



Bunchgrass Historian

Volume 1, No. 2

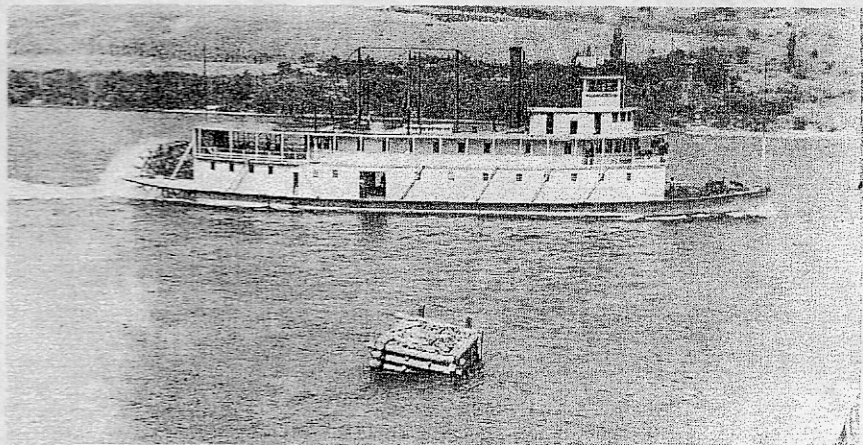
SUMMER, 1973

The River Road to Ragtown that Opened the Palouse

By June Crithfield

As we ponder the potentials of development on the Snake River today we are very close to the realization of the dreams others had long ago.

It is impossible to paint a picture of the gradual development of the river with an even brushing across the canvas. One must first place the river, but then may find it necessary to jump from one stretch to another to paint in developments as they happened. To keep each kind of development in chronological order would mean a separate sketch for each which could present something in modern art hardly recognized as the picture we are after today. So



The steamer SPOKANE paddling upriver to Ragtown in 1900.

Three steamers have carried the name "Lewiston" and a new boat commissioned at Portland, Oregon on May 16 of this year will again bear that name. The tug "Lewiston" is a new addition to the Knappton Towboat Co.'s fleet which serves the Columbia-Snake River System. The new "Lewiston" is currently serving the Almota port and expects to extend service to the Idaho city in 1975 when slackwater will permit navigation another 35 miles upriver, with barges.



Bunchgrass Historian

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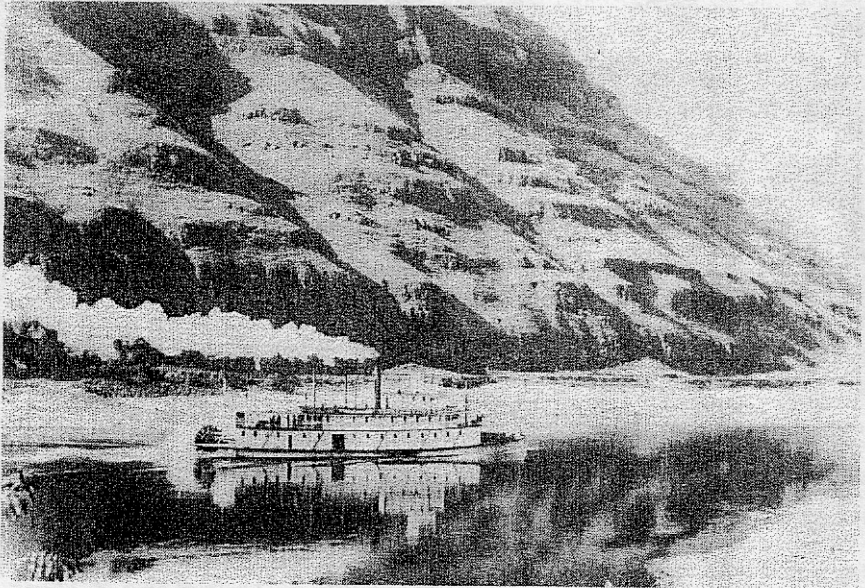
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if the following account seems at times to depart the current subject only to return at a later time, this is the reason.

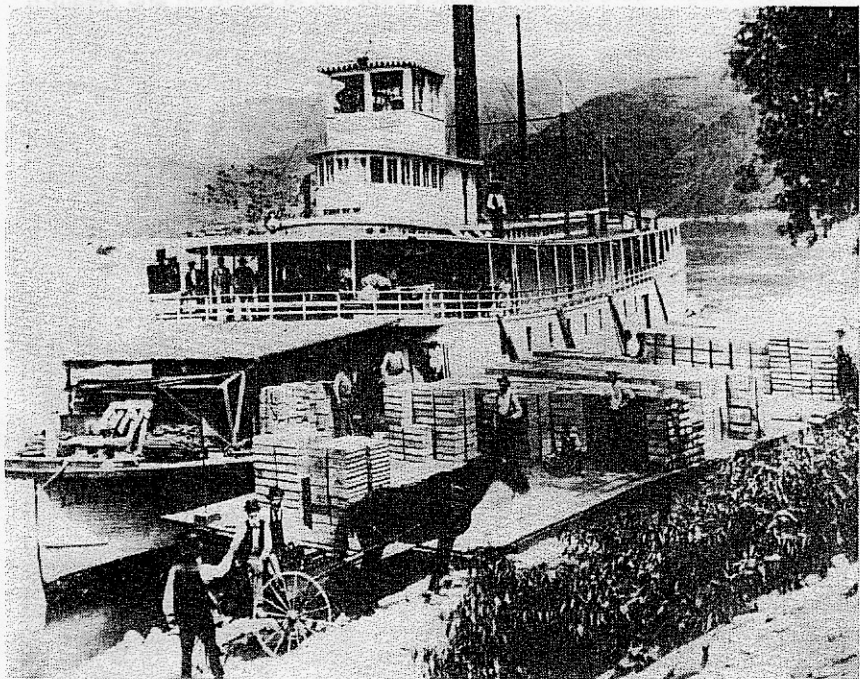
Years ago the Snake River was the only highway into this "inland empire." It ran at the front door of Whitman county and played a key role in the settlement of the Palouse country.

