

# Bunchgrass Historian

Whitman County Historical Society Quarterly

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Spring 1988



**Schools and teachers**

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Gerald Druffel attended Bald Butte School in the 1920s and has lived in Southern Whitman County most of his life.

"Truth" was a school-related paper published in Garfield in the 1890s; copies may be found in the archival collections of the Historical Society.

S. C. Roberts was a teacher in many kinds of schools, explained in the edited text of his reminiscences.

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## **Bald Butte School District No. 2 (The Last Eight Years)**

**By Gerald Druffel**

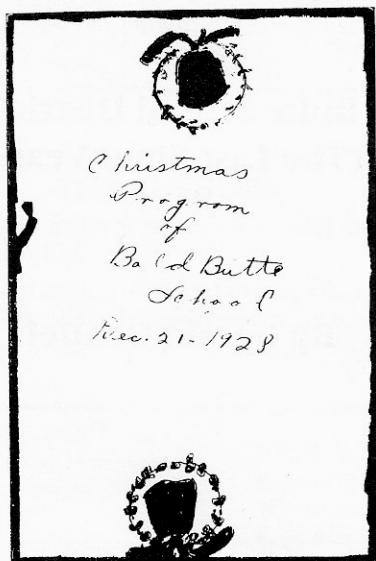
This school district was formed in 1887 as a one room grade school approximately 5 miles northeast of Colton, WA., near the south base of Bald Butte. It was also known as the Cleveland School. The second school building at this site was built in 1920, also one room, with full basement, dug several years after the school was built, and a cloak room on each side of the front entrance.

This was the school I entered as a first grade student in the fall of 1928. The total student count varied between 20 and 30 pupils during the years I attended.

All eight grades were taught by a single teacher. Marie Waldron was our teacher during the first three years, in the fourth year a new plan was put into effect and a floor to ceiling curtain divided the room, with Jenny Germond teaching the upper four grades. This system lasted only one year and in the fifth year, Mary Everson taught all eight grades in the one room. In the sixth, seventh, and eighth years, Mary Wieber Moser was the school teacher. In the spring of 1936, Bob Moser, Leonard Riedner, and I graduated from the eighth grade in this school.

In the fall of 1936, school district no. 2 consolidated with the Colton School system. This year also brought the advent of the first school bus system for the newly consolidated district.

The teachers during my time were mostly graduates of Normal schools and found district no. 2 their first assignment, with a salary of \$90 a month, of which they spent \$30 for room and board, usually with a family in the district. Remember there was a great depression. For this sum of



*Program for Christmas Pageant, 1928*

money they wore many hats, janitor, counselor, nurse, playground referee, expected to be model citizen of the community, and furthermore teach. Probably the janitor chore was the most demanding as the school had a gravity coal furnace in the basement with a large floor register in the classroom. The teacher was expected to keep the school warm and had to learn to bank the furnace after each school day, so the live coals could be shook free of the banking ash and a new fire prepared for the day. The state law stated only Washington mined coal could be burned in schools, therefore a pretty soft grade of coal was used. On cold morning arrivals the floor register was a very popular place to stand to remove the chill.

Also, the teacher was asked to stay after school on certain afternoons and teach religion to those students who's parents wished them to receive the instructions.

The school plumbing system, in my first years, consisted of an out house for the toilet; in the winter snow, the older students were expected to tramp out the path for the younger ones. A dipper with water bucket, pulled from the spring box, furnished the drinking water. I am sure the first cold of the season easily became the common school cold.

With much hard work this plumbing system was replaced by a dug reservoir, wind mill, and running water in the school building, which also al-

Christmas Welcome --- Song  
 Opening Address --- Mary Frie  
 Thomas Like it Used to Be --- Nigel Simpson  
 Good Enough --- Edward Frie  
 Christmas Birthday --- Margery Becker  
 Christmas Pageant --- School  
 Away in a Manger --- Bobbie Moser  
 Johnny's Christmas --- Lucretia Keller  
 Old St. Nick --- Leonard Rudner  
 Who Santa Claus Was --- Augustine Helle  
 Luci Beare to Dinner --- Dialogue  
 Silent Night ---  
 Santa's Mistake --- Gerald Knuffel + Rita Moser  
 I Aint Letter On --- Agnes Becker  
 Elias' Christmas Eve --- Dialogue  
 Finding St. Nick --- Lawrence Moser  
 Secretly --- Lewis Knuffel + Hilford Moser  
 Learning to Spell --- Evalena M<sup>rs</sup> Lee  
 Christmas Carol --- Song  
 Santa and his Muse --- Mary Frie  
 Mrs. Brown's Visitors --- Dialogue  
 First Christmas --- Joanne Becker

We Come in the Night --- Elizabeth Frie  
 Star of the East ---  
 Raising Up --- Joanne Becker + Kenneth Long  
 Journeys of Bethlehem --- Isabelle Knuffel  
 Legends Mistake --- Dialogue  
 Christmas Wish --- Rita Moser  
 Santa Claus --- Song  
 Goodbye --- Elizabeth Frie

### Program for Christmas Pageant, 1928

lowed indoor toilets, wash basin sinks, and drinking water. There was no electricity in the school.

In winter time, a hot soup lunch was tried for a few years, and I remember many cases of Campbell soup in the basement, where the lunch was served.

