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LATAH LEGACY

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The North Idaho Childrens Home

The Lost Wheelbarrow Mine

Latah Vignettes



The Garden Brigade with Rev. Chase

Spring 1984

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NORTH IDAHO CHILDRENS HOME:
THE FORMATIVE YEARS

by Carole Simon-Smolinski

Note: Mrs. Simon-Smolinski is an independent historian living in Clarkston. Her recent book Journal 1862 presents a fascinating tale of travel from Portland to Lewiston. She is the director of the "History Day Fair" in Northern Idaho, and heads Northwest Historical Consultants.

This article is based on research funded by a grant from the Association for the Humanities in Idaho, a state-based committee of the National Endowment for the Humanities. The project was sponsored by the North Idaho Childrens Home as part of its 75th anniversary celebration.

The article covers the first ten years of the North Idaho Childrens Home, a period corresponding not only to the superintendency of Rev. Samuel Chase, founder of the society in north Idaho, but also to the formative years in the development of our national social welfare programs.

NICH, although located in Lewiston, has historic ties to Latah County and all of north Idaho. Community help and private donations from the entire 10 county area during those early years provided the base upon which it grew.

All sources used in this article were found in NICH archives. They include: case studies, financial reports, board minutes, day books, private correspondence, and Home Finders (quarterly reports published jointly by the north and south Idaho societies) for the years 1908 to 1918.

Idaho was a young state when, in 1908, the Childrens Home Finding and Aid Society was founded in Boise. However, the need for social reform was as apparent in Idaho as it was in other states during that Progressive era. Similar societies dedicated to the care of the children were established nationwide. It was believed that if the child's environment were a

positive one, the child would grow to become a worthy citizen. If not, the later adult would only contribute to the growing number of social problems facing American states, cities, and towns. The sooner the problems were confronted, the better off society would be.

The goal was to remove abandoned, orphaned, or destitute children from the contamination of almshouses, poor farms, or unhealthy home environments and place them in private homes with good families.

In Idaho when county boards or probate courts reported children who were orphaned or whose living conditions were found to be intolerable, the society's task was to find families who were willing and financially able to take the child into their homes. The placement was either permanent or temporary, depending upon the child's circumstances.

In the interim, in order to meet the child's immediate needs, a receiving home under the charge of a superintendent and matrons was established to house the children temporarily. Reverend O. P. Christian was the superintendent of Idaho's first receiving home in Boise.

In 1908, Reverend Christian was called to north Idaho to remove two brothers--age five and nine--from the Moscow poor farm and place them in the temporary custody of good families. The children, who had lived with their mother in the wooded hills north of Troy until she could no longer care for them, had been sent to the poor farm by court order. That October, Reverend Christian traveled north to Moscow to receive the boys and deliver

them to nearby foster homes. However, at a time when the only means of travel between north and south Idaho amounted to little more than a rutted or muddy wagon road, it was evident that from Boise, Reverend Christian could neither adequately arrange for homes nor supervise the living arrangements of north Idaho children. He needed a counterpart in the northern section of the state.

To Reverend Samuel Chase, pastor of the Congregational Church in Lewiston, fell the task. In addition, Chase was to start a branch home finding society in north Idaho to support his work. The society would also see to the construction of a receiving home to serve the ten northern counties.

The two Troy boys were Chase's first assigned youngsters. The younger boy adapted readily to his new home. Within two months his mother permanently released the boys for adoption and he became a family member in his foster home. Unfortunately Reverend Chase did not find equal satisfaction in his work with the nine year old. The boy, described by Chase as being "a child of the woods as wild and tough as the coyotes that ranged that same forest," was too incorrigible to remain in any of the numerous foster homes Chase found for him. Most of that first year the boy lived with Reverend and Mrs. Chase. After the youngster's final act of defiance--burning down the barn of a foster family--Chase admitted defeat. He committed the boy to the Idaho Industrial School at St. Anthony.

That first year the Chase home became a receiving home for many other children in need of immediate housing and care. In early February a family of five was brought to his house. The children's mother was dead and their father was unable and unwilling to care for them. When they arrived, the children were filthy and lousy. They had little clothing, and what they had was in poor condition. The pattern continued. The Chases never knew how many children to expect, when they would arrive, nor what their condition and needs would be.

The burden, the expense--Chase's salary was \$100 a month--and the emotional drain must have been formidable. Reverend Chase's wife died that same year, leaving him alone in his grief to provide daily care for the children who lived in his home. In addition to his pastoral duties, the responsibilities of investigating reported cases of neglect, of arranging for foster homes, and keeping up with all of the required correspondence was an exhaustive burden for him. No doubt he received help and encouragement from his congregation, but he had no official organization in north Idaho to help him.

A sample of Chase's financial statement for 1909 tells but a small part of the problems he faced daily.

June 15, 1909

Collections for May 1909	\$ 60.80
Salary for May 1909	100.00
Hotel Charges	15.35
Bus Fares	.50
Postage .50 Telephone 1.45	1.95
Board of 13 children	52.35
Clothing	1.10
R.R. Fare (including trip to Seattle)	7.40
Total expenses	\$178.55
Balance deficit	117.75

Chase, however, following a most diligent economy, managed to remove the deficit and show a balance of \$32 by the end of the year.

Finally in the fall of 1909 the Lewiston Commercial Club initiated action to help Reverend Chase. The club challenged civic organizations throughout north Idaho to participate in the formation of a north Idaho children's home finding and aid society. The society's aim was to seek out and bring together needy children and childless homes; to give temporary care and aid to the many children who could later be returned to their family or relatives. The creed was the belief that "private charity was preferable to public charity as an agency for the solution of the child saving problem." And



The children are ready for school:
girls in one line, boys in the other.

they believed the benefits of their work extended to the child, the foster parents, and the state.

Its task would be to build and financially support a proper receiving home for the children. The Chase home had long since been inadequate to meet their growing needs, even with the rented home next door added as the boys' department. The committee especially sought help from women's organizations, for it was "the opinion of the committee if the ladies would take-up the matter, they could accomplish the objective better than the men." The women responded by forming the Ladies Auxiliary of the Idaho Children's Home Finding and Aid Society. Dr. Elizabeth Todd was the first president. Committees from each supporting organization coordinated their work through the auxiliary. Together with the governing board comprised of influential citizens from

the ten county area and the endorsement of Governor James H. Brady and the south Idaho society, the women set about raising funds for a new receiving home.

In 1910 Samuel Chase married Mary Comstock, a staff worker from Deaconess Hospital in Spokane. She immediately became absorbed in her husband's work. Her training, dedication, and love for the children must have been a tremendous help to Reverent Chase. To their home came dirty, lice infested, poorly clothed, and frequently diseased children, some of whom feared for their lives. The doors were always open to needy children until foster homes could be found. Legal details could be worked out later. "We sought to fit boys and girls to go out into Christian homes, thereby helping them to maintain what they had lost by being castaways," Chase explained.



Sam and Mary Chase

His philosophy was that it was easier and less expensive to save children than to punish criminals, since neglect and abuse drives many children into criminal lives. According to Chase, 96% of the children placed by national societies in good homes have grown into worthy adults, thus proving that proper training and a good environment would turn wayward children into good citizens.

Mary Chase also contributed significantly to the women's fund raising efforts for a new receiving home. She proposed starting an annual donation day whereby people throughout north Idaho were requested to pledge \$1 each year "for a term of years." Their goal was to raise \$3,000 in personal pledges that first year. She also traveled throughout north Idaho to solicit funds. One time she called upon the miners of Kellogg and Wallace. She went into the mines on a tram, explained the conditions facing the children, and emerged with \$1,000 from the concerned miners.

