, young Scotch-Irishman from County Armagh of the Emerald Isle. Yet in all the years I knew her I never once heard her complain of her lot, or indicate in any way that she felt sorry for herself. She also had the intrepid spirit of the pioneer, and her home and family were her life. In this home her husband was the acknowledged head of the house and his word was law. He made all the decisions and his authority was never questioned.

I, myself, have lived on a homestead miles from civilization twice in my life, and I am really thankful for the experience. Once as a child in our own Moscow Mountains, only eighteen miles from town, but a day's journey with a hack and team climbing mountain roads, and on my own homestead down in the sagebrush country of eastern Oregon. I have had a little taste of homestead life and having to "make do," but I always knew I had a comfortable modern home to come back to. So these times in isolated places were more like a fun vacation for me. I really enjoyed "roughing it" for a few months. But real pioneer life was something else.



Speaking of the things our pioneers didn't have, I had to smile when I read a facetious little article quoted from the Presbyterian Survey of a few years back. The author was speaking of the Pilgrim Fathers at the time, but his "poem" is just as apropos to our own pioneer forefathers of the Far West. "Here," says the author, "is a partial list of what they didn't have:

Planes o'er head and presliced bread,  
 Electric heaters and batter beaters,  
 Candy bars and motor cars,  
 Neon signs and party lines,  
 Homogenized milk, synthetic silk,  
 Prefab houses, dacron blouses,  
 Natural gas and safety glass,  
 Ray machines, antihistamines,  
 Vacuum cleaners, radar screeners,  
 Automatic dryers, milkfed fryers,  
 'Mycin drugs and spray for bugs,  
 Beauty shops and frozen chops,  
 Electronic eyes, Eskimo pies,  
 Ballpoint pens, trifocal lens,  
 Nuclear fission, television,  
 Nervous tension, old age pensions!  
 They lacked these things,  
 The Pilgrims old,  
 But they had faith,  
 And that's what told.

So, also, our pioneers. If they didn't all have religious faith, such as the Pilgrims had--although most of them did--they at least had faith in themselves and in the land to which they had come. And from their faith, we their descendents, are now reaping a rich reward!

After this pioneer history was allegedly finished, a friend in Spokane - Raymond K. Harris, retired band teacher in the Spokane schools - discovered two very interesting carbon-copy articles about both William Taylor and Wylie A. Lauder in his file of 40 years ago (when he was a student at the University of Idaho). Next was a search to find the source of them! His Spokane Library and our University of Idaho Library both discovered the book from which these very authentic-sounding histories were taken - a book published by a Chicago Company in 1899 entitled, An Illustrated History of Idaho. Since they give some details I was not familiar with, I add them to this manuscript about my parents and grandparents. The biographical sketch of my Grandfather, William Taylor, follows immediately. For the sketch of my Father, Wylie A. Lauder, see Chapter 17.

#### WILLIAM TAYLOR

For twenty-eight years William Taylor has resided in Latah county, and is therefore one of the honored pioneer farmers of the locality. He has not only witnessed the entire growth and development of this section of the state, but has ever borne his part in the work of progress, and his name should be enduringly inscribed on the pages of its history. A native of the Emerald Isle, he was born in county Armagh, Ireland, April 15, 1820, his parents being Joseph and Elizabeth (Rankin) Taylor. In 1840 the father came to America, bringing with him his wife and seven children.



They made the voyage on the sailing vessel Fairfield, and were five weeks on the passage. They took up their residence on Bonus prairie, Boone county, Illinois, near where the city of Belvidere now stands, the father purchasing forty acres of land, from which he developed a fine farm. The city of Chicago was then but a little muddy village and the country was largely unimproved. Both he and his wife were members of the Presbyterian church, were highly respected people, and each lived to the age of seventy-three years.