With a distance up to three miles, transportation, to and from school was by about every mode at that time. In the good weather, mostly walking, then bicycle, and the horse and mule were so popular that a barn was built on the grounds for daytime use. In the winter when the roads were snow covered, various neighbors took turns with a team and bobsled to transport the children. I remember a sled box filled with straw and lots of blankets. When more than two from our family attended, a buggy pulled by one horse in shafts provided transportation. One sad memory is that one morning when riding our horse, Nig, to school, my brother and I had the experience of the horse dying of a heart attack. This was the same horse that usually shied and dumped us off whenever a car met or passed us.

In those days the car was seldom used to take anyone to school, to walk or take the horse seemed more practical and also more dependable, unless the horse died.

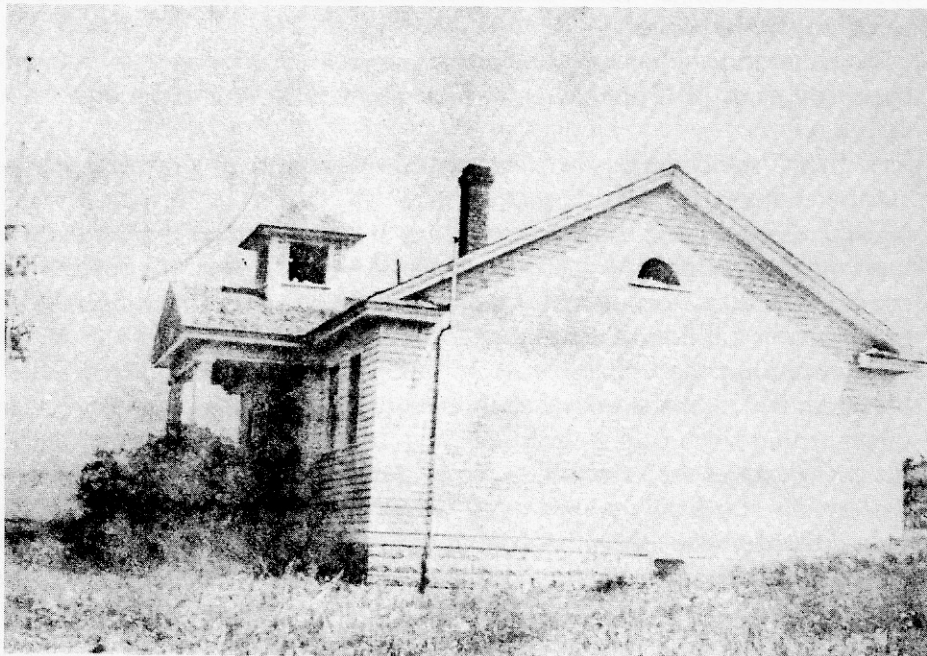
Today we build a million dollar gymnasium and use a fifty thousand dollar school bus to haul our children to get their exercise.

A typical school day started with the pledge of allegiance to the flag. Then a line up against the window wall. There we were asked health questions; did you brush your teeth, comb your hair, wash your hands? The answers determined our grade in health. We each made a song book in art class and these were hung on the window wall for our school song session after health. What we lacked in singing ability, we made up in volume!

After this we all found our desks for the days' classes. With eight grades in one room each subject had about ten minutes of class time with the teacher. If a student was motivated, he or she, had all the advantage of progressive education as one could follow along with the grade above you, or conversely below you. In my estimation, this was one of the prime benefits of the one room school. All reading was taught by the sound and phonics method, and arithmetic by the flash show card system. These left an indelible print in your mind. Also the Palmer Method of writing was used. Push pulls and ovals gave you the exercise to loosen up your hand for the writing test.

Each year the 7th and 8th grades were given state exams by the County Superintendent to determine if you were qualified to pass on into high school.

Our school always rated very high in these tests. I have never felt disadvantaged by the one room school system but rather fortunate to have had that education experience.



*The second Bold Butte School #2*

The Bald Butte School had quite good play ground equipment, including a giant stride, chinning bars, and a slide. The baseball field was quite poor due to a side hill location. The ball, if hit, invariably flew to the right field. The runner went down hill to first, then up to second and third, and then down hill again to home.

After consolidation, the school house was moved to Colton High School for a Vocational Ag Shop and served that purpose for some years until a larger shop was built. A local farmer purchased the building from the school district and it now sits west of Colton on the breaks of the Snake River.

My one unanswered question is: how did this district get the designation No. 2; Colfax had No. 1; with the geographic location in Whitman County that it held?

It would seem in chronological order that there would have been other school districts formed sooner than Bald Butte District No. 2.

**COVER PHOTO**  
**1929 SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 2**

**Top Row** (Left to Right)

Ed Frei, LeRoy Druffel, Jeanne Becker, Marge Becker,  
Betty Frei, Bob Moser, Kenneth Rosgen

**Middle Row** (Left to Right)

Agnes Becker, Hazel Simpson, Isabelle Druffel,  
Evalona McGee, Elizabeth Sardon, Gus Welle

**Front Row** (Left to Right)

Leonard Riedner, Quentin Keller, Virginia Becker,  
Rita Moser, Dorothy Becker, Gerald Druffel, Philip  
Becker