The Ladies Auxiliary pursued other fund raising activities as well. Solicitations were made throughout north Idaho from churches, civic organizations, and schools, and a regular board of directors was selected to administer the funds. J. J. Day represented Moscow; others were selected from Lewiston, Sandpoint, Coeur d'Alene, Wallace, Grangeville, and Mohler.

Most communities, large and small, responded enthusiastically. After all it was their children being helped. The women's initial success led to the purchase of a tract of land in Lewiston Orchards as the future site of the north Idaho receiving home. However, they could not accumulate enough money to begin the construction while continuing maintenance operations of the existing home as well. The recently constructed Boise receiving home cost \$40,000. Clearly, it was too expensive to build a similar home in Lewiston.

Finally in 1911 news reached the society that the Hurlburt Mansion of Lewiston was for sale for the reasonable sum of \$14,000. The building was large enough to accommodate the society's needs with a minimum amount of remodeling. Also it was located far enough east of town (across the street from the present-day Lewiston Shopping Center) to have the desired rural surrounding. The mansion was beautiful, the showplace of its day. The floors were hardwood, the walls brick. Four hugh Corinthian columns supported its massive portico. Sixteen white pillars held up a balcony which girded the four walls. The interior was spacious.

The state promised \$7,000 towards the purchase of Hurlbut Mansion if the north Idaho society could raise a like amount. Most of the ten counties pledged an annual payment of \$500 each providing the home would be open to their children. Others promised to pay \$25 a month for each child from the county committed to the home's custody. Private donations and pledges accounted for the remaining amount. By February 1912, the Hurlbut Mansion became the North Idaho Finding and Aid Society's new receiving home.

One can imagine Samuel and Mary Chase's relief when they finally moved with the "wards" to the new facilities. However, except for the addition of Samuel's adult daughter, Bertha, to the "staff," their work continued in the new surroundings much as it had been in their private home.

Most of the children in their care were not true orphans, even though the receiving home came to be known as the "orphanage"--a misnomer and misconception which has persisted to the present. Many of the children's circumstances were similar to their 1910 case. Late in the year a family of five was brought to the home. The oldest was 9, the baby two and a half. The mother had deserted the family and the father, said to be an honest, hard-working man, was unable to find work at a location where his children could be properly reared. He also could not keep

a housekeeper. He signed his children over to the home on contract. Reverend Chase kept the children for several years, finding them good temporary homes. They were finally returned to their father.

Records in 1911 show no orphans, rather children who had been removed from their natural parents. The reasons for removal varied--"they were left without father's support, bad environment, mother improper person, reported as beggars, mother drunkard, mother incompetent, or parents incompetent." Some of the children were brought to the receiving home by county officials. However, the task generally fell to Chase to travel throughout northern Idaho and accompany the frightened, confused children to their new home. In 1913, Reverend J. H. Martin was employed as a field worker to assist in that task. He also visited the foster homes in which children had been placed and was in charge of fund raising throughout the north. The work of both superintendent and field worker changed little in the next three decades. By the end of 1913, 28 children resided in the Lewiston receiving home and 111 children were in foster homes under supervision.

It is hard to know what life was like for the children in the receiving home during those early years. The few remaining case files are sketchy at best. Most glimpses of everyday life come from Chase's reminiscences of later years. By piecing together the information, one gets the picture of a loving home in which the children followed a tightly regimented routine. The older children were required to help with the work around the house, under Mrs. Chase's supervision. But there was play time for the children as well. Reverend Chase encouraged the children to play games and have parties. He recognized the importance of play for those children.

Meal time was scheduled at the same time each day and was a very orderly affair. The children waited in line until told to be seated. They paraded to their assigned seats--boys and girls at separate tables

--and began eating after the blessing. Pictures show the matrons and cooks looking on. The Chases always dined with the children. It was an opportunity for them to keep in close touch with each child, as well as keep an eye on the children's table etiquette and general habits. After the meal the children were dismissed together and quietly exited the dining hall. A later superintendent explained that such regimentation was necessary. Most of the children came from homes in which the meals were irrationally served and table manners and proper etiquette never taught. No doubt most of the children later appreciated that early training when they became adults.

Weekday evenings the children gathered at Chase's office to do homework--they all attended Lewiston schools--while he answered correspondence at his typewriter. Promptly at 7:30 the children were all dismissed to the living room for prayers, after which the little ones went to bed and the older ones went back to the office. Bedtime for them was 9:00 or 9:30.

Reverend Chase recalled Sunday evenings as "one of our happiest hours at the Home, . . . when our whole family, some forty boys, girls and workers, gathered in the front room about the big table the Orchard people gave us." Bibles and hymn books were passed out for a "real gospel service and personal talks."

Christmas was a special time at the home. Gifts and donations showered in from throughout north Idaho. People from Lewiston and nearby communities also contributed their time in special ways. Generally one or another Lewiston family entertained the children in their private home on Christmas Eve. Reverend Chase fondly recalled one Christmas Eve when Mrs. Chase and eleven little ones piled into the family buggy with faithful old "Babe" heading the procession. Behind, 14 older children trailed on foot, singing carols as they traveled to a private home and Christmas party.

Christmas morning began with stockings

and surprises at the receiving home, followed by a late breakfast. During the early 1900s records note that each Christmas evening a "splendid dinner was provided by the MESS of Moscow." The MESS was a group of Moscow women who contributed their time, food and cooking talents to community activities and worthy organizations. A fully decorated Christmas tree was usually brought in by a civic organization sometime Christmas day. The children, staff and guests concluded the day's festivities with a Christmas program presented by the children, a few games and prayers.

The Chase's parental concern extended to children in foster homes as well. Reverend Chase kept in touch with each child by letter, reminding the children to be worthy of their foster parents, to do their work well, and to go to Sunday school. One letter to an older child suggests that Chase might have occasionally had misgivings about the foster families upon which his work was so dependent. He expressed his concern to a boy whose brother lived with one such family. The family was planning to move to Nevada and requested permission to take the youngster along. "We have not been at all satisfied with the care he has been receiving," Chase wrote, "but this [the planned move] really opens up a way to get him back without friction."

The superintendent and north Idaho board were obliged to comply with foster care guidelines adopted by the state Home Finding and Aid Society. Families wanting to take in a foster child were required to submit a completed application form to the superintendent. The requested information included the family size and composition, the father's occupation, church affiliation, the reason for wanting a child, and the names of three reference persons, one of whom was to be a local merchant. Those people were asked to submit a written evaluation of the applicant. The superintendent was required to visit, unannounced, each applicant's home before children were placed. If the home was acceptable, the applicant had to agree



Sunday evening religious services with Reverend M. A. Covington (1919-1931) in charge (standing).

to "treat the child kindly and properly, to provide a public education for at least 6 months of the year, to teach the child to work, and to guard his morals, health, and habits until such child should reach the age of 18." At that time the home's legal custody of the child ended. The society provided each child with a Bible, two complete sets of clothing, and \$50. They were on their own.

Another stipulation agreed to by foster parents was that if, as a result of subsequent visits, the superintendent judged the applicant's influence to be "vicious or harmful" to the child, the applicants were to "return the child to the society at their expense when so ordered by the superintendent." Chase and Field Worker Martin screened the homes before placing the child, but considering the reality of those times--primitive roads, poor transportation facilities, and a vast terrain to cover--they no doubt erred in their acceptance of some homes. How to tact-

fully remove children without losing the goodwill of foster homes in general would indeed have been a difficult situation.