One hundred and twelve years ago, in 1861, the first steamer, the **Col. Wright**, pushed upriver to Lewiston (Ragtown) with passengers and freight headed for the gold mines in Idaho. This opened the way for settlement. Soon there were small villages strung along the river at various points. Texas City, and later Riparia, Central Ferry, Penawawa, Almota, Wawawai, Steptoe Canyon and Wilma. Each had its special reason for existence and some flourished and died and thrived again according to the tides of time.

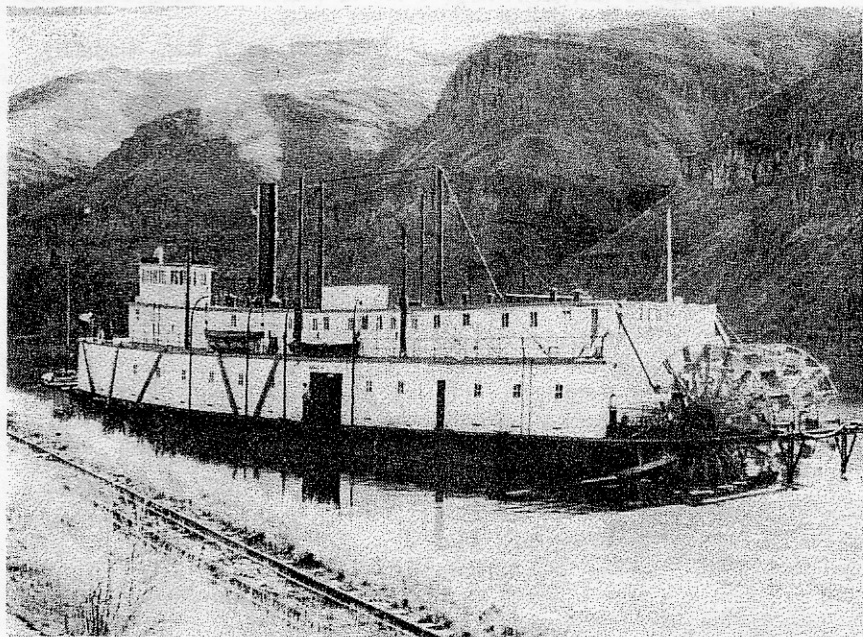


Steaming by Wilma Bar below Lewiston-Clarkston long before the Pomeroy highway was built. Photo Courtesy Carol Wilson.

June Crithfield is the author of "OF YESTERDAY AND THE RIVER" now in its third printing



Loading fruit at Wawawai. Man facing camera shaking hands is John B. Tabor.



The last LEWISTON unloading wheat at Crum siding. Taken in 1938.

During the 1860's the **Col. Wright**, the **Spray**, the **Casadilla**, and the **Nez Perce Chief** brought more miners and their supplies to Lewiston and steamed downriver with the gold of their efforts. The **Nez Perce Chief** carried the richest cargo ever when she was loaded with \$382,000 in gold dust in 1863.

By the late 1870's the **Spokane** and the **Harvest Queen** were bringing in settlers and agricultural machinery, soldiers to control the Indians; and in return they were carrying grain downriver. At one time there were sixteen steamers called the "wheat fleet" in operation on the Snake River. The **Almota** paid for herself in one trip when she carried soldiers to Lewiston to reinforce Gen. Howard's troops during the war with Chief Joseph. Steamboating was a very profitable enterprise and the Oregon Steam Navigation Co. held a virtual monopoly on the river traffic. The boats were often named for the thriving cities of the inland empire, the **Almota**, the **Spokane**, the **Asotin**, the **Umatilla**, and the three steamers named **Lewiston**. Or they were named for prominent men of the day, steamboat captains or respected business men, the **John Gates**, the **D. S. Baker**, the **J. M. Hannoford**, and the **J. N. Teal**.

Steamboating was not without peril and the river saw the end of many of the boats. The **Asotin** was crushed to pieces in an 1918 ice jam, the **Annie Faxon** was destroyed by a boiler explosion in 1893, the early **Lewiston** and the **Spokane** burned at the Lewiston docks in 1922, and the **Umatilla** ran aground and sank in 1933.

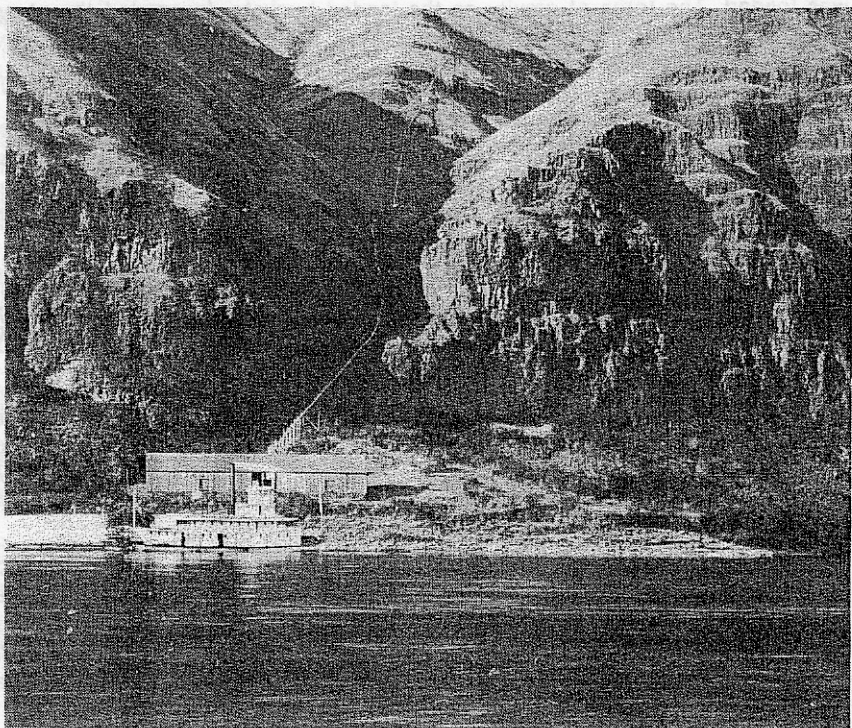
The first wheat shipped from the Palouse country was hauled to Almota where it was picked up by steamer in 1876. By 1877 twenty to twenty-five wagonloads of grain a day were hauled to Almota for shipment downriver.