Teacher: Marie Waldron (standing on left)

absent: Mary Louise Becker

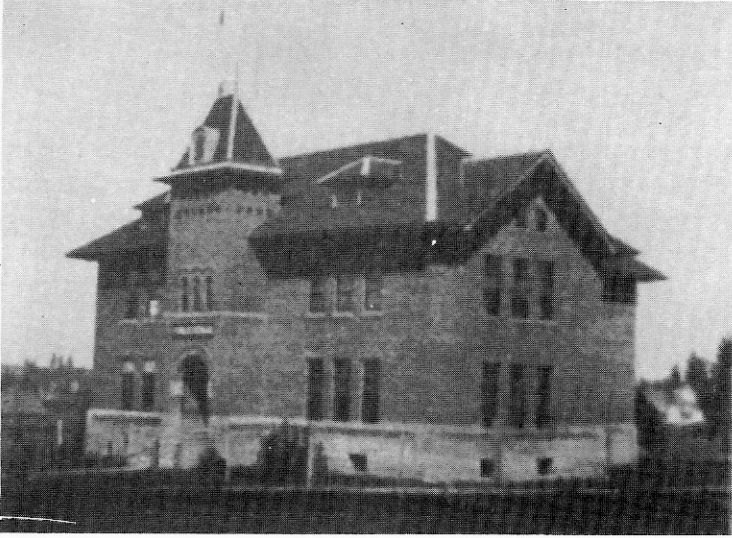
# **Our School's History The Ups and Downs of Garfield's Educational Institutions**

**From "Truth," 1897**

Hon. J. C. Lawrence Tells How He Became Teacher of the First School in the Town of Garfield.

Editor, Truth — In response to your invitation to write a history of the Garfield school district I will give the facts coming under my personal knowledge, going back to December 1878. I suppose you have asked me to write the history for the reason that I was the first teacher of the district. Associated with my first experience as such teacher, there is a scene in the mountains that is recalled in memory. The bleak winter was well on toward the first of a new year, snow on the ground to a depth of several inches, myself with two friends engaged in the pleasant passtime of splitting rails. A man with a heavy black beard and a very keen eye, a typical pioneer; the mountain sides with its tall fir trees; this is the scene. This black whiskered man explained to me that he and two neighbors had secured the organization of a school district a few months before and under the law were required to begin school during the next month. Having no school house and no funds to pay a teacher they were as a loss to know what to do but wished if possible to save the organization of the district. He thought they might hire a teacher and "pay him next month" if he would "room around" and wait for his pay, but he would have to begin teaching at a private house until a building could be put up that would an-

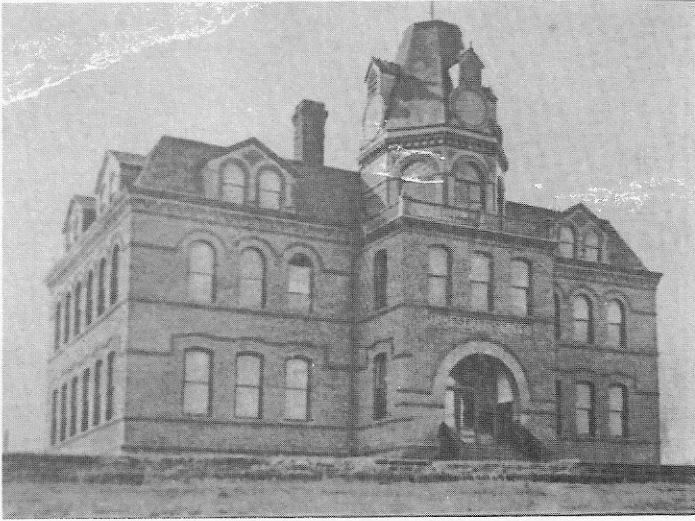




*Public School, Palouse, ca. 1905*

swer for a school building. He had heard that I was a teacher and had come up to see if he could hire me. The idea of spending the winter making rails, with no place to put them after they were made, was not a pleasing one to me, so that the thought of no school house and no money, not even the big boys I had learned belonged to this man's family, did not keep me from agreeing to exchange vocations for the winter. Before we parted I had hired as the teacher. Mr. Harlan's beard is not so black now, and his face appears more kindly if his eye is as keen. He was the man and Mr. Tant and Mr. Syron were the neighbors and what is now the Garfield district was the place to which I had agreed to go.

January 6th, 1879, at Mr. Syron's house, near where he now lives I called order to the first school ever taught in the district. William, Mina, Charles Syron were the pupils. The first two weeks were taught there and indelibly impressed upon my memory. The deep snow that came falling with the opening of school and (had?) prevented any other children in the district from attending. The blanket of snow nearly six inches in depth I had on my bed the next morning. Dismissing school to chink the cracks in the roof prevented similar blankets from getting on the bed thereafter. Then the building of the first school house. It seems to me I have told this so many times before that it must cease to be of interest. A pile of lumber in a bank of snow. How Milton Harlan and myself went to shovel the snow off the ground for the foundation. Working without tools, using a clapboard on which we would pile snow and hold over a fire until melted



*School Building, Oakesdale, ca. 1905*

and using the water on the board as a level for setting the foundation, which we got within nearly a foot of the real level. When we ran short of lumber and it was impossible to haul more we used a crosscut saw and ripped the boards into strips for sheeting the roof. As I remember Mr. Tant did the "fine" work, Silas Syron, Billie Simpson, Mr. Harlan, Milton, Frank and myself were the common carpenters. In a week the building was completed and a trip made to Colfax for a stove. I had some fourteen scholars during the term, William, Mina and Charley Syron, Alice and Julia Tant, Milton, Frank, Ida and Charley Harlan, Lou and Ed Hill and their three cousins. I think that makes the number. The school house stood over the hill northeast of town. The house was built on Milt Harlan's place and belonged to him.