Although a large number of children were placed in the care of the society during those early years, the courts attempted to comply with Idaho's policy of keeping children in their natural homes if at all possible. That policy reflected the national philosophy of the times, even though some cases lead one to question its wisdom. A 1914 report is an example. A family of eight children was found with their parents living in a "filthy hovel. After cleaning the children and home up, and giving them food, fuel and other supplies, it was necessary to send the four oldest ones to the custody of the Home. The children knew nothing about the use of knives, forks and spoons and had to be trained in every way. It took scrubbing with a brush and Old Dutch cleanser before they could be dressed in decent clothing and permitted to begin their new

life." There is no report on the welfare of the four children left behind with their parents.

Idaho was the third state in the union to enact the Mother's Pension Act. Through this 1913 act a probate judge had the authority to provide for partial support of mothers whose husbands were dead or confined to the Idaho State Penitentiary, if the mothers were poor and if they had one or more children under the age of 15 years. The monthly amount awarded was not to exceed \$10 for the first child and \$5 for each additional child. The act further stipulated that the children were to live with the mother. Many requirements as to the mental, moral, and physical fitness of the mother had to be assessed before she could receive the pension. It was a significant act in that its passage demonstrated Idaho's willingness to assume public responsibility for the welfare of Idaho citizens, but it was a token act at best. Destitute mothers and their children were reported in increasing numbers. The pension did little to alleviate their circumstances.

Demands upon the society increased at a time when the financial resources declined. The problem commanded much of the superintendent's and Mrs. Chase's valuable time. In 1913 Mrs. Chase traveled to the lumber camps of the Potlatch area and returned with \$800 donated by the Blackwell Lumber Company and its employees. Reverend Martin's work the following year helped ease their burden somewhat--his efforts doubled contributions--however new difficulties arose.

Many children were returned to the receiving home by their foster families. Most of those people were farm families who had come on to hard times. They could no longer afford to feed and properly care for the foster children. The home was soon too small for the growing numbers of children, supplies became scarce, and expenses mounted. The problems were further augmented when by 1917 the usual state appropriations were not received, nor were there assurances that they would be reapportioned.

Reverend Chase continued in his pursuit for funds, driving great distances throughout north Idaho with limited success. He decided to make the home more self sufficient to compensate for the loss. With the children's help he planted vacant lots owned by the society into vegetable gardens. Results were not satisfactory, however. The children's initial enthusiasm over the project waned and Chase could not find the time to motivate them and supervise their gardening activities. On top of that, there was a water shortage.

International problems consumed people's resources and attentions that year. The war in Europe dwarfed the problems of the Children's Home, forcing the Chases to make-do as best they could.

The war was soon to have a far-reaching impact on America's social problems as well. It was our first experience in national mobilization. Thousands of men were rejected for military draft for medical reasons. Mental tests took another 20 percent. The nation was startled that so many were unfit. Tuberculosis, venereal diseases, and neglect of the children were believed to be responsible. Idaho attempted to alleviate the problem by providing tubercular sanitation, social hygiene, county nurse work, and school health inspection programs throughout the state. Through those sources Idaho became acutely aware of the number of families living in destitute conditions, of mothers either widowed or deserted by their husbands and unable to provide for their children, and of fathers who attempted to hold down a job while raising the children alone. Cases of abuse and mistreatment also surfaced.

Perhaps it all became more than the Chases could continue to confront. At any rate, they retired January 1, 1918, to the family farm in Peck. Chase's ten years of unfaltering service to the children of north Idaho came to an end. Samuel and Mary Chase had successfully laid the foundation for a social commitment that was to

see decades of valuable service. Their work continues. The home has seen many changes over those years, but the basic philosophy remains the same: Give the kids a chance to make something of themselves.

To Reverend Chase it was all worthwhile.

"You cannot know the strenuous life we are compelled to live as we try to make good the work of others who have failed and brought poverty, pain and disgrace upon these homeless children. It is a night and day job, 365 days a year. But I need not complain, for it is the best work I know about." (1912 letter from Samuel Chase to a foster mother.)



Children upon arrival at the Receiving Home.

"It is the best work I know about."

THE LOST WHEELBARROW MINE
(The Rest of the Story)

by Ed Burke

In August of 1939 an interesting news story appeared in the Pullman Herald:

"MINE SHAFT, LONG SEALED, MAY HOLD KEY TO LEGEND OF GOLD, GREED AND MURDER.

"Was it a rifle bullet with which the old time miner Casper killed his partner or was it the blunt handle of a mining pick that aided Casper in doing away with his partner and escaping with \$20,000 in gold dust and nuggets? The alleged murder took place almost 70 years ago, and the details which have been handed down through the years as the legend of the 'Lost Wheelbarrow Mine' are expected to be proved within the next week.

"However it was accomplished, it is definitely established that many years ago the miner Casper killed the partner with whom he had worked to extract \$20,000 in gold from the side of a mountain and made away with the dust and nuggets. This fact came to light about 20 years later after the crime when Casper, the gold wasted away, returned to the Moscow Mountains to hunt for the Wheelbarrow Mine. Casper, at that time told the following story to W. M. McGahan of Troy, Idaho, who also sought the mine. 'My Partner and I packed into this district from Walla Walla, the closest town in the early days. We worked over the different mountains around Moscow and opened up a rich vein of gold bearing ore. We would crush the rock by hand and pan the gold. After taking out \$20,000 in small nuggets and dust, we prepared to return to civilization. Indians still roamed the district so we lived in the mine. As we prepared to leave, we quarreled. I struck my partner with a pick. I took the gold and left, believing that I had killed him. I went to California, lost most of my money and then came back to Portland. There, I

heard that my partner had not died. Twenty years had passed and I came back but could not find the mine. The shrubbery and trees had grown up and I was completely lost. I knew this mine was on the south slope of a mountain, and that probably inside it would be found the hand made wheelbarrow we had used. Also in the mine should be our pots and pans.' McGahan relates that Casper started about 1903, when he told the above story, to hunt for his 'Wheelbarrow Mine.' He spent the last year of his life roaming the Moscow mountains, where he had a cabin, searching for the mine from which he and his partner had taken a fortune. He died, old, broken, and alone, but still insisting that someday somebody would find that rich vein of gold ore tapped by the hand hewn tunnel where he attempted to kill his partner.

"Recently, Dr. C. Landis Treichler, Palouse Physician, who has long been interested in mining claims in the Gold Hill region north of Palouse, discovered, almost hidden by a rank growth of forest underbrush, a pile of mine tailings and nearby, the caved in mouth of a mine tunnel. Together with Jack Moore of Pocatello, Dr. Treichler started to dig. After going into the hill less than 30 feet, a shovel struck a solid object. Hurried investigation disclosed a wheelbarrow, its whisky barrel stave body rotting away, the wheel rusty and worn. Resting on the body of the vehicle were a number of chunks of high grade ore which have assayed high values. Further digging disclosed rotted timbers, the remains of a fire and evidence that an explosion had taken place in the mouth of the tunnel. A few days later continued digging by Dr. Treichler resulted in the finding of a rotting bone which the Physician believed to be the vertebra of

a man. Not satisfied with his own diagnosis, Dr. Treichler sent the bone to another physician who identified it as the eighth dorsal vertebra of a man between 40 and 50 years of age. His opinion was that it had been buried between 55 and 70 years. Anxious to learn if other bones could be found in the tunnel, Dr. Treichler continued to dig. The disturbance caused the rotten old timbers of the mine to give away, causing a cave-in which temporarily sealed the secret of the 'Lost Wheelbarrow Mine.' A parallel tunnel is being bored into the hill and when it has entered the ground to a sufficient depth it is planned to enter the caved-in tunnel. What will the find be? Will Casper's story be substantiated? Will the entire human skeleton be found? Is the ore as rich as is believed? Those are questions to which Dr. Treichler and Jack Moore and the Fitsum Mining Company,

owners of the mine seek an answer. Slow progress through rock filled clay is delaying the answer that apparently has been sealed in the bowels of the earth for so many years.