As more and more land was plowed and planted to wheat the farmers searched for some way to eliminate the long, hot, dusty hauls to the river. The first wheat pipeline was conceived in 1879 by Major Sewell Truax, an engineer and surveyor by trade. This was a wooden pipeline which ran down the hill at Knoxway Canyon on the south side of the river near Truax. A long thin line running down the ridge is a visible reminder yet today.

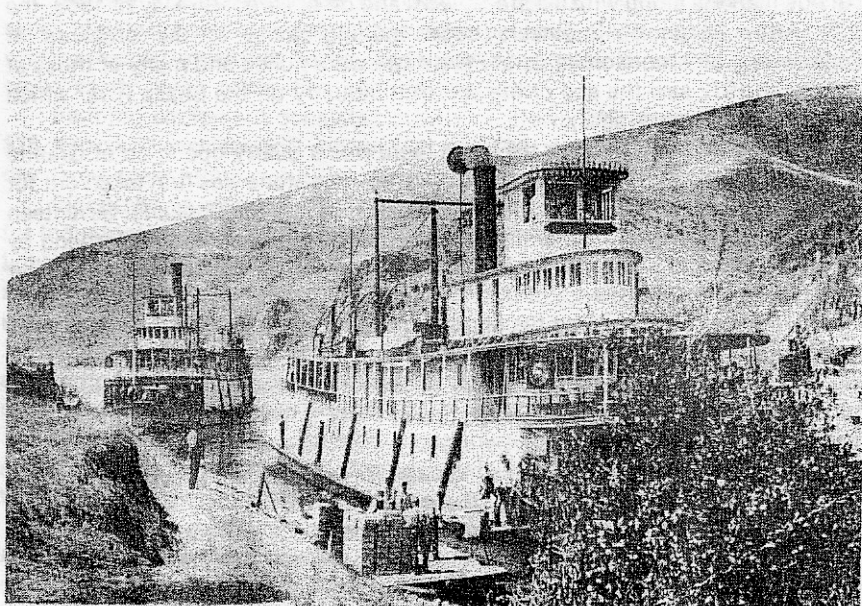
Other pipelines were soon installed at Truax, Bishop's Bar, Nisqually John's, and Steptoe Canyon on the north shore and at Judkin's on the Kelly Bar on the south side. Some of these pipelines were made of wood, some of sheet iron or tin. They were not too successful. The grain traveled so fast down the chutes that the hulls were burned off making it useless for milling. The farmers struggled to perfect the system since it did save time. They inserted baffles in the pipelines to slow the descent of the grain, lined one with glass for a smoother surface but even this did not prevent the frequent burning of the grain. At least one present day farmer feels the method could still be made to work by first filling the pipeline and then controlling the descent of grain at the bottom. In spite of the mediocre success of the pipelines, some were still in use when the railroad line was built along the river in 1907.

In 1890, a small rail tram was built across the river from Wawawai by Garfield county farmers. Built of 2 x 6's surfaced with strap iron, the tracks came down the canyon one-half mile then curved across a gully. The grain was hauled the rest of the way to the river. Not considered of much help to the farmers, this tram was moved a year later to the site of the famous Mayview cable car tramway which remained in operation until 1942.

A later method of getting the grain to the river was the construction of the first bucket tram at Judkin's in 1893. This consisted of a continuous loop of cable which ran down the hillside to the river, supported on towers. Attached to



Grain pipeline running down Knoxway Canyon in Garfield county. Built in the 1880's. Photo Courtesy of the Oregon Historical Society.



Steamers LEWISTON and SPOKANE loading fruit at Wawawai before 1900.

the cable were 146 buckets, or arm-like projections onto which one sack of grain was loaded. The force of gravity as the loaded buckets descended the steep hillsides brought the empties back to the top for reloading. Another bucket tramway was built one mile below Wawawai, at Interior, in 1901 by Aaron Kuhn of Colfax. This was the only tram in Whitman county.

Grain warehouses began to spring up all along the river. One at Donaldson's near Silcott, two at Steptoe Canyon, one at Squally John's, one at Judkin's on the Kelly Bar, one at Bishop, two at the Mayview site, one at Interior, two at Almota. Across the river just below Wawawai was the Fite and Davis warehouse and below that the old Ilia warehouse.

Another kind of warehouse had dotted the landscape at several settlements on the river in the early years and these were the Hawley, Dodd and Co. implement warehouses which were established at Penawawa, Almota, and Wawawai in 1877.

Not until after 1884 was there any other way of transporting the needs of the settlers. Before then everything came and went by steamer and where there were no warehouses or docking facilities, the supplies were simply dumped off on the sand bars where they waited to be hauled away by the owner. Barrels of flour, sacks of meal, crates and bales together with the red wheels and wooden frames of farm machinery lay scattered at the water's edge.