William Taylor, their eldest child, was educated in his native land and learned the mason's trade, serving a five years' apprenticeship. After becoming a resident of Illinois he followed that pursuit, doing much of the work in his line in that early day both in Belvidere and Rockford. Many of the substantial structures of those towns still stand in evidence of his excellent handiwork. He was married in Illinois, to Miss Priscilla Mitchell, a native of Pennsylvania and a daughter of Thomas Mitchell of that state.

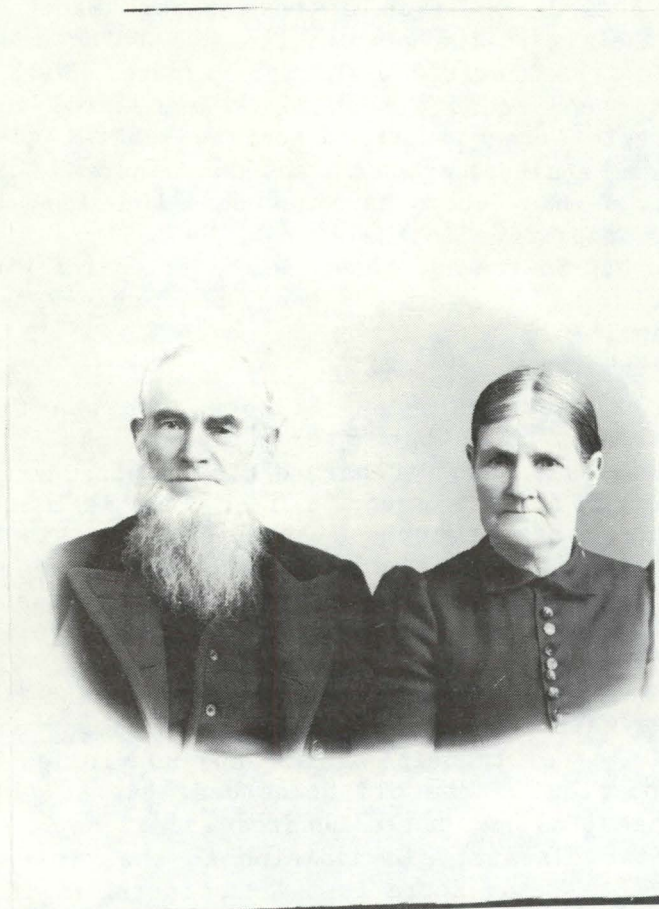
In 1871 Mr. Taylor determined to seek a location in the new and undeveloped west. He first made his way to California, later traveled through Oregon and then came to Idaho. Here he believed he had found the richest farming land in the United States, and the unsettled condition of the country made it possible for him to take his choice of a claim in the vast region. He selected the farm upon which he now resides, it being then covered with rich verdure. With a spade he turned the sod in several places and found a rich black loam, from four to five feet deep. There was also a little stream on the place and several good springs, and he believed that everything could be grown in abundance here. Time has proved the wisdom of his judgment, as his labors have resulted in making this one of the finest and richest farming properties in the state. He built a log house and then wrote for his wife to join him in the new home. With her children she traveled to Ogden, Utah, where Mr. Taylor met them with a team, thus conveying them to the new farm in the wilds of Idaho.

During those first years he had very little money. He had to go to Walla Walla for supplies, and for four years Mr. Silcott, who ran the ferry at Lewiston, trusted him for his ferry bill, but after a time he was able to do some building for the kind ferryman, and thus discharged his indebtedness and received twenty-five dollars additional for his labor. Mr. Taylor is a man of great industry, energy, diligence and practical common sense, and in his undertakings he prospered. He improved the place and added to it until he has six hundred and forty acres of the splendid farming land of the district. His son, Thomas J., grew up to be a capable young business man and became associated with W. A. Lauder, a son-in-law of our subject, in the manufacture of brick. They met with splendid success in the business, did contracting and building and furnished all the brick used in Moscow. They erected many of the finest public buildings, including the State University. In order to help his son and son-in-law in their business reverses, he sold a portion of the old homestead, but still has left one hundred acres of the old homestead and three hundred and twenty acres of timber land in the mountains, not far distant. In addition to the fine springs of pure water which he has on his homestead, there is a rich mineral spring which has fine medicinal properties, being a curative for a number of diseases. Charles W. McCurdy, of the chemical department of the University of Idaho, has made a most careful analysis of this mineral earth showing its elements and properties, and in the hands of an enterprising man the spring might be made a most profitable business undertaking, but Mr. Taylor is now too far advanced in years to undertake a new work of this character.