"Recent finds have tended to muddle Casper's story. Indications point to the fact that the tunnel mouth was blasted with black powder by Casper in the hope of forever sealing the murder secret. A rifle, cocked and loaded, burned and partly melted in a forest fire of nearly 55 years ago was recently found nearby, leading to the theory that Casper may have shot his partner, blasted the tunnel and left to spend the \$20,000 in gold. At any rate the location of the stream and spring near the mine, the fact that two trees grew near the tunnel entrance, the finding of the human bone and the wheelbarrow inside the tunnel coincide exactly with



The Wheelbarrow Mine supposedly in operation

the story related by Casper 36 years ago. Will continued digging uncover the skeleton and disclose a bullet hole? Will the pots and pans be found? If they are, the legend of the 'Lost Wheelbarrow Mine' will be transformed from the legendary state to history and if the mine yielded \$20,000 to two men and hand labor, what will be the 'take' from modern methods?

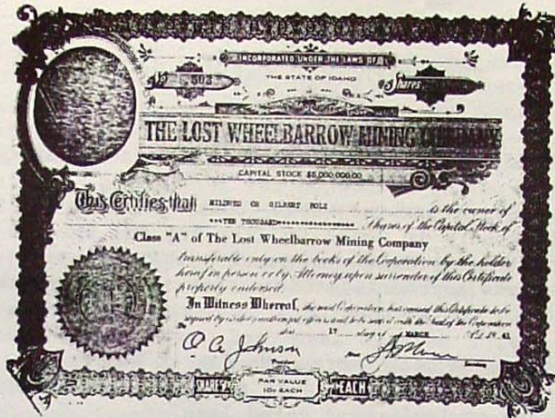
"This week the whiskey barrel stave wheelbarrow, the rich assay ore and the human bone are on display in the window of the local Montgomery Ward store. Perhaps those things found in the old mine, together with future finds will piece together a thrilling and dramatic incident in the history of this vicinity and may open a rich mining area nearby.

"More than half a century ago Casper killed his partner because of the spell of the glitter of gold. Perhaps gold from the same rich vein will provide new wealth and perhaps even be responsible for the rapid development of a new town on Gold Hill north of Palouse. It is an intensely interesting situation and one that is holding the people of Palouse and Potlatch almost spellbound as the slow but careful exploration of that tunnel, in which may have been enacted an early day tragedy woven around the glitter of gold."

Other newspapers in the Palouse Empire also carried the story. An article in the Palouse Republic tells us that a skeleton was found in the caved in tunnel and that three people took part in the discovery and uncovering of the evidence: Dr. Treichler, L. J. Moore and Charlie Bockmier.

According to J. B. West of Palouse, Washington, L. J. Moore came to the Palouse-Potlatch area in early 1939. He told people that he was a mining engineer. He spent considerable time looking around the country where there had been prospecting in earlier years. He was particularly interested in the story about a lost wheelbarrow mine and enlisted the help of two Palouse men, Dr. Treichler, an osteopath, and Jack Sheets, a barber. He told them that he was planning a mining development company and he would let them in on

the ground floor. These men accompanied Moore to Gold Hill and, in their searching, stumbled onto an old abandoned mine. The tunnel had caved in and Moore anxiously made plans to dig into the caved in part to see what they might find. He returned later with Dr. Treichler and Charlie Bockmier and the rest of the story has already been told. They found the wheelbarrow, some gold ore specimens, and a skeleton which supposedly was that of one of the miners. The skull had a hole in it which had been caused by a blunt object such as a pick ax. The mining company was organized and stock in the amount of \$5,000,000 was authorized to be sold. A mining crew was hired and a small community grew at the mine site on Gold Hill. An announcement by L. J. Moore that the original rich vein had been located and the assayed value would exceed \$8,000 per ton. Stockholders' hopes soared and stock sales were brisk. Dr. Treichler made a trip to New York City to appear on the radio show "We the People." He related the story about the rich gold mine and how it had been discovered. Paramount News sent a camera crew to Gold Hill to cover the story. After a few months of operation the unbelievable happened. L. J. Moore left the country. Accounts at several stores were left unpaid. The miners stopped work and quietly packed up and left. The mining operation ceased abruptly. The truth became obvious: the whole operation was a cruel hoax. The stockholders who had invested money in the company had been hoodwinked by a cleverly planned promotion. The abandoned mine which people had been led to believe was the Lost Wheelbarrow Mine had been planted with the wheelbarrow, gold ore specimens, and even a skeleton. All the mystery and intrigue associated with the story about the lost mine had set the stage for an ingenious stock swindle. No gold of any appreciable amount was ever produced. Dr. Treichler was charged with intent to defraud. He was able to convince the judge of his innocence and was released. He immediately left for his former home in New York state. L. J. Moore had taken residence in Toronto, Canada. The Federal Securities Commission picked him up when



One of some 500 stock certificates issued to unsuspecting buyers

he crossed over into the States for a visit. He was prosecuted and given a 10-year prison term. No money was every recovered from him.

Mr. West's story about the Lost Wheelbarrow Mine reveals some additional and interesting facts. The two miners had discovered their mine in 1883. Palouse, Washington, was an active community and served as a jumping off place for miners who were traveling to the Hoodoo Mountains which are to the east of Potlatch, Idaho. These two miners used to appear together from time to time to purchase supplies so it was well established that they did actually exist. One day the older miner came out by himself and disappeared, apparently leaving the country. A few days later the younger miner appeared looking for his partner. He also left the country. A few years later he returned and told his story. He and his partner had accumulated quite a fortune in gold. They had quarreled about the division of the gold. The older miner struck his partner with a pick handle and knocked him unconscious. When the younger miner came to he found that his partner had taken the gold and his gear and had left. The younger man then set about looking for his partner to square accounts with him. He was unable to find him so he returned to continue working the mine by himself. He was unable to find the mine and, after a

thorough search, which by the way was directed along the south side of the Moscow Mountains, gave up and left. He did tell people that the mine still had plenty of gold to be mined and that it could be identified by the fact that a wheelbarrow was left inside the tunnel. Casper, the older miner, returned about 20 years later himself to try to locate the mine. By this time the brush and timber had grown enough that it was impossible to find the exact location of the mine. He had confided in Mr. W. M. McGahan of Troy, Idaho, who searched with him. Casper had positively stated that the mine was on the south side of the Moscow Mountains. He had heard that his partner was still alive and being quite relieved with this news had decided to return and continue working the mine himself. Two facts discredit the mine that Moore supposedly discovered and claimed to be the Lost Wheelbarrow Mine: the mine was not located on Gold Hill and there was no murder involved between the two miners. In conclusion, I would believe that the Lost Wheelbarrow Mine still remains lost--who knows, maybe forever.