The next year the new school house was built, one of the best in the county. Going up Main Street toward the east and you can still see it. Next year Jonas Crumbacker was the teacher and was followed the next year by H. D. Irwin. The next winter I again became the teacher and the following winter, if I remember correctly, Rev. Amos Cox taught the school. The next winter J. M. Smith wielded the birch as some of the boys, now grown, can testify. About this time there was an agitation for a new school house and finally a special meeting was called to vote a tax to build one. The days came and the meeting progressed nicely, but just before the polls closed a crowd came in from the country and voted it down. Next year we tried again and succeeded. The new house was built west of town and was

quite a magnificent building in its way. I believe Mr. Phillips taught the last term in the old building and John Holbrook the first in the new. Then came Mr. Beach who taught for several years and was followed by Prof. Hunt, the Prof. Jackson, who was succeeded by Prof. Mattoon. You see I have omitted all the assistants but they are certainly as well remembered as any of the principals. You will all remember the burning of the white school house and the relocating in the present place of the brick building that has been occupied some five years. This is the brief outline of the history you have asked me for.

### Commencement Program

The following program will be rendered at the graduating exercises of the class of '97,

Overture .....	Garfield Band
	“Crown of Victory” — Lansing
Invocation.....	Rev. A. W. Trine
Greeting Song .....	Male Quartet
Salutatory .....	Ira B. Follis
Oration.....	Clare B. Allison
	Rome Was Not Built In A Day
Music .....	Band
	“Soldier’s Dream” — Ripily
Essay .....	Ollie Laird
	Advantage of Self-Reliance
Song.....	Moonlight, Bells and Song
Oration.....	Glen H. Trout
Conservatism vs. Progress	
Song.....	Oh Lovely Evening Star
Valedictory .....	Bertha O. Trowbridge
	The Hope of the Scholar
Presentation of Diplomas .....	Dr. J. A. Dix
Song .....	by Class
Address.....	Pres. E. A. Bryan, Agr. College
Music .....	Band



## Reminiscences of a Pedagogue

by  
S. C. Roberts  
ca. 1935

*In the mid-1930s, Stokley Clarence Roberts compiled a huge set of reminiscences at the suggestion of Frank Nalder, the head of off-campus instruction of Washington State College. Much of the material seems to have been broadcast on the college radio station, and then further put to shape by student editors working for a program of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration.*

*The final product of all this effort is almost 250 pages in length. It calls to mind the work of the medieval Welsh writer Nennius, who characterized his own historical writing as "making one heap of all he found." Collectively called "Reminiscences of Pedagogue," it covers Robert's experiences as a teacher in wide variety of schools, large and small. It covers his experiences as a school district administrator, chiefly in Whitman County, and as a teacher in the preparatory unit of Washington State College. The memoir also speaks to his work as a carpenter, an occupation that alternated with teaching for many years. It includes much local history, some observed, some picked up, some correct, some not so correct. The presentation is not a chronological narrative or a series of chapters of each of these matters. Instead it jumps around a good deal, reflecting the origins of the document as a series of loosely connected radio talks.*

*Presented here are selected parts from the first part of Robert's memoirs, chiefly those dealing with his experiences as a teacher. Selection of passages was by the editors of Bunchgrass Historian.*

The ocean voyage from San Francisco to Portland had been anticipated as the probably climax of the whole journey for novel experiences; so what was our disappointment when the sea being unusually rough, all but four of the passengers and several of the crew became very sea sick. During the entire forty-nine hours before we entered the Willamette River, the only food I attempted was a few strawberries, and they, even, refused to stay down.

Close connections at Portland with the railroad, and then the ever thrilling ride up the Columbia to Wallula and Walla Walla. Whence, over a rough and rutty road, a four-horse Concord stage-coach with about a dozen passengers, took almost an entire day to reach Riparia. Followed then my first river-boat ride up Snake River to Almota where Henry Spaulding's holdings included the docks, warehouses, hotel, a flouring mill, and a considerable planting of orchard trees and garden tracts. Almota was a thriving and busy landing for most of the goods destined for the Palouse Country as far north as Farmington, Sprague, Cheney, and Colville, and east to Moscow. From Colfax half a dozen stage lines carried people to "Homestead" in the Inland Empire.

The eighteen-mile stage ride from Almota to Colfax was over almost unbroken "Bunch Grass" hills, and, as I remeber, with only one four-acre patch of plowed land until within a few miles of Colfax. In fact, in all the Palouse Country, the hills were considered undesirable for farming, but they were well covered with luxuriant bunch grass for the rapidly increasing herds of cattle and horses.

While teachers' pay here in 1883 was not very attractive, rural teachers receiving fifty to sixty dollars per month, there was not a graded school in Whitman County and town teachers received little more than those in the country. A more serious factor was the brevity of the school year. Few rural schools had more than four or five months and many only three, the minimum required by law to participate in territorial funds. Many families on isolated stock ranches employed private teachers. As late as 1892, I served as superintendent at Colfax, with two years on a six-months basis; and a third, eight months. The Colfax school was first graded in 1888 and included ten grades under O. A. Noble, the county superintendent who issued my first certificate back in Nebraska. The town had just completed a four-room wooden building, at that time the best in eastern Washington, outside Spokane and Walla Walla. Previously the school had been housed in a two-room building of rough, vertically set board walls.

In August of 1883, together with R. L. McCroskey, now Judge of our superior court, and his cousin, S. M. McCroskey, I took the teacher's examination and was surprised to receive a first-grade certificate, quite an advance above the third-grade I had received the year before in Nebraska. The following winter I taught a five-month term at Penawawa, seven miles below Almota.