The children of Mr. and Mrs. Taylor are Thomas J., now sheriff of Lemhi county, Idaho, and a prominent young man; Edward, who was graduated from West Point Military Academy and is now an officer in the regular army, serving his country in Manila; Elizabeth, wife of Mr. Clayton, of Moscow; and Minnie, wife of W. A. Lauder. The other children are now deceased.

In early life Mr. Taylor became a Master Mason, in Illinois. In politics he was formerly a Republican, but differing with the party on the money question, he now gives his support to the men and measures that, in his judgment, stand for the best interests of the country. He is a gentleman of broad intelligence, of sterling worth and unassailable reputation, and he and his estimable wife are numbered among the honored pioneers of northern Idaho, -- pioneers to whose unselfish efforts this section of the state largely owes its prosperity and progress.



William and Priscilla Taylor



## BOOK REVIEWS

Idaho for the Curious: A Guide. Cort Conley. Cambridge, Id: Backeddy Books, Box 301, Cambridge, 83610. 1982. 704 p. Illustrated. Maps. Cloth. \$14.95 plus \$1.50 postage if ordering by mail. Available locally at Bookpeople of Moscow. Also available in hardcover, signed and numbered by the author. \$25.00. Mail order only.

For residents of Latah County, Idaho for the Curious is a useful guide to some of the reasons we live here. In Latah and its four contiguous counties--Benewah, Shoshone, Clearwater, and Nez Perce--are: "The highest straight axis gravity dam in the western hemisphere"; two Indian reservations; the first capital of Idaho and its only seaport; northern Idaho's only state scenic highway route; four national forests; the edge of the Bitterroots; and, on the western side, the edge of the Palouse.

Conley, sticking close to state and federal highways, guides the reader on a tour of all of Idaho. In the larger towns he points out historic houses and buildings. For nearly every community he gives the derivation of the town name and, often an anecdote of local history. He is just as ready to tell you the story of the great forest fires of 1910 as about the Steamboat Jean rolling on her side. In the Preface he suggests that it is likely that he "sins by inclusion, rather than by exclusion," a thought that is supported by the substantial weight of the book. It is these stories, however, that makes this guidebook a worthy addition to the shelf holding Vardis Fisher's WPA guide. For here, strung upon the highways of Idaho, is its history--presented in relation to the site rather than the chronology.

It is unfortunate that some minor errors cast doubt on the whole of that history. For example, the more commonly accepted version of Moscow's founding and naming does not give as much emphasis to A. A. Lieuallen as Conley does. This may seem to be a result of the drift toward anecdote over fact. Yet the decision of the Potlatch Lumber Company to build a mill and town on the Palouse River rather than just a mill in Moscow is represented by Conley as a matter of right-of-way costs. A more anecdotal version, featuring the colorful Bill Deary, is that the availability of water to float logs was a primary concern.

Well illustrated, usually with early photographs, and accompanied by an Official Idaho Transportation Department highway map, Idaho for the Curious certainly lives up to its title; and, as well, is for those--like residents--who are more than just curious.

Terry Abraham

Biographical Note: Terry Abraham, archivist and editor, is a resident of rural Latah County.



## TEN GOOD THINGS TO KNOW.

1. That salt will curdle new milk; hence in preparing milk porridge, gravies, etc., salt should not be added until the dish is prepared.

2. That clear boiling water will remove tea stains and many fruit stains. Pour the water through the stain and thus prevent it spreading over the fabric.