Pullman Herald, August 18, 1939.

Palouse Republic, April 26, 1940.

Bunchgrass Historian, Vol. 7, No. 1,
Spring 1979.

Special acknowledgement to Dr. R. M.
Chatters of Pullman, Washington, and
Charlie Bockmier of Moscow, Idaho.

THE UNCOVERED WAGON, Part 3

CHAPTER 13: LATAH COUNTY IS BORN--IN WASHINGTON, D.C.!!

I have found that many of our present Latah County Citizens are not aware of the historical fact that this county in which we live has the special distinction of being the only county in the United States of America that was created by an act of Congress! Therefore, it seems appropriate to mention it here, since all this rumpus over the county took place in my grandparents' and parents' time. What Grandfather's interest in politics was, I have no idea--and, of course, women, being "the weaker vessel," didn't have the vote back there. My Father was an avid Republican--the kind who would sit up until midnight to hear over the radio who won what, after radios came into the picture. Mother couldn't have cared less!

Concerning the formation of the new county, I find also that many of our people do not realize that this portion of the state was for many years a part of Nez Perce County, with the county seat at Lewiston. Lewiston, as one chronicler has said, was reached from here over roads "so terrible that snow and mud often made them impassable." No beautiful spiral highway then, but rocky canyons down which one traveled by horseback--or later by stage--at his peril. Yet the people up this way had to make that trip to take care of all such county business as must be done at the county seat. It is no wonder they tried in vain to move the county seat to Moscow. But--and this is ironical--would it not have been as rough a trip from Lewiston to Moscow and back as it was from Moscow to Lewiston? From History of North Idaho, already mentioned, I quote the following:

During the fall of 1882 a determined effort was made by people north of the Clearwater to affect segregation from Nez Perce county, and the formation of a new political division. As is usual in such movements, the leading agitators hoped to gain some financial benefit by the establishment of a new county seat. The ambitious town in this instance was Moscow, in the rich and prosperous Paradise Valley. Petitions were circulated and numerous signed, praying for the erection of the proposed new county. These called forth counter petitions among the south side residents, who admitted that county division at some time was inevitable, but considered this movement premature. Then, too, it was argued, that as soon as northern Idaho should be attached to Washington, a readjustment with county lines would become necessary. Therefore the people desiring to be clothed with the authority to organize a separate local government ought to await incorporation into the territory of Washington before pressing forward their schemes.

[Note: Agitation over the panhandle of Idaho being annexed to Washington Territory had long been going on, and some felt such an annexation was inevitable.]

So numerous were the remonstrators and so strong their opposition that the bill could not be carried in the territorial legislature. Disappointed in this project, the friends of the movement (to move the county seat) introduced a bill providing for a special election to be held in Nez Perce County at which the advisability of relocating the county seat should be submitted to a vote of the people. The bill was, of course, introduced in the interest of Moscow. . . . A lively campaign followed, both parties to the contest making a thorough canvass and arguing the question in all its phases. The result on election day was in favor of Lewiston.

Then followed a renewed effort to secure the removal of the county seat from Lewiston to Moscow. The friends of Lewiston again took the gauntlet, and so effective was their opposition that a change in tactics by the Moscow people became necessary. Through Delegate Dubois of Idaho Territory, and Senator Mitchell of Oregon, they secured the introduction into both houses of Congress a bill creating Latah County out of the northern portion of Nez Perce County. The measure carried despite the protests and efforts of its opponents in the southern part, becoming a law May 14, 1888.

Thus, this not-exactly-friendly little battle with our sister city down over the hill resulted in Latah's having the distinction of being the only county in all our country to have been created by an act of Congress!

Speaking of politics, I was interested in reading, in this same big book from which I have just quoted, that my own father was once nominated by the so-called Silver Republicans in 1896 for Latah County coroner. It seems these Silver Republicans had split off from the regular Republicans over the "free silver" issue, and at the time heartily endorsed William Jennings Bryan for President. The Democrats and the Populists had united for a joint ticket, and were, of course, the stronger group at the time. According to the election returns, Dad was soundly beaten by his good friend, Sam Owings, a Democrat. That evidently put an end to his political aspirations--to the delight, I am sure, of my Mother, whose interest in politics was anemic, to say the least.

CHAPTER 14: MY FIRST RECOLLECTION OF GRANDMOTHER'S HOUSE

Speaking of the pioneer home just demolished to make way for Progress, my first recollection of it was occasioned by a "celebration" which took place there when I was scarcely more than a baby--about two and one-half years old. We were to have our pictures taken!

I well remember being seated at Grandmother's long kitchen table on the lap of the photographer's wife, Mrs. Charley Christopher, as she dipped a comb in a glass of water and curled my half-wavy hair over her finger. This was really an event in my young life, for I had never before had my hair curled. I also remember clearly some thoughts that went through my baby mind during this picture-taking episode--thoughts which I am sure none of the grown-ups even suspected! So far as I know, this is the first time I have revealed them.

Of course, I had had my picture taken before--many times, in fact. With a professional photographer as a personal friend of the family, that could happen quite often--and did, as the many lovely photos in Mother's velvet-covered album prove. But this was the first time I have any recollection of such a performance. Now, I seemed to be alertly conscious of the whole proceedings. I even remember the little dress I had on at the time--a rose wool, worn with a cream-colored "shally" blouse with pink rosebuds scattered all over it. Of course, the skirt was clear down to the ground, as little girls were properly dressed in those days. Oh, I felt real good all over!

One of the things I was most impressed with in this picture-taking episode was the elaborate preparations that followed the hair-curling preliminaries. While this little girl stood very quietly so as not to shake out the curls until they dried, the throne was made ready. A kitchen chair was placed between the window and door of

that front parlor, and beside the chair on the floor was placed a big thick book (probably Webster's Unabridged Dictionary). Over all this went the photographer's red chenille throw. My brother, Ralph, was instructed to sit on the chair--the "throne," it looked like to me--and his little sister Alma was told to ascend the big book beside him. (This was going to be fun!) Then I was told to lay my head on Ralph's head--lovingly, of course, as though we were the best of friends. We were, so that was all right with me. Then the photographer pointed the camera on the tripod in our direction and stuck his head under the big black cloth which covered it. After moving the thing this way and that until he was completely satisfied, we were instructed to hold that position while he squeezed the bulb, and snap went the shutter! But, "just in case," he took out the glass plate (under the black cloth, of course) and put in a fresh one for a second snap. All well and good, and now we could step down. This had been fun, I thought, but there was an unexpected sequel to this little drama.

Willis, the photographer's five year old son, was now told to take the throne in Ralph's place, and I was invited to ascend the big book again. So far so good. But not the next step! I was told to lay my head on Willis's head as I had on Ralph's. No sir! Not me! But I had been taught to obey, so finally I came to it. If the grown-ups noticed my momentary hesitation they probably thought I just didn't understand. But I did, and I have remembered my infant rebellion to this day. It was rather strange, too, that I should have felt that way, for Willis and Ralph and I were good friends and always played together whenever the two families could get together. I believe the Christophers lived in Colfax at the time, which was quite a trip to Moscow by slow horse and buggy.



Alma, head on Ralph's shoulder

Several years after this picture-taking episode, when I was perhaps six or seven, the Christophers drove over to visit us after we had moved into the brick house which had been built on the University side of town. We were expecting them, so met them in the barnyard as a welcoming committee. The first thing Willis did when the buggy stopped was to jump out and grab me to kiss! I thought as unfavorably of that performance as I had of laying my head on his head several years before. (How sad is unrequited love!)