While the farmers on the plateaus above the river were just beginning to experiment with grain crops, those living on homesteads along the banks of the Snake River began to realize their future lay in planting orchards of soft fruits to which the climatic conditions were so advantageous. It began when Alexander Canutt planted the first fruit trees at Penawawa in 1874. After this orchards were planted on both sides of the river and the fruit industry flourished. In March of 1890, the Snake River Fruit Growers Association was formed at Wawawai with Dave Kelley, Henry Spalding, and James B. Holt the first directors. Wawawai later became the largest fruit shipping point. In 1890 the steamers carried 100,000 boxes of fruit downriver and approximately 7,000 tons of wheat to outside markets along with livestock, wool and other cargo. (In May of 1966, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers began pulling some of the orchards at Penawawa. Later more orchards at Penawawa were pulled and many of those at Wawawai. 1972 saw the end of the soft fruit industry on the Snake River which began over 90 years ago.)

At various times through the years there was a quarry operation at Granite Point which provided yet another type of cargo. The stone was first taken out for a railroad bridge at Ainsworth, near Pasco, in 1881, on the **Spokane**. Seventeen years later a great deal of granite was quarried here and hauled to Portland by the **Norma** for use in building the new Customs House. This building was later used by the Portland district of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The last use of the granite was in riprapping the shoofly track and the haul roads at the Lower Granite damsite.

Although the gold mining boom in Idaho had cooled by the mid-1870's mining for gold along this part of the Snake River was a profitable endeavor for many years for those with the patience.

At New York Bar, an eastern syndicate, for which the bar was named, had planned to begin placer mining there but abandoned the diggings soon afterwards. In 1891, a Chicago promoter was ready to place a floating mining camp on the Snake River large enough to accommodate 150 miners. Facilities for room and board for these men were carried right on the raft together with all

the necessary gear for the mining operation as it moved up and down the Snake River. In spite of these interests the Chinese probably mined more Snake River gold than anyone else.

Imagine for a moment the variety of sights which must have greeted the eyes of passengers aboard a river steamer in those days! The dugouts and brush huts of small Indian encampments, Chinese panning for gold, tramways and grain warehouses, fruit drying and packing sheds, machinery warehouses, the river hotels and ferries, flour and saw mills, the river dredges and the passing of other steamers. Just the flavor of some of the names of people and places heard then is enough to whet the appetite of nostalgia. Captain Baughman, Felix Warren, Henry Spalding, William L. LaFollette, all highly respected men of the day. Kentuck's Ferry, Hull's Hotel, Iliia, Boom Boys and others.

It has only been 33 years since the **Lewiston** made her way downriver for the last time ending the steamboat era.

By 1975 we will see commercial traffic on the Snake river again. Not the romantic old paddlewheels but great river barges that can haul many times over what the **Annie Faxon** could.

As commercial and recreational traffic on the river increases in the years to come the Snake River scene will surely be as varied and colorful as those of by-gone days.

Written in Honor of Our 50th Anniversary

[Con't. from Vol. 1, No. 1]

By Lena Parvin

Heading outfits had been replaced by binders; bundles stood in shocks a week or 10 days before threshing. Harvest time often extended over a period of 6 or 7 weeks depending upon how soon Matt Ragan, Seagle Bros. or some other custom worker could be induced to "pull in."

Delivery to warehouse was by four-horse teams, wagons loaded with 50 sacks of wheat and making about five miles per hour. Six-horse teams and trail wagons hauled up to 110 sacks. From standing grain to warehouse receipts could easily mean more than two months time.

Farming equipment consisted mainly of plows \$65 (2 or 3-bottom), drill \$75, harrow \$5 each section, mower \$60, rake \$60, wagon \$80, disc \$85. Present day large-scale farming outfits can and do run into the 6th column.

Electricity as a source of power was quite impractical. What better power for industrial and agricultural use than steam, waterpower and horses? As for light, it was for city dweller only, and there again a trifle impractical—there still being those who rather questioned the advisability of house wiring just for a few lights.

None could have visualized time and labor-saving appliances such as automatic washer, dryer, vacuum cleaner, deep freeze, water heater and a score of smaller items which so effectively replaced good old elbow grease.

As a source of heat, ridiculous—even if electric heating systems had been available; with a woodshed full of range and heater wood together with a couple tons of coal, what more could anyone ask?

Rural homes were lighted by kerosene lamps, main living quarters, that is. As for bedrooms, simple—just carry a lamp. Gasoline mantle lamps were coming into use—a bit dangerous, perhaps, but a marvelous improvement over the yellow coal-oil lamp. A few Delco systems were to be seen. Rural electric service had its beginning in the '20s. The handy kerosene lantern, also later

replaced by the gasoline lantern, in winter evenings was carried to the barn to milk and bucket-feed the calves, to the woodshed for an extra skuttle of coal for night fires, to the cellar for a pan of apples for the bunch to munch, and to light the way on any other outdoor errands.

Indoor plumbing was the exception. Newer and better homes were so equipped, older homes were not. The Saturday night washtub bath by the kitchen stove was quite routine. In warmer weather, outdoor showers often served. A tank was placed on a frame allowing for standing position, then filled by hose with water in the morning. By evening the sun warmed the water for a comfortable shower.

Refrigeration was very inadequate, to say the least. Ice boxes were used and ice could be purchased for a cent or two per pound—a great improvement over “putting up” ice, which meant sawing 15-inch ice squares from lake or stream, hauling to the ice house and packing in sawdust.