3. That ripe tomatoes will remove ink and other stains from white clothes; also from the hands.

4. That a tablespoonful of turpentine boiled with white clothes will aid in the whitening process.

5. That boiled starch is much improved by the addition of a little sperm, salt or gum arabic dissolved.

6. That beeswax and salt will make rusty flatirons as clean and smooth as glass. Tie a lump of wax in a rag and keep it for that purpose. When the irons are hot rub them first with the wax rag, then scour with a paper or cloth sprinkled with salt.

7. That blue ointment and kerosene mixed in equal proportions and applied to the bedsteads is an unfailing bedbug remedy, as a coat of whitewash is for the walls of a log house.

8. That kerosene will soften boots and shoes that have been hardened by water and render them as pliable as new.

9. That kerosene will make tin tea-kettles as bright as new. Saturate a woolen rag and rub with it. It will also remove stains from varnished furniture.

10. That cool rainwater and soda will remove machine grease from washable fabrics.

## Picture credits:

Cover.....Mrs Alma Keeling

p. 3, 5.....Univ. of Idaho Library

p. 11, 12....Mr. George Fallquist

p. 14 .....Latah County Historical  
Society

p. 22.....Mrs Alma Keeling



# ANNOUNCING

*A GREAT GOOD COUNTRY:*  
*A Guide to Historic Moscow and Latah County*  
by  
Lillian Woodworth Otness

A Fall Publication of the Latah County Historical Society

*A Great Good Country* represents five years of research through archives, maps, photos, books, oral histories and other records by Otness and a committee of Historical Society members. In addition, Carolyn Gravelle, John B. Miller and Richard Waldbauer served as contributing authors. The final product is an indispensable front-seat traveling companion for tourists. County residents will find it an educational source of local history. Librarians and researchers will see it as a valuable reference tool containing accurate details on the history and architecture of 363 sites, including 17 on the National Register of Historic Places.

*The Guide* is divided into 13 tours: The Genesee Valley; Troy, Deary and Bovill; Kendrick and Juliaetta; Potlatch and the mining regions; Mountain View Road and Robinson Park, and eight tours of Moscow. Twenty-one maps guide tourists to their locations. Concise histories of Latah County and of each of its towns introduce various sections. The book is illustrated with historic photographs and original drawings, is subject indexed, and has an extensive Latah County bibliography.

*A Great Good Country* — \$8.00 for Latah County Historical Society members and libraries; \$10.00 for non-members.

*Watch for an order form in the mail this fall!*



LATAH COUNTY  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
110 South Adams St.  
Moscow, Idaho 83843

Non-profit Organ.  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Permit No. 161  
Moscow, Idaho

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

In 1968 interested individuals organized the Latah County Historical Society to collect and preserve materials connected with the history of Latah County and to provide further knowledge of the history and tradition of the area. Every person, young or old, who is interested in the history of Latah County and who would like to assist in its preservation and interpretation is cordially invited to become a member. Subscription to this journal and a discount on books published by the Society are included in membership dues. Dues for the various classes of membership are as follows:

|            | Friend  | Contributing | Sustaining | Sponsoring | Benefactor |
|------------|---------|--------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Individual | \$ 5-10 | \$11-25      | \$26- 50   | \$ 51-100  | \$101-499  |
| Family     | 9-15    | 16-40        | 41-100     | 101-200    | 201-499    |
| Business   | 25-35   | 36-75        | 76-150     | 151-300    | 301-499    |

A "500 Club" is reserved for contributions of \$500 or more. Privileges are identical for all classes; the higher dues represent a much needed donation to help the Society's work. Dues are tax deductible.

The Society's services include conducting oral histories, publishing local history monographs, maintaining a local history/genealogy research library and the county museum, as well as educational outreach. The Society wishes to acquire objects, documents, books, photographs, diaries, and other materials relating to the history of Latah County. These are added to the collections and made available to researchers while they are preserved for future generations.

The Society is housed in the William J. McConnell Mansion, 110 South Adams, Moscow. The museum is open from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday. Visits to the museum or research library are welcomed at other times and can be arranged by calling (208) 882-1004.