I have but few memories of my first home across town in which all four of Mother's children were born. (It was in this home that the first two were torn from her arms within three weeks of each other by that vicious epidemic of scarlet fever which swept the countryside in 1891.) I have a good picture of this old house as it was when I lived there. The house, at the dead end of Second Street--"kitty cornered" across from what was for years the Swedish Lutheran Church but now the Senior Citizens' meeting place--holds but three memories for me, two of which caused me to be very "emotionally disturbed."

When I was perhaps three years old, I lost my ring somewhere near the well on the north side of the house. Although everyone combed the area with a fine-toothed comb, it was never found. (It was probably a twenty-five center, but much loved.) I carried that "guilty feeling" with me for a long time, as I realized it was my own carelessness which had lost it for me. I was probably taking it off and putting it on again just for fun when it rolled away from me and was seen no more. But the very guiltiest feeling came when I deliberately did something I knew I shouldn't have done, and realized it all too well!

Since there were no dormitories then at the University, the students had to room and board here and there with the townspeople who were willing to take them. Since cooking was my Mother's favorite occupation, she was doing her bit in helping both the students and the family finances by keeping a few boarders.

One day while she was getting the meal on the table, I found her scissors and decided to try them out. They worked fine! Hiding in the dark under the big square table at the feet of the unsuspecting boarders, I made my first attempt at barbering. (I have since learned that few little girls there are, or were, who have not at sometime in early life decided to cut their own hair. But this was no excuse for me.) When the boarders were well on their way of making an end to my Mother's good meal, she started looking for her wayward daughter.

Hearing no reply to her calls, someone had the bright idea to look under the table! A frightened little girl with a badly haggled head of hair was pulled out from under the table, to the amused chuckles of the boarders. But it was no laughing matter to me! I knew I had done wrong and was so informed by my Mother! The fact that I was hiding away in the dark during this escapade is just one more proof of the truth of the Bible which says, "They loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. . . . And neither will they come to the light lest their deeds be reprov'd." So it was!

I do not recall being spanked for this misbehavior, but my Mother had learned long before that a good scolding hurt my supersensitive soul more than a flat-handed spank. But I never again aspired to be a "lady barber"!

Mother was a loving but very strict disciplinarian who believed in bringing up a child in the way he (or she) should go, and she never failed to do her duty! An equally loving Daddy left all matters of discipline, at least in small things, up to her. So we all got along fine.

I have but one other recollection of this home in town where I was born and that is one of pure joy! Between our house on Van Buren and the house just south of us where our good neighbors, the McDonalds, lived, there was a stone wall. Both houses were on a sloping hill, and I assume the wall was put there to keep the soil of our place from running down onto theirs. I still remember how much fun it was to crawl over that stone wall! If Mrs. McDonald had any objections to it, I never heard about it. She probably looked out her north window and saw how much happiness it gave us, so indulged us in it. Not long ago I drove by there to see if the wall is still there. It is. Good old native rock!

CHAPTER 15: CAMPING IN THE NEW BARN

When I was five, my Father started the tremendous task of building a big brick house on a part of Grandfather Taylor's original homestead which he had deeded to my Mother on the University side of town. We were still living in town on Van Buren then, but the house was now for sale, so Dad decided to build a barn near the new construction and move his family over to camp in it for the summer. Here in this big red barn with its white battens, two little kids, aged five and seven, had the time of their lives. What fun it was to watch the new house taking shape!

By that time we had acquired a horse and buggy and a cow. These discreetly spent the summer outside while we occupied their stalls as bedrooms. The haymow was full of sweet-smelling alfalfa hay for their winter provender, so a little boy and girl from the "city" had a lot of fun hanging by bent knees from the rafters and dropping down in the soft hay. And what fun it was to hunt eggs in that hay! It was interesting, too, just to watch the pigeons flying in and out of the wire-netting pigeon house up under the eaves. Mother was raising squabs to supplement the occasional fried chicken. They were a tasty and tender meat.

Maybe all this moving, and the hard work it meant for Mother, was just too much for her in her present state of health. She was never strong, but now seemed to be suffering from a sort of nervous collapse and had been put to bed by Dr. Gritman, our family doctor. So the weighty responsibility of looking after a family of four fell on the frail shoulders of the only other "woman" in the family, a little pre-schooler of five. Or, at least, so she thought! I'm sure a certain Daddy did most of the cooking, such as it was, although that was by no means in his line. But, I'm sure too, I did set the table, bring the invalid her tray, and at least wash the dishes afterward. Mother did her best to give instructions from her bed.

One thing she warned me about was not to forget to feed the redbird hanging in his cage on another side of the barn, out of her sight. I believe I did feed him a few times, then promptly forgot all about him. When reminded of it again, I went to take care of him and found him dead on the bottom of the cage! That, too, has been on my conscience ever since. I loved that beautiful redbird, but now he was no more. The next pet which occupied his cage (when we finally moved into the brick house) was a pink-eyed white rat!

That summer camping in the big barn was full of adventure for two small children, not yet started to school. I remember picking wild roses from Nature's own bushes on the hill above the barn, and parting the bushes to gaze in awe at the tiny egggs in the hummingbird's nest. We were taught never to disturb a bird's nest full of eggs, but what harm could there be in just peeking? Later, when the nest was empty and the baby birds had flown, our Mama gave us permission to bring her the nest. She loved little things like that.

By fall, the brick house was ready to move into before September rains began. They started the long, slow process of finishing the inside. That really took all winter, and still the upstairs was only half finished. Once my brother (always bent on mischief) hung my rag doll, "Allie," from a rough rafter in front of my bedroom door, so high up I couldn't reach her! I can yet see her hanging there, her lace-edged petticoat down over her head and her little panties exposed to public view! I felt this was a real insult to Allie--named for my favorite Scotch Cameron sister, who often came to look after us children while Mother packed apples for Dad's "Idaho Fruit and Produce Company." Allie was my best-loved doll and I slept with her every

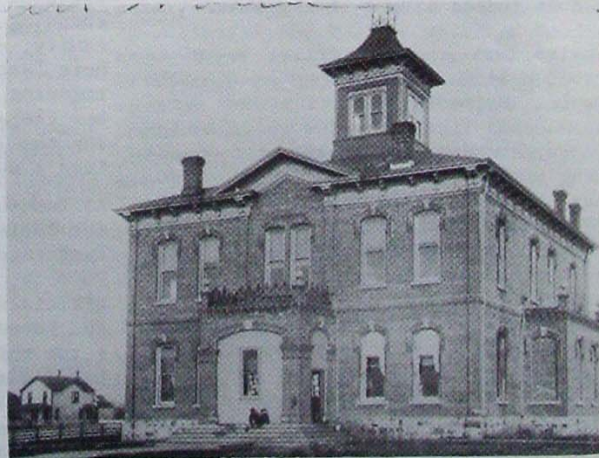
night, but here she was hanging by one foot from the rafter! Mama was, of course, promptly called into counsel and Allie was as promptly cut down. Maybe she wasn't the most beautiful doll in the world, but she was very precious to me! Mother had made her out of unbleached muslin (ten cents a yard) and had stuffed her with cotton. Her eyes were two small blue beads, and her lips and cheeks were scandalously rouged for a proper young lady of that day! But, best of all, she had real brown hair, which Mother had woven out of some of her own combings. Maybe little brother didn't think she was so wonderful, but he just didn't know! Anyway, Allie was never strung up again.