*High School, La Crosse, ca. 1905*

That school was typical of most schools of the Northwest. There were forty-five students enrolled and they graded from five-year-olds to first year high school. There were nine men and women of legal age. One man of twenty-seven was a third grader. Two of the older girls were called upon to help teach the lower classes.

To lead such a school was no easy task as I shall try to show by relating a single incident. The winter before my arrival, the teacher, some time before completion of his term, was forcibly escorted to the door by some husky boys and invited to leave and not come back, which suggestion he fully carried out. My days moved along quite happily for all concerned until mid-November when good skating near the schoolhouse came on. Gradually it became more and more difficult to stop the fun on time after the allotted intermissions, until finally it was ordered that any one coming in tardily should make up double the time lost from succeeding intermissions. As I rang the bell that afternoon at the end of recess period, five-year-old Warren Cram, now automobile dealer in Colfax, rushed in with: "Teacher, them three biggest boys says they're goin' to stay out fifteen minutes to see what you'll do." With stifled feelings, I worked and in exactly fifteen minutes the three came in orderly, nonchalant. No friction developed that day. When recess time arrived next morning I reminded the school of the penalty incurred by the three and dismissed the school - but not, not to the skating area. Every mother's son and daughter of them grouped themselves outside the eight windows to watch developments. The three stayed; I took out the register remarking that the two recesses

forfeited by them were for study and so forth. No response. On pressing my point, the leader of the trio paid me my first really professional compliment. Looking up with a complacent grin and putting his feet out into the aisle, he asked, "Now Professor, (first time I was ever so addressed), Professor, ain't you rushin' things a little too fast around here?" In desperation I quickly rose, as my eye caught a glimpse of the yard long, half-inch iron stove poker behind the stove, about equally distant from myself and from the mutineers. I beat them to it and the day was won. The leader was sent home, and, returning next morning with his father, made a manly apology at the opening of school and the incident closed, but not forgotten, for, to this day I shiver when I think how it might have been.

A score of busy towns soon sprang up, stimulated by the profits of grain growing with the cheaper transportation. Carpenters and builders were at a premium with qualifications easy to meet. So, having had two summers experience as journeyman carpenter in Nebraska, I was able to cash in on that experience by becoming a builder and contractor during the summer season, when very few schools were in session. For seven years, from '83 to '90, I directed construction of some fifty odd structures including dwellings, school houses, bridges, and barns, the last contract being for Colfax College, built for the Baptist Church, to house the old Academy. I had a half interest in that contract, to prosecute which I secured a half interest in a sash, door, and moulding factory with a battery of twelve standard machines. The building, partly because of the establishment of the State College at Pullman, has long since ceased to function for school purposes, and, within a few months since, I had the honor of presenting it to The Whitman County Pioneer Association to be used as an historical museum. Of the three-hundred people assembled at the presentation, I doubt if a single one knew, that, of the contract price of neary twelve-thousand dollars, the contractors received but about four-thousand dollars. So the presentation speech carried with it all possible equities in the unpaid balance of some eight-thousand dollars, together with interest for some forty years. In all fairness, I should add that the trustees offered a half section of raw, unpromising land in the Rogue River Valley near Medford, Oregon, in settlement of our claim, which offer was declined. Too bad, for that land is now all fully developed under irratagation, and before the Depression was valued at from a thousand to fifteen-hundred dollars per acre with its pear and cherry trees.

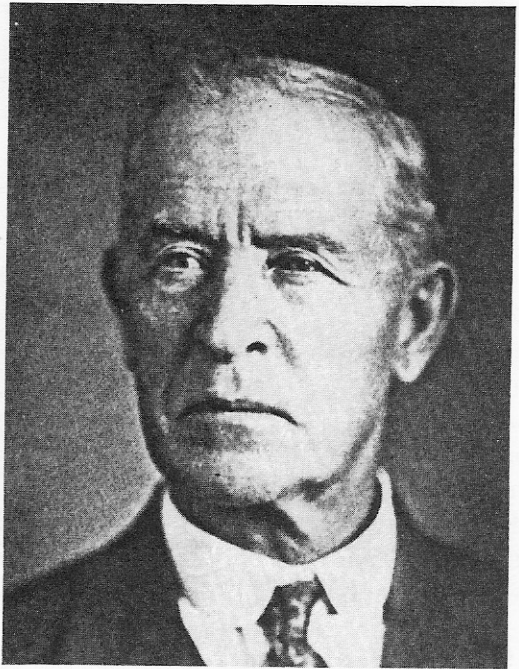
My second Washington school was at Albion, then called Guy. There I had full play for my diversity of gifts, in building the schoolhouse, making the furniture and teaching the five-months term of school, which included