For holidays or just any Sunday morning—“Let’s make a freezer of ice cream.” You’ve never really enjoyed ice cream to the fullest until you have cranked a hand freezer some 30 minutes or to the back aching stage. Made with thick separated cream and Mom’s good custard mix, the reward makes it all worthwhile—i.e., licking the paddles and snitching a few spoons full of lip-smacking, mouth-watering goodness when backs are turned. Following a few hours ripening period, packed in ice and salt, open up the freezer and dip out heaping helpings of delicious ice cream. Cut hunks of devil’s food cake, sit back and let the rest of the world go by. Seconds? Indeed there were!

Cooking on wood and coal range had its advantages, especially on cold frosty mornings. How does this breakfast appeal to you? Thick slices of sugar-cured ham right from the smoke house, smoked link sausage, fried eggs sunny side up, hash browned potatoes, whole milk gravy, fluffy hot soda buttermilk biscuits, sorghum molasses and honey, Man, that was livin’!

Calories? Never heard of ‘em. You were intended to be fat or to be thin, so why worry. Weight watching and dietary problems were not the serious matters they have since become. “If there’s good food around, enjoy it—good food never hurt nobody.”

Health problems were often baffling due perhaps to a certain extent to the nonexistence of penicillin, serums, antibiotics and various wonder drugs. Had they been available during the 1918 influenza epidemic, many lives, no doubt, would have been spared. Specialists were few and located only in cities. Surgery was performed only as a last resort. The good old family doctor brought younguns into the world, rarely in a hospital, and guarded their health and well-being through to maturity.

Hospitals and nurses were limited in number as well as efficiency, and patronized only in extreme cases. County pest houses and poor farms served a questionable purpose.

Diseases that plagued humanity were pneumonia, tuberculosis, smallpox, scarlet and typhoid fever, rheumatism, and of course the usual children’s diseases. La grippe and quinsy were winter troublemakers, oftentimes inflicting punishing after effects (eye, ear and glands, for example) with a vengeance. Now the story is much different, less of former ailments, but sharp increase in heart, stroke, cancer, arthritis, allergy and tired blood.

Mom baked her own bread as well as all the goodies the family loved so well, and churned her own butter. Butter and egg money paid the grocery bill with some to spare. She could buy no mixes, frozen foods or baby food. The

pantry with its many open shelves was her own domain. In it was her new Kitchen Queen and the equipment and makings for foods unlimited. Now, no Kitchen Queen, no open shelves, and no pantry. Handsome built-ins line our kitchen walls.

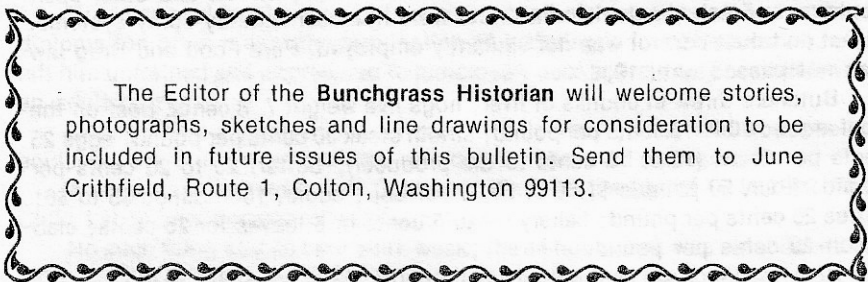
A good bank cellar was indispensable for storage of a winter's supply of home grown vegetables and apples. Shelves were lined with home canned fruits, jellies, jams, pickles and preserves. Canned vegetables came mainly from grocery shelves, variety rather limited.

In the days before babysitters, filter cigarettes and singing commercials we had no chain stores or self-service markets, no year-round fresh fruit and vegetable supply. Retail prices were more or less controlled by the law of supply and demand. Merchants accepted farm produce in exchange for groceries. Every farm had a good orchard and garden. Our fruit now comes from Snake river or California.

1915 brides had been trained to turn out the weekly wash beautifully white and clean. Clothes must be soaked in soap suds, then well washed in hot suds in a hand powered washing machine. White things were boiled in suds in a wash boiler, rinsed in clear water and finally put through blueing water. White clothes hung in the sunlight, colored in the shade. Used suds were great for scrubbing the chicken house and other out-buildings. The entire project consumed some six hours, often more. No doubt about it, Mondays were strenuous as well as blue.

Much time and hard labor was connected with the maintenance of a well-ordered home. A case in point requiring energy and stamina a-plenty was spring housecleaning. For those never having experienced this endurance test, minus the aid of a vacuum cleaner, cleaning preparations, etc., the true significance of pure drudgery involved cannot be actually appreciated. A good approach would be, go through all closets, drawers and cupboards, taking inventory in an orderly manner. Then taking one room at a time, strip it bare, moving practically everything outside for airing and dusting. Carpeting was taken up, hung on the line, beaten free of dust and exposed to fresh air, wind and sunshine. Then came washing down painted walls, ceilings and woodwork.

When the living room was due for a paper and paint job, experience really counted. Mom, being a dyed-in-the-wool do-it-yourselfer, made everything move along smoothly toward a satisfactory conclusion. But for the inexperienced worker, a detailed account might go something like this: After painstakingly accurate measurement, strips of paper somehow are found to be either short or long; pattern matching often presents problems. Strips are brushed with paste (too thick or too thin; again too little or too much, folded and trimmed. Now for a test of skill and patience. Despite well laid plans and



The Editor of the **Bunchgrass Historian** will welcome stories, photographs, sketches and line drawings for consideration to be included in future issues of this bulletin. Send them to June Crithfield, Route 1, Colton, Washington 99113.

preparations, wet ceiling paper has an uncanny way of becoming quite out of control, tearing with every move and finally draping itself most ungracefully over and around the distraught paper hanger. The hopeless frustration of it all was something to try men's or women's souls, and truly a pitiful sight to behold. Finally after overcoming great odds, short tempers and nervous tension, the job was completed. The terrific mess was cleared away, floor scrubbed, and the entire scene took on a brighter and more encouraging aspect.