We were close to Grandmother's now and often walked the half mile over the hill. Sometimes the whole family would walk over and have Sunday dinner with the old folks who weren't old at all then, but seemed so to little children.

In the winter it was a real thrill to start at the top of the hill--now Ridge Road with all its beautiful new homes--and coast clear down to Grandmother's house without stopping! We had but one sled, so Ralph guided it while I hung on for dear life behind him! Once, I recall, my mischievous brother, instead of proceeding down the lane as usual, suddenly turned the sled sharply to the left into Grandfather's orchard, dumping me into a deep snowdrift! I still remember how a tearful little girl about my size had to stand for what seemed hours before Grandmother's big wood range to dry off! I'm sure my watchful Mother must have spoken to the young man about that, for I was a frail child, and a little stunt like that was all it would take to land me in bed for a week with a bad case of tonsillitis! So I could not take very much of this good-natured brother-sister treatment. Anyway, I do not recall ever being dumped again.

Speaking of the old orchard in the hollow above Grandfather's house, I picked fruit there many a time as a child. I was interested in reading in History of North Idaho that it was William Taylor and two other men who first got the idea that fruit trees should grow in this wonderfully fertile soil, and planted experimental orchards. Grandfather's orchard stood there for many years until it was frozen out by a particularly severe winter.

Latah County's first
Courthouse - built by
Taylor-Lauder - Brick
Contractors, 1888-89.



LATAH VIGNETTES by Keith Petersen and Mary E. Reed

This is the first installment of a regular column in Latah Legacy to be written by Petersen and Reed about some little-known people, places, and events from Latah County's past.

On a rare dry day in the wet spring of 1984 we traveled the Scenic White Pine Drive lunching at Laird Park, a U.S. Forest Service campground and picnic area five miles northeast of Harvard. This is a delightful park of trees and meadows with one of Latah County's few swimming holes. We took the roadway marked Monument Group Picnic Loop, and, sure enough, came upon a monument, two good-sized boulders fused together, embedded with a bronze plaque stating "In Memory of Allison W. Laird." A few feet away a weathered wooden marker gave a bit more detail on the Park's history. "The site for this park," it read, "was donated to the United States by Potlatch Forests, Inc. in memory of A.W. Laird, pioneer lumberman and early-day official of the company." The picturesque setting suggested that this site must have a bigger story than these two markers told, and with our curiosity whetted we investigated the Historical Society's archives and chatted with the helpful people at the Palouse Ranger District in Potlatch. We found that Laird Park does indeed have a lively past.

The Laird Park area was first known as Griswold Meadow after "squaw man" John Griswold. Griswold married a Nez Perce woman and had little use for white society, always moving out of the way of advancing civilization. By the mid-1870s miners, hoping to find riches in the Hoodoo Mountains, intruded upon Griswold's meadow home and the Griswold family again moved on, but his name stuck to the place--sort of. "Grizzle" Camp became the most notable mining boom town in the upper Palouse valley. Complete with an eatery, saloon, and blacksmith shop, this was the terminus of a stage and freight line from Walla Walla and Palouse City serving the Hoodoo miners.

The boisterous camp eventually died out as the mining boom burst, but Griswold's name once again remained on the land--sort of. When the Boy Scouts built a camp a little ways west of Grizzle Camp they named it Camp "Grizzly."

Meanwhile, the timbered land around Griswold Meadow became a popular outing spot for people from Potlatch, Princeton, Harvard, and nearby areas. Among those who particularly enjoyed picnicking here was Allison W. Laird. Laird, a Winona, Minnesota banker, moved to Palouse City in 1905 to become Assistant General Manager of the Potlatch Lumber Company before there was a town of Potlatch. His kin, founders and operators of the Laird, Norton Company, were partners with the Weyerhaeusers and other Midwestern lumber families in the big Potlatch operation. Laird knew little about lumbering when he moved West, but under the tutelage of General Manager William Deary he learned quickly and became, as the sign at the Park says, a prominent "pioneer lumberman" of the Inland Empire, taking Deary's place as General Manager in 1913 when Deary died, and being for a time President of the North Idaho Forestry Association. Laird, unlike Deary, did not always believe in "cutting clear as we go," and one of the refuges from his lumberjacks' saws and axes was the area surrounding the present Park. Laird, his family, and friends frequently visited here, and though the prime forests surrounding the place were owned by the lumber company, Laird steadfastly refused to log the site, hoping some day to turn it into a public park.

Allison Laird died in 1931, shortly before the Rutledge, Clearwater, and Potlatch lumber companies merged to form Potlatch Forests, Inc. (PFI). Soon after his death officials at PFI began negotiating with the Forest Service in an effort to preserve this 120 acre tract of land in Laird's memory. The donation was finally made in 1934 with the stipulation that the natural surroundings be disturbed as little as possible.



A. W. LAIRD ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER.

In the summers of 1935 and 1936 a crew of nearly 40 Civilian Conservation Corps laborers built heavy log picnic tables, cleared campsites, and constructed a small dam on Little Sand Creek to provide drinking water. On August 21, 1937, a simple ceremony dedicating the Park was held, and the Laird monument was unveiled. Laird Park was thus the first public campground opened in the Palouse Ranger District, later joined by Little Boulder Creek in 1961 and Giant White Pine in 1968.

Every tree species common to northern Idaho can be found in this natural arboretum. The Park has always been home to deer and elk and people who enjoy the quiet. But in the 1940s this peacefulness was momentarily disturbed as the Forest Service

constructed a wooden planked airstrip in a large meadow here. In an effort to save an estimated \$60,000,000 worth of Douglas and white fir timber from an infestation of Tussock moths, planes loaded with DDT sprayed 350,000 acres of north central Idaho forests. Many of the planes used the Laird Park airstrip to load the chemical and refuel.

The 1947 battle with Tussock moths was successful, but by the late 1950s many of the virgin trees at Laird Park were getting old. The Forest Service considered some of them a safety hazard and proposed to cut about 100 of the more dangerous trees. This proposal was not universally popular, especially since PFI had requested that the site be as little disturbed as possible. "Why get so excited

about the wind blowing the trees down when it was a freak wind, which evidently blew down only the defective trees. If we take out approximately 100 trees won't the next wind only blow that much harder? We do not pump the river dry because somebody drowns in it." The Forest Service remained unconvinced, though, and the trees were logged, many of the stumps still being visible today.

At the time of the logging the Palouse Ranger District undertook numerous improvements at the site. They replaced the 20-year-old CCC picnic tables, deepened and enlarged the swimming hole on the Palouse River, and hauled in sand to make a beach. Then in the early 1960s they replaced the contaminated water supply from Sand Creek with a well.

Today Laird Park receives nearly 25,000 visitors a year, making it one of the most popular camp and picnic grounds in the St. Joe National Forest. Even though the Park has changed through its transformations from Griswold to Grizzle to Grizzly, squaw man John Griswold would still recognize the site of his meadow home. Each visitor to this special place can be thankful for the foresight of Potlatch Forests, the U.S. Forest Service, and especially of Allison W. Laird, who recognized its potential before most.

For more information. People interested in learning more about the Laird Park area should consult Richard Waldbauer, "A Historical and Archaeological Survey of the Hoodoo Mining District, Idaho," unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Idaho, 1981; Alec L. Bull, "Palouse Valley History," Latah Legacy, Winter 1980; Rollo Perkins, A History of the Palouse Ranger District (c. 1975); Latah County Historical Society archival file SC/LAI-1, which contains information on the Park in the 1930s; and the Laird Park files at the Palouse Ranger District. We would like to thank Stan McDonald, Mike Peterson, and Hank Johnson of the District for their help.