the three months organization period, required for participation in the territorial school funds. The building was designed as a store building at the expense of Mr. J. D. Whetzel, from whose land the townsite was carved, and housed a general store, when, next year, the district put up a permanent brick structure. My enrollment, numbering nearly half a hundred, as at Penawawa the winter before, was gathered from considerably beyond the boundaries of School District Number 99, while ages and attainments were even more varied than I had at Penawawa. Here, my chief disciplinary problem was one of my cousins previously mentioned; and those who have been similarly inflicted with family relatives of nearly their own age, will appreciate recital of this incident. The actors were my double cousin, Bert Rice, and Effie Rollins, from Viola, Idaho, auburn-haired, teen-aged. Her long braid of bright hair, tied at both upper and lower ends with large ribbon bows, reached well below her waist. Returning one morning from a recitation to her seat just in front of the mischievous cousin, she gave the long braid a fling backward where it wound itself neatly round Bert's neck. Nothing daunted, he gingerly unwound it, and, giving it a sly jerk, to his utter consternation, it came loose and hung ingloriously in his fingers. Effie, suspecting the worst, whirled, snatched the braid, fled from the room and stayed fled for the rest of that day. Her hair had been shingled, bobbed, I should now say, and, in her hazardous attempt to wear her hair both long and short at the same time, I can see her yet; her back hair now only a brave little pigtail, tied with a white cotton string and sticking straight out behind. An extra recess was the only adequate prescription for laughing off the effects of the performance. Some twelve years ago I met Effie here on the College campus where she had come to visit a daughter, a student here.

A debating and literary society and a singing school, each with weekly meetings, were the principal social activities and were well attended, not only by the village folks, but many came from considerable distances outside to participate in them. And to this day a hearty response greets any one who starts a review of those doings with any who took part in them.

May I relate an incident from my own observation of the establishment of a school. Time, 1883; locality, a little settlement near Pullman; characters, a teacher from Illinois and sixteen pupils from Oregon, Missouri, Nebraska, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Wales, Germany, Russia, and Massachusetts. That is to say, ten different states and foreign countries. Many of the latter migrating so recently they spoke English with difficulty, as, for example, a Swede of the group addressing his son, "Et, Et, gone up dis hill an see dis big black rock he ban a hok. He ban a hok you drive





*S. C. Roberts*

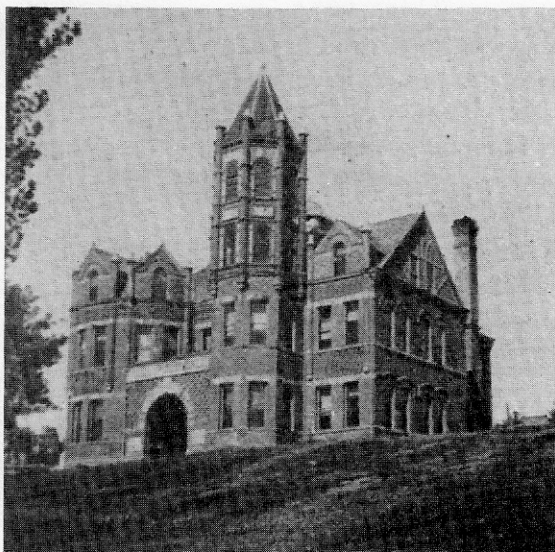
'im out. You lef wide open dis gate." And again, "Et, so much veat you fet dis hoks. Half nuff dis much ban plenty."

Expenses of that school were borne by tuition paid in cash, or services, or equipment. Lumber was logged and hauled by the Swedes. A Missouri carpenter built the schoolhouse and made the furniture. A man from Oregon gave the land. I still have a copy of the program of the Whitman County Teachers' Institute of that year. In lieu of the traditional book and lamp of learning, the printer selected a dingbat that left the print of a large stork on the cover page.

The institute lasted a week and its daily schedule included seven subjects, namely: Reading, Writing, Spelling, Arithmetic, Geography, Grammar and History. An eminent institute conductor from Kansas presided, assigning regular lessons and conducting their recitation. He was F. B. Gault, who later founded Whitworth College on Whitby Island, I believe, and still later served as president of Idaho University.

That school and institute were typical of the schools and professional activities of that day — a composite of the methods and procedures of the civilized world with no local precedents to hamper initiative or experiment in adapting matter and method to immediate necessity.

A few examples will suffice to illustrate how such schools succeeded in preparing young men and women for life.



*Public High School, Pullman, ca. 1905*

Oliver Hall, wagon maker, so long a member of the state legislature that he is called Dean of the Senate, now retired octogenarian at Colfax, had no formal training in forensics other than that afforded by debating societies in the common school and in fraternal societies, notably the Good Templar's Lodge. John Arrasmith, sometime member of the legislature and member of the board of Regents of the State College, had no preparatory practice in public speaking other than that secured at the Bethel School Literary Society, of which I shall say more presently. Similarly John E. Ballaine prepared for his career as editor of the Palouse Gazette, member of the legislature and chief promoter of the first Alaskan Railway. The leader of my Penawawa school mutiny became state senator. Of the eight members of my first high school graduation at Colfax, the second such class in Eastern Washington outside of Spokane and Walla Walla, Goldie Amos became a social worker in New York City; Alma and Hattie White became high school teachers, Lily Brown and Margaret Davis, grade school teachers. Boyd Hamilton became a bank cashier, Sam Mitchell a real estate and insurance broker in Spokane and Leo Carter owns and operates a large hardware store in Colfax. I believe none of these young people except Boyd Hamilton, who graduated from the State College, ever attended a higher institution of learning. Several pupils completing eighth grade that year passed the examinations and taught in rural schools.

My final example is a longer story, and with that I close.

During the winter of 1885-6, my third school in Washington was at Bethel, a church building on the Palouse road four miles east of Colfax.