We would wash windows, replace carpets and freshly varnished furniture, THEN with the last remaining ounce of strength, hang freshly cleaned curtains and drapes.

Rubbing alcohol and epsom salts baths provided relief for sore aching muscles, but the real healing balm was the feel of a clean, fresh smelling house. After all, cleanliness is akin to godliness.

In the way of grueling toil, fall butchering ran a close second to housecleaning. Butcher shops were not so regularly patronized as today. Each family butchered from 4 to 8 hogs. Several neighbors pooled their efforts and made of it a butchering bee. A big dinner followed, making a enjoyable and busy day for all.

Then followed days not so enjoyable. Porkers must be cut up. Hams, shoulders and bacon were carefully trimmed, lean scrap went into sausage meat, fat into lard. Sausage was ground, seasoned and mixed well. Ham, shoulders and bacon were cured in brine solution or by dry salt method. Scrap fat was cut into cubes, then cooked in large iron kettles set over fire. Care was taken to turn out pure white unscorched lard, which, when cracklings were brown, was ladled into various containers, chilled, covered and stored in a cool place. Sausage patties were fried, packed in earthen jars and covered with hot lard for next summer's use. The hog heads and feet were cleaned and cooked. By-products were pickled pigs feet and tongue, head cheese, liverwurst and mincemeat. Also tasty dishes of scrambled eggs and brains or sweet breads, liver and onions, baked heart and sage dressing. Best of all and what we've been looking forward to is oven-fried spareribs or backbone with sauerkraut and baked potatoes. The salt curing process required three weeks, smoking 48 hours. Meat was now ready to be hung in a cool dry place; some preferred burying it in an oat bin.

Other annual projects included making sauerkraut, apple cider, picking geese, making soap out of cracklings, packing eggs down in water glass for winter use. Winter egg production was oftentimes nil, possibly due to no egg mash.

Food items such as coffee, beans, rice, crackers, cheese, dried fruits, pickles, candy and meats could still be seen in bags, barrels and other open containers. Fresh vegetables and fruits were not freshened by spray systems. Insect and dust control was not vigilantly employed. Pure Food and Drug law was not passed until 1938.

Butchers threw in chunks of liver; hogs live weight 7, 8 cents. Beef on the hoof around 10 to 15 cents per pound; sirloin steak 30 cents per pound; eggs 25 cents per dozen (10 to 15 cents to the producer); butter, 20 to 25 cents per pound; flour, 50 pounds \$1.50 or \$5.00 per bbl.; sugar, 100 pounds \$5 to \$6; coffee 25 cents per pound; bakery bread 5 cents or 6 loaves for 25 cents; slab bacon 20 cents per pound.

How we managed without plastic, Scotch tape, Kleenex, paper towels, napkins and plates, we will never know. All these and various other convenient

items were not to become a part of our lives for years to come.

Following a holiday dinner, Mom stood over the ironing board what seemed like hours "doing up" a three-yard linen company tablecloth and napkins with flat irons heated on the kitchen stove.

In the clothing department, with the purchase of a suit of clothes priced at \$18 to \$30, the obliging salesman threw in a shirt or tie and suspenders. Dress shoes, \$3.50 pair; hat, \$3 to \$4; overalls \$1.50 pair.

With the exception of coats and suits, the choice of women's ready mades was more or less unsatisfactory. For best results you made it yourself or hired a dressmaker. Many fine fabrics were to be had, reasonably priced. Silks, brocades, taffeta, crepe-de-chine, georgette crepe, smart satins, delightfully sheer organdy and tissue gingham. In wash materials colors were not fast, fabrics not pre-shrunk, and of all things—no drip dries.

Hosiery was predominately black or white with a few browns. Cotton for common occasions; silk lisle (lace), one pair for best. Very sheer stockings would have been frowned upon. Currently some 365 million pairs of nylons are manufactured yearly in a wide variety of shades.

As for slacks, shorts, short shorts and bikinis, Heaven forbid! No one would have believed the day would come when women and girls would possess these scanties, much less be seen in them, perhaps smoking a cigarette. Shocking, bold, immodest, just a few such adjectives would have been used in a vain attempt to describe such brazen conduct.

A Saturday night invitation, "Let's go to the movies" was happily accepted. Sure, it was silent pictures with explanatory inserts, so what—it was real fun. A broken film and the usual pause for repairs gave time to concentrate on our popcorn and candy. Talkies first appeared in the early '20s. That was the day!

Leisure time and pleasure seeking for many was something special and not to be taken for granted. Summertime—picnics, the circus, 1, 2 or 3 celebrations, camp meetings. Wintertime—shows, parties, dances in homes as well as community centers, skating and sleigh-riding.

Ah, those precious memories! A Sunday afternoon and evening date. A shiny black, yellow-wheeled, rubber-tired buggy, pretty lap robe and a pair of high-stepping trotters. A long leisurely afternoon drive through shady lanes, show in the evenings, sweet nothings whispered in a little pink ear at the gate, and romance was in the making.

All this was on the way out; the fellows were very soon to be calling for their dates in Ford runabouts or Dad's Buick. Doubtless much more thrilling and exciting, but perhaps no more romantic.

Education—as always has been of prime concern. In yesteryear higher learning was not available to all, also, not actually essential in the climb up the ladder of success.

Grade school teachers taught as many as all eight grades. A high school diploma too often meant the termination of a student's formal education, and left him untrained and unprepared to judiciously accept life's responsibilities as an adult citizen.

College or a business course took two to four years, and supposedly equipped the student with a well-rounded fundamental background.

A child was required by law to attend school to the age of 16 in 1909. The Child Labor Law became effective in 1924.