BOOK REVIEW

Journal 1862: Timothy Nolan's 1862 Account of His Riverboat and Overland Journey to the Salmon River Mines, Washington Territory. Carole Simon-Smolinski. Clarkston, Wa.: Northwest Historical Consultants, 1983. 169 pp. \$17.95. Cloth. Available from the Latah County Historical Society. Add \$1.00 for mail order copies.

Carole Simon-Smolinski has produced a thoroughly researched, profusely illustrated, and well written book that accurately portrays the era of the mining frontier in the Pacific Northwest. To accomplish this, she has used an interesting literary device, a journal recorded by a fictitious personality, Timothy Nolan. Accompanied by his brother Robert, the two young men from Nebraska embarked from San Francisco in May 1862 and traveled by steamboat, rail, horse, and on foot bound for the gold fields along the Salmon River in Washington Territory. After a 1,451 mile journey lasting over a month and many adventures and tales later, the brothers finally arrived in Lewiston. But other than the Nolans and a couple of other minor characters, Journal 1862 is not a fictional account--far from it. Instead, it is a true-to-life narrative of another time and place, which the author has meticulously reconstructed from historical diaries, travel descriptions, reminiscences, and newspaper articles, among others. From these she has extracted "terminology, impressions, names, descriptions and even the prejudices . . . to convey authenticity of attitude as well as historical fact." (p. vi)

A concern for accuracy and attention to detail are apparent throughout the book. For example, Simon-Smolinski includes in her account over a dozen steamboats that plied the Columbia and Snake Rivers. Journal 1862 is true to historical fact in that there are no boats in the story that either had not been built by 1862 or had been wrecked before that year. In addition, the author's graphic descriptions of travel by steamboat over treach-

erous rapids literally puts the reader in the middle of a turbulent stream. To illustrate, Timothy Nolan describes Captain Baughman's deft maneuvering of the Tenino through Palouse Rapids, which dropped six feet in only three-quarters of a mile. The captain "'cramped' Tenino ahead with a running jump straight into the center of the rapids. Water lashed into billows capped with foam, poured through a narrow chute, emptied into an eddy and boiled back towards the current from the south side. Inch by inch Tenino tenaciously pushed onwards. At times the upper tow was sufficient to carry her ahead half a length. Suddenly she would refuse to move and stand trembling in place with waves violently pounding her sides. At other times she would sheer from side to side, casting us about . . . before proceeding forward a few inches." (p. 121) Two hours later the boat emerged safely at the other end of the rapids, much to Nolan's relief. This is good storytelling, which vividly recaptures an experience no longer possible on the slack water of the Columbia and Snake.

Through Nolan's eyes and pen, the author presents other glimpses of a world far removed from the twentieth century. It is worth the price of the book alone to have between two covers descriptions of the flora, fauna, geology, topography, history and legends, towns, crafts, work, and people found along the Columbia River and its tributaries over twelve decades ago. A ride on the cinder-belching Oregon Portage Railroad around Cascade Rapids, instructions on how to make cedar bark canoes, the advantages of sternwheelers over sidewheelers, descriptions of Indian "isles of the dead," the effect of floods on towns and the surrounding countryside, the life of "hurdy-gurdy girls" in a predominantly male society, Indian platform fishing, building a sternwheeler, a cave full of rattlers, constructing roads and ferries--these are only a few of the stories skillfully woven into Journal 1862.

Simon-Smolinski also fairly depicts the prejudices of the time, particularly a pronounced class consciousness and a racist world view. When Timothy Nolan sat

down for a savory repast of baked salmon on board the Tenino, it was in the company of other men of his class, "common gold seekers like myself . . . serious sober men looking forward to hard work ahead and a chance to better their fortunes." (p. 79) Above them in status were professionals, businessmen, and other successful capitalists. Bachelor Nolan, a literate man with an interest in intelligent and refined "ladies" (especially one--dark-eyed Christiana), obviously aspired to move upward and did not feel it was beyond his reach. Just as obviously, he looked with disdain on the "members of the hard class," who likewise flocked to the gold fields but did not realize that hard work was necessary in order to succeed at mining. To find out whether or not Nolan attained love or fortune, the reader will have to wait until the publication of volume two of the journal. In any event, Simon-Smolinski has written a perceptive interpretation of a not uncommon phenomenon of nineteenth century America, openly expressed class consciousness and antagonism.

To portray racism for the same period, the author has her characters use terms that at first might offend today's readers: "celestials" and "chinamen" for the Chinese; "greasers" for Mexican-Americans; and "coloreds" for blacks. But these words were employed by nineteenth century whites when referring to minorities. Simon-Smolinski, however, goes well beyond mere labels. Through historical anecdotes she subtly presents a balanced account of the paradoxical nature of racism. In one context it can express a high regard for an ethnic group or individual, yet in another context it can turn to hatred and fear. For instance, when Nolan viewed the Nez Perce from the deck of a steamboat, he saw them as a hospitable and industrious tribe, one which had adapted well to white institutions, namely capitalism and agriculture. But in Lewiston on the crowded streets of the tent city, the races faced each other in uncomfortable proximity. Under these circumstances, Nolan remarked that the Nez Perce "do not impress me in the least. They wrap those everlasting blankets

around themselves so that nothing is visible save their long black hair and grim-visaged countenance. You never know what to expect from them. I only hope they aren't planning trouble!" (p. 149) It was one thing to observe from the relative safety of a river steamer and quite another to face the prospect of Nez Perce retaliation for white incursions onto the Indians' reservation.

This reviewer found Journal 1862 an informative and very readable historical synthesis of a fascinating era of Pacific Northwest history. Although the book is not footnoted, it does contain a discerning bibliographical essay in the introduction (pp. vi-vii). There are a few minor flaws: no index or list of illustrations; occasional typographical errors; and misspelled words. It is also difficult to accept that any self-

respecting nineteenth century male would refer to a jackrabbit facing its demise at the hands of Indian hunters as a "doomed bunny." (p. 85) Nevertheless, overall the author has avoided most of the anachronistic traps and other pitfalls that lie in wait for the unwary writer. In a nutshell, Carole Simon-Smolinski has made a significant contribution to the historical literature of the region. Complementing the text are over six dozen illustrations (approximately one per page of text), including photographs, maps, and original art by Grende LaFord.

--John R. Jameson

JOHN JAMESON is on the History faculty at Washington State University and has a research interest in the Columbia River and its tributaries.



Five well-dressed young men in front of the North Idaho Childrens Home

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Michael Anderson, Bozeman, MT
Mrs. Oscar Anderson, Moscow
Leonard & Jean Ashbaugh, Moscow
Beulah Baker, Moscow
Mary Banks, Moscow
Ray & Lura Berry, Moscow
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In 1968 interested individuals organized the Latah County Historical Society to collect and preserve materials connected with the history of Latah County and to provide further knowledge of the history and 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:

	Member	Friend	Contributor	Sustainer	Sponsor	Patron
Individual	\$ 7.50-15	\$16-30	\$ 31-75	\$ 76-150	\$151-499	\$500 up
Family	12.50-25	26-50	51-100	101-250	251-499	500 up
Business	25-50	51-100	101-250	251-350	351-499	500 up

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 local history/genealogy research archives 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 archives are welcomed at other times and can be arranged by calling (208) 882-1004.