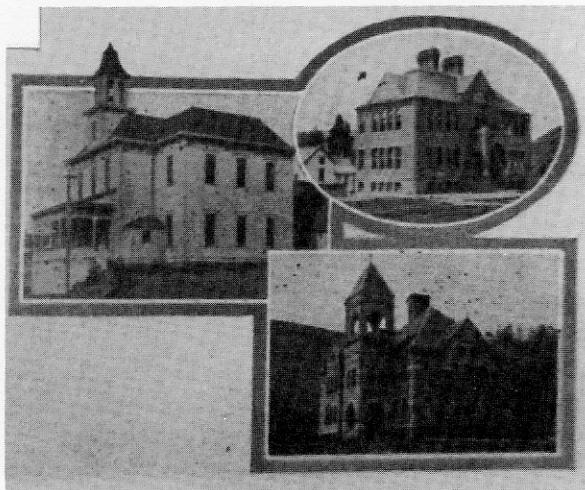
Here my salary was \$60.00 per month for the five months, with the stipulation that I might accept tuition fees from students outside the district; but the total enrollment was not to be more than forty five. In order to accommodate the nonresidents, I had to buy lumber and make additional desks and seats. Having reached to within three of my stipulated quota, one gray November Monday morning, through driving snow, a wagon drove up to the door. On a board seat spanning the wagon box were three girls ranging in age from fifteen to eighteen years. Two were sisters and the third a neighbor of the two, all living several miles away. At the door, the youngest of the three, introducing herself and the others to me, said, "We have come to ask if you will admit us to school. We have brought our things with us to set up housekeeping if we can arrange with you." Informed that I still had three places yet to fill, she added, "If you please, then, we will unload our things and after lunch we will come to find out about our studies." The classification was arranged, the spokesman being assigned to third reader. At the close of the five months she finished the fifth. I soon learned that the sisters had recently come from the far south where their father, a once prosperous planter, had lost all during the Civil War.

On the following Friday afternoon, the school put on a program of rhetorical exercises for which each pupil was required to contribute something of his own selection by way of practice and entertainment. The late arrivals, of course, were exempt because of their recent enrollment. At the conclusion of the program, as the time for dismissal approached, the youngest of our last arrivals, who had shown a lively interest in everything going on, raised a hand. I nodded permission to speak and she said, "Teacher, won't you recite something for us?" The unexpected request found me quite unprepared, but seeing the whole school apparently approving the request, I recited a short selection, one of the popular *One-Hundred Selections for School Programs*, 'Evening at the Farm'. Here are a few of the lines:

"The evening dews are falling.  
Into the stone heap darts the mink,  
The swallows skim the river's brink,  
As into the yard the farmer goes,  
A horse approaching, "Whoa, Boy, whoa, whoa."

And,

The milkmaid sits on her milking stool,  
Sits and milks in the twilight cool,  
Soothingly saying, "So, Boss, so, Boss, so, so.  
The while the cowboy, far away,  
Goes seeking, those that have gone astray,  
Calling, "Co, Boss, co, Boss, co, co, co-o-o.



*Schools at Colfax, ca. 1905*

closing with,

Supper over, the paper read,  
Stories told, and all to bed.  
The household sink to deep repose,  
But still in, in dreams, the cowboy goes,  
Singing, calling, "Go, Boss, co, Boss, co-co-co-o."  
And still, and milkmaid, in her dreams,  
Drums in the pail with her flashing streams,  
Saying, "So, Boss, so, Boss, so, so, so, so-o-o."

At dismissal, the instigator of my performance came up saying, "I wish I could do that, I never spoke a piece in my life. Would you teach it to me?" I handed her the book of recitations saying she might memorize the piece if she liked. On Monday morning as I was starting the fire, she entered the room, saying, "I have learned that piece, and will you hear me say it before the children come?" I would, and taking a seat at the rear of the room, constituted a very respectful audience as she mounted the platform and recited the piece. So well did she do it, I recognized even some faults of my own in her performance. I offered a few criticisms, referred to some of my own faults in the Friday performance, and she asked, "May I try it again, there's no one coming yet?" She might, and she did. And still a third time she went through the piece with great zest; so that I felt quite outdone.

During that week we organized a literary society and a singing school, meeting the midweek and Friday evenings. On request, I started another singing class at Clear Creek Schoolhouse near the foot of Kamiak Butte, and where a literary society was already a going institution.

The members of each of my singing classes were invited to attend the meetings of the other with but one tuition payment, and even at that my returns were nearly equal to my salary as day school teacher.

At the close of my school at Bethel, Mr. C. W. Bean, then County School Superintendent, appointed me his deputy. My duties included school visitation and posting notices of meetings for school district organization and adjustment of district boundaries. Such business quite naturally kept me busy in the western half of the county. One problem was that of finding welcome at meal time and accommodations for the night. Leaving Colfax on Monday morning, my work was planned to drive all week, visiting such schools as could be reached conveniently, usually two each day, and at the same time post the legal notices required in course of district organization and alteration. Now and then I came upon a lone horseman of the stock range or an isolated dwelling while threading the primitive roads. These followed the lines of least resistance along the drainage channels. The only guide was a crudely pencilled map or the verbal directions of some accommodating settler. The roads being as crooked as the meanderings of the streams, all sense of direction was lost so far as reference to the points of the compass was concerned. But there was compensation for such inconveniences in the ready welcome accorded the County Superintendent in any pioneer home he might choose, for information, refreshment or a night's rest. As parting guest, the temptation was always to prolong the stay and continue the conversation, not only that connected with official business, but also with local and general news reports. So the isolated settlers were keen for contact with anyone to break the monotony of their lonely existence.