No such thing as a 40 hour work week; the 44 hour week was established in 1938. Prior to this working days were from 6 to 6 with one hour for noon six days

a week. Labor unions were instrumental in the change of working conditions, hours and pay.

To the list of "things" we did not have or do, let us add income tax, sales tax, government controls and subsidies, billions spent for foreign aid and to land a rocket on the moon, or to circle the globe in a matter of a few hours. Nor was our nation saddled with a staggering debt. We also did not have social security, improved public school systems, travel conditions and other services and protections that we now enjoy.

Nobody wore a wrist watch; continuous vision lens and invisible hearing aids were yet to come. Even bi-focals were not generally worn. Some folks used steel rimmed "specs" with a second pair for seeing at a distance.

Postal rates were 2 cents for letters, 1 cent for cards.

Telephone service, such as it was, was quite generally in use. In fact, listening in on the party line which often served 10 to 20 patrons was a favorite indoor pastime.

Olden days and ways were, or so we thought, "good" and life was lived in peace and contentment.

Be that as it may, we must recognize and appreciate that this time and labor saving, highly specialized, stream-lined, push button, automatic, ready mix, dynamic world of ours has placed in our hands a multitude of "Better things for better living" in this remarkable and progressive age we live in today.

End of an Era

By Harry E. Sever

Landmarks which once served as community centers are gone or fast disappearing. But they are well remembered.

Years ago, all roads, such as they were, wagon-rutted country lanes, followed the cow and Indian trails which led to the old Indian ford on Union Flat. There was the famous Hamilton pine tree. The trails converged and passed the Hamilton Schoolhouse and on a short distance was the Saints Home church and campgrounds. It was nestled on a pine-covered benchland above the creek and under the protecting shelter of the steep north hillside.

There were several well-defined trails leading over the hills toward Rebel Flat and Colfax, the county seat. Even the Union and Rebel ex-soldiers from their two separate settlements met on friendly footings beneath the shadowy pines and enjoyed the cool spring water and the friendly spirit of the Saints.

All members spoke of the others as "Brother" or "Sister" so and so. Twice each year, around the Fourth of July and again in the autumn when the fall work was done, they assembled.

The hitching rack was lined with horses hitched to single buggies, surreys with the fringe on top, Harvey and Ragan hacks and democrat wagons. Most all brought tarps or tents. The horses and the family cows were turned out into the church pasture to graze. The barn was full of hay for the horses and straw for the bed ticks. Some farmers moved in their ranch cook houses on wagon wheels. Others felt a little self-conscious if they were still using the old covered wagon that they had used to cross the plains. Those who still rode in democrat wagons felt socially a little beneath those with surreys and hacks.

Mr. Sever is the Author of "DAM MANIA." He is greatly interested in history.



The Saint's Home Church built on land donated by George Davis. People came here for religious retreat twice a year for a week at a time, camping out under the pines. There was a dormitory with kitchen facilities, a barn full of hay and a pasture for the stock.



For a week at a time these hardy religious pilgrims of the prairie schooners: mothers, fathers, and children of the new West came here to relax and renew camp life and memories of the Old Oregon Trail while they visited. Talking crops, real estate and horse trades more or less on the sly for the main purpose of the assemblage was worship.

Seventy-eight years ago come New Year's Eve, my parents, Myrtle Lucinda Martin and David Clinton Sever, were the first couple to be married here in the new church. Grandfather Martin, an early-day preacher and missionary, lies buried in an isolated and abandoned cemetery high on the ridge that overlooked the Saints Home church and campgrounds.

Today young folks can motor ten miles to church in less time than it took dad to harness old John and Ned.

The old days were something special. The community spirit of the small neighborhoods, the dependence people had on one another and the willingness to "get together."

James A. Perkins, Co-Founder of Colfax

[Continued from Volume 1, No. 1]

By Roy Milton Chatters

Members of the second generation of the Perkins family to occupy the pioneer homesite in Colfax with their parents were Minnie Belle, Myrtle May, Stella and Sumner Ewart.

Minnie (1874-1965), the first white child born in Colfax, married L. L. Tower, a mining engineer. Following his death she returned to Colfax where for many years she was employed as a librarian. It is to her that we owe much we know about the early history of the family. She prepared a very extensive genealogy of the Perkins family from the 14th to the 20th centuries. In her later years she lived in the family home on Perkins Avenue with her widowed mother and Sumner's family. Mr. and Mrs. Tower had four children, Louis L. Jr., Angelo Emory, James Allen and Margaret Jeannette.

Myrtle May (1875-1966) married Charles E. Scriber in 1896. Mr. Scriber was cashier of the Second National Bank of Colfax. Mrs. Scriber, as were her sisters, was educated at Mills Seminary in Oakland, Calif. The Scribers had two children, Jeannette (Mrs. Joseph G. Saboe, Hermiston, Ore.) and Geraldine (Mrs. Cordell Buchanan, Encino, Calif.)

The Perkins' third daughter, Stella (1879-1920), married Vernon B. McDowell and to this union Malcom H. and Jane were born.

Sumner Ewart Perkins, only son of James A. and Sara, was born in 1884 at Colfax. He studied for a time at Washington State College in Pullman where he roomed with Harry Davenport of Spokane. Later, he went to Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia, but left because of ill health. Next, he attended the University of Vermont, again leaving due to illness. He returned to the West to homestead in northeastern Washington near Northport.

A while later he returned to Colfax where he became actively engaged in the banking business with his father. Upon his father's death in 1920, he became assistant cashier of the Colfax State Bank in which position he remained until 1929. He was secretary of Colfax Savings and Loan until 1951. Also, he served as clerk of the Colfax School District for more than 13 years and as a member of the school board for 21 years.

In 1915, Sumner married Ethel May Case in St. Paul, Minn. The former Miss

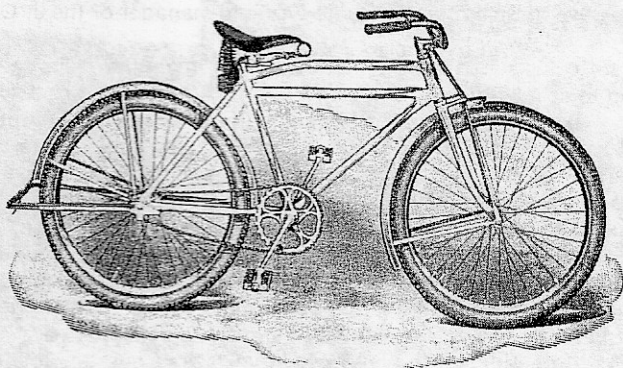
Case was the daughter of L. S. Case who was general sales manager for Weyerhaeuser Timber Company in the Twin Cities. He later transferred to Spokane. Miss Case was one of the first two home economics teachers in Colfax.

Mr. and Mrs. Perkins had three sons, James Allen II (1916-1936), Louis Case (1920, now living in Salem, Ore.), and Donald Ewart (1922-1945). Louis and Donald were in military service during World War II. The Perkins had one daughter, Catherine (1925, living in Bellingham, Wash.).

The three boys were engaged in a bicycle business which was started by James A. II. A large stock of bicycle frames, wheels and small parts, plus the business records which were in the log cabin are preserved by the Society.

Louis has provided me with the following information:

"Our brother, Jim, was extremely ambitious and enterprising. He was president of the senior class and vice president of the student body. Attained Eagle Scout rank and Boy Scout of the Year award. His thriving bicycle business



Jim Perkins

BICYCLE SALES AND REPAIRS

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was interrupted by returned to Washington State College and was on a bicycle business trip to Endicott at the time of his fatal accident.

"Donald was active in the bicycle business and scouting. Attended the second National Boy Scout Jamboree in Washington, D.C. Worked in the fishing industry in Alaska before joining the navy. He was a very resourceful and enterprising young man."

Catherine was president of Girls Federation and valedictorian of her Colfax High School graduating class and enjoyed playing the flute in high school and college bands and orchestras. She graduated from Washington State College where she was a member of Kappa Alpha Theta Sorority. Also, she attended the Prince School of Retailing in Boston and worked for Filenes in Boston and Abraham and Straus in Brooklyn in management positions and for Cappwells in California at Oakland.

She now lives in Bellingham, Wash., with her husband Jack Stoltz, a mechanical engineer with the Georgia-Pacific Corporation, and their four children, Lynette, Paul, Eric and Jeffrey.

Louis (Louie) has informed me that his greatest claim to fame "was being a caddy for Fred Stapleton when he won the Colfax golf course championship." He worked in the bicycle business and for Elliott's Paint Store and started his long (27 years) J. C. Penny Company career working part-time in the company's Colfax store as part of a distributive education class in high school. He was president of the high school student body.

He graduated from Washington State College where he was a member of Phi Sigma Kappa fraternity, Crimson Circle, Who's Who and Senior basketball manager. Louie obtained an ROTC commission as a second lieutenant and spent time in the military service during World War II and the Korean conflict. After the war, Louie married Marlys Hartgrave and they have one daughter, Cindy Lou. They live in Salem, Ore., where Louie is manager of the J. C. Penny store.

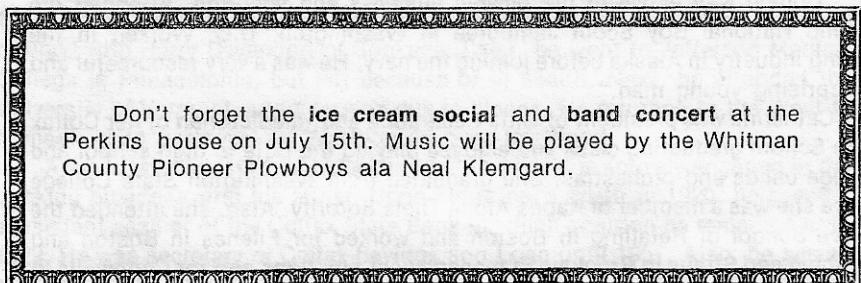
This tribute to his parents was made by Louis recently, "Our father and mother seemed to always be part of the community and enjoyed to 'Give' more than receive as the years rolled along. Their many activities and participation would be evident, if thoroughly explored." The following statements bear out his claim. Sumner was active in community affairs, spending many years in the Chamber of Commerce, cemetery board, school board, Boy Scout committees, athletic fan extraordinary, counseling immigrants for U.S. citizenship and helping the less fortunate. Ethel Perkins showed her true spirit as a hard worker in Red Cross programs and one of Colfax's largest blood donors, helped with election boards and was a charter member of Colfax P.E.O. chapter. She had a real interest in home economics activities all her life and was always learning.

Mr. and Mrs. Sumner Perkins were very active in the Congregational church of Colfax of which his parents, James A. and Sara Jane, were charter members. Rev. Estes, present pastor of this church, has been invited to prepare a history of his church for a future issue of the **Bunchgrass Historian**.

Conclusion:

It is hoped that the accounts of James A. Perkins, his wife and their descendants, carried in the first two issues of the quarterly, will give the reader a better appreciation for the Society's wish to restore the Perkins homesite as a memorial to these early pioneers.

Having, along with Mrs. Norma McGregor, devoted most of my waking hours for the past nine months to this restoration effort, I feel a strong kinship to James A. Perkins, Co-Founder and First Permanent Resident of Colfax, W.T.



Don't forget the **ice cream social** and **band concert** at the Perkins house on July 15th. Music will be played by the Whitman County Pioneer Plowboys ala Neal Klemgard.