Among the first permanent settler in the extreme southwestern part of the county, were the McGregor brothers, John, and Peter, who later served long as regent of the State College. They had acquired title to approximately an entire township of land surrounding the town of Hooper. Here they settled for home making and sheep raising. Here, their two houses less than a half a mile apart, they lived in princely isolation, but making splendid contribution to the business and social life of the whole region. They built a schoolhouse and both served as school directors of a far flung district extending considerably beyond the boundaries of their own six-mile square possessions. At the conclusion of my first official visit



*Rosalia High School, ca. 1905*

to the school, I was invited to be guest for the night at the home of John McGregor. His household included two children and his mother, whose speech revealed her Scotch extraction, while every detail bespoke the good taste and efficiency of his charming wife.

Next morning, with a feeling of reluctance, I started on my way to the next school a half day's drive to the north. I had driven an hour or so when a young cattleman rode up beside me and opened conversation, with, "Any objection to my riding along here with you for awhile? Hain't seen a man to talk to for more'n a week. Gits sort o' lonesome ridin' these hills every day, all by yerself." Replying that I was about as lonesome as he could be, I invited him to tie his horse to the buggy and ride with me; but he politely fenced the invitation by saying, "No, I better stick to my horse. Can't never tell when I'll see a stray and I'll lose my job if I don't 'tend to business. I'll just ride along here an' talk a while if ye don't mind." So he kept me company till noon, asking all sorts of questions and chipping in a comment as he felt disposed. Stopping at a ranch house for lunch, I invited him to join me, but he politely declined saying he had a "snack" cashed away near the place where he had joined me and he would have to ride hard the rest of the day to make up for lost time.

The next summer, 1890, I had completed at Garfield, a residence for R. C. McCroskey, later state senator, and long a regent of the State College. When, as I was about to return to Colfax, he kindly informed me of a

vacancy in the principalship of the Farmington School, saying that General Tannatt, then in business and also member of the board of regents, was a friend of his and a member of the school board, and handing me a letter of introduction to the General. Hiring a saddle horse, I at once rode to Farmington and found the gentleman, with his ledger, in the office of his hardware store. As he scrutinized me over the tops of his glasses, I approached and handed him Mr. McCroskey's letter, after reading which, he gave me another critical but brief examination, ending with, "No, can't think of hiring a boy to run this school. This is a man's job." Thus summarily counted out, I decided to see the other two directors before relinquishing my quest. I opened my next interview, which was with Dr. Benson, with a recital of my interview with General Tannatt. To this he replied, "His action is nothing to worry about around here. I can act more quickly and perhaps more wisely, knowing in advance the General's attitude. What credentials have you with you?" Offering Mr. McCroskey's letter, my two certificates and two letters from school directors at Penawawa and at Bethel, together with a letter from Superintendent Bean, he looked me over saying, "Very well, let's go over and see Dr. Grimm, the other member of the board." After introduction and a report by Dr. Benson on what had taken place, Dr. Grimm said, "Well, it seems to me there's only one thing to do. This is the only first-grade certificate yet presented to us. School opens next Monday. I'm in favor of making a contract right now, provided you think as I do." So the papers were made out and I left with the position in my pocket — a principalship with one subordinate teacher, and with a salary of a hundred dollars per month.

This chapter closes with recital of an incident or two involving disciplinary problems, and reintroducing my cousin, Bert Rice when a student, save the mark, at Colfax Academy, at the time when Miss Leota West, also previously mentioned in this series, was in charge of that institution.

One excessively warm afternoon in June, one after another of the pupils had asked for, and received permission to go out into the school yard to study under the trees, until all had gone from the room except Bert, when he, too, meekly asked to be favored also. Looking up from her work of examining written lessons, she replied somewhat as follows: "Bertie, you are the only member of this school who cannot be trusted to do any studying out of sight of the teacher." Resuming her work again, she looked up just in time to anticipate the boy's evident intention to climb out of a nearby window. Substantially plump and portly as she was, she tripped down the aisle just in time to pull down a sash so exactly amidstships of the miscreant that he fairly balanced over the window sill, following up her advantage by administering a wholesome dose of local treatment with a substantial maple ruler which she happened to have in her hand.

Some weeks later, during a recitation in arithmetic, the class had become inattentive and surreptitiously communicative. Hearing the whispering and noting the general lack of attention to problem demonstration, the teacher, after speaking a rather sharp reprimand, concluded with a final warning; but scarcely was the threat spoken when she discovered Bert whispering to a nearby girl, who, to this day he insists, first asked him a question. All innocent of the possibility of any one else being involved, the teacher commanded, "Bertie, you may come up here." The order was meekly obeyed, when she picked him up bodily and placed him ingloriously on her lap. With a teen-aged boy's innate consciousness of the impropriety of such a procedure, the unfortunate miscreant changed color, looked first at his teacher, and then at his mischievous classmates and did a most heroic thing. Suddenly throwing his arms around the lady's neck, he gave her a sounding salute on the cheek. To his great surprise and indescribable satisfaction, he was unceremoniously dropped, as I may say, and the general verdict was that Bert had won.

On a third occasion, he returned to the playground from a nearby drug store enjoying the fragrance of what appeared to be a bottle of Hoyt's German Cologne, then a popular toilet water. As the bell rang for assembly, he was beset by a dozen or more girls presenting their handkerchiefs to be perfumed. Gathering up a handful, he poured over them the contents of his bottle which proved to be a saturated solution of ammonia. The effect was so pronounced that an extension of recess was necessary to ventilate the school room.