



# Bunchgrass Historian

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## *Pioneer Mother Saves Her Children*



Mrs. Keith crawling two miles through a winter storm with a broken ankle.

# Pioneer Mother Saves Her Children

The pioneers of Whitman county were no less hardy than those who settled other parts of this country. With determination and endurance they met the hardships of disease, accident, and harsh weather head on. There must have been many incidents of extreme bravery shown in those days. An account of one such incident follows.

In 1879, Mrs. Frances Boone Keith gained recognition in national publications for her courage and fortitude. A 27 year old frontier wife and mother in the Leitchville district of Whitman county, Mrs. Keith's home overlooked the canyon of the Snake river. On January 9 of that year she decided to take her two small children to spend the night with a neighbor, Mrs. George Barkhuff, who lived two miles away. The menfolks, her husband, A. D. P. Keith, and her father, Daniel Miller Boone, had gone with Mr. Barkhuff to the Moscow mountains to cut wood for several days.

About four in the afternoon when the light of the winter day was already fading she led the horse with the two little girls astride up to a creek bank so she could mount. As she climbed on the horse it slipped on the ice and fell, pinning her beneath it. The children were thrown clear. The horse finally managed to get to its feet and wandered into a nearby shed. The fall had left Mrs. Keith with a broken ankle. In great pain she crawled to the shed and caught the horse once more and then helped the children to remount. Then unable to get on the horse herself, she put the reins between her teeth and began to crawl on hands and knees through the snow to the neighbor who was expecting her. Suffering with pain and cold she arrived late that night.

Mrs. Barkhuff aided them as best she could and then decided she should ride for a doctor. Cold and tired she stopped at the Eli Wiggin's home to rest and he volunteered to go to Genesee for the doctor. Mr. Wiggins only 17 years old at the time could not make the whole trip that night. He rode on the next day after the storm had eased and returned with the doctor. Mrs. Keith eventually recovered but remained lame the rest of her life. The courage against great odds shown by all three young people is a prime example of the pioneer spirit to do what had to be done. □

#### FOOTNOTE:

An account of the above incident was first published in the Palouse Gazette and later in the Boston Police Gazette where it appeared with artist's sketch. Mrs. Keith is the same one whose letter to her parents in Oregon appeared in the last issue of the Bunchgrass Historian. However, her father's name was incorrectly given then as David R. Lewis instead of Daniel Miller Boone. David R. Lewis was her maternal grandfather.



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# The Doctors and Other Remedies

By Lena Parvin

Much respect and esteem is due the memory of the Old Country Doctor, whose horse, buggy and courageous spirit carried him through rain, axle-deep mud, snowdrifts and darkness of night to try to bring comfort and relief to some suffering soul.

After warming his chilled hands over the heating stove, Doc sat at the bedside, checked pulse, body temperature, whites of eyes, and the tongue. Listened with a stethoscope to the respiration and heart beat, tapped here and there and somehow seemed to know what ailed the patient. In his black satchel he carried a pint-size drug supply from which he was able in most cases to fill his own prescriptions. Written instructions would probably be something like this: Take 1 teaspoonful before meals, eat light foods, keep feet warm, head cool, take plenty of liquids and rest. Donning his fur coat, heavy mittens and arctics, he again braved the cold and darkness unless the gravity of the case necessitated his staying the night. Fee \$3.00.

Due to travel conditions, long distances and insufficient funds, professional services were often out of the question. In which case, always available was a willing and resourceful soul in the person of "Granny" or "Aunt Polly" who was known to be "right handy with sick folks". She delivered babies, set bones, sewed up wounds, treated infection, pierced ears (with a darning needle) and more. She nursed fever patients and "catching sickness." To her, doctoring "youngun" diseases was routine. She soaked and poulticed everything from chilblains to snake bites. She even attempted amputation on extremely urgent occasions.

Foraging hikes during summer months, which covered woodland area, meadow and river bank, filled Grandma's medicine chest from Nature's own drug supply. Roots, barks, seeds, berries and an assortment of herbs from whence came medications in the form of poultices, syrups and a wide variety of teas and tonics. We understand why she "put by" for future use. She understood what to search for and where to find it. The following is an incomplete list of plants thought to possess medicinal value.

apple or peach tree bark	ague
barberry and hard cider	jaundice
burdock	skin and blood
chittum bark	laxative
choke cherry	blood builder
clover	sores, cancer
cockle bur	stings and bites
cranberry	erysipelas (poultice)
dandelion root	liver
dog fennel	fever
elm bark, flaxseed, garlic and hops	poultices
horehound	deafness, wh. cough
horseradish	neuralgia
lily of the valley	sub. digitalis
mullein	mumps, quinsy
parsley	dropsy
pumpkin seed	tape worm

raspberry .....summer complaint  
 tarweed .....asthma  
 sassafras bark .....blood thinner  
 peppermint .....heart and nerves  
 poppy .....pain

In the average household the drug supply consisted of camphor, castor oil, homemade salves and liniments, turpentine, vinegar, mustard, and home brewed teas, tonics and syrups.

Most of the foregoing remedies are awfully simple and few are simply awful, but all are authentic. (Excerpted from *Reminiscent Remedies* by Lena Parvin). □

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## Early Health Practitioners

Although every household laid by a store of home remedies, doctors were still needed for the really serious illnesses, accidents and epidemics. And the doctors came. Some came to open private practices in the small rural communities of the county, others came with the military or the railroads. Their services were sorely needed, and the same is true of the early dentists.

They are all remembered not only for their skill but for their dedication, kindness and understanding. Payment was not always in hard cash. More often it was potatoes, hay, chickens, a quilt or whatever the homesteader could spare. And many times they were never paid. But no one was turned away for any reason.

The doctors featured herein are examples of that kind of country doctor. There were many more. Space limits us to these few.

**Dr. Henry Jacob Webb** was born in the small town of Dexter, Michigan on February 20, 1848. He joined the navy at sixteen years of age and served with the Mississippi squadron as hospital steward for a year. This whetted his interest in medicine and upon his discharge from the service he entered the medical college at Ann Arbor, Michigan. Graduating in 1869 he began his medical practice at Eaton Rapids. A year later he moved to Missouri and established a practice in Iron county where he remained until 1881. He moved that year to the "new west" and settled in Whitman county at the village of Three Forks which later became Pullman.

The doctor had married in 1870 a lovely young girl named Joanna Farr. They were blessed with six children.

"Doc" Webb, as he became affectionately known, was 33 years old when he arrived in Pullman and no other single person had as much to do with the many phases of early development in Pullman as he did. He never limited himself to his medical practice which extended much beyond the boundaries of the town itself. He was called the "father of Pullman" in recognition of his tireless efforts to get the Agricultural College established in the town, to secure the services of the railroad and other public institutions. He was an inventor and held patent rights on several of his inventions. Doctor Webb was at one time president of the First National Bank of Pullman and opened the first real drug store in Pullman with Dr. Thomas Kayler, and early day dentist. Prior to the time of the

**FOOTNOTE:**

Mrs. Parvin, a Whitman county pioneer, is now living in Moses Lake. (See Vol. I, No. 1 of the *Historian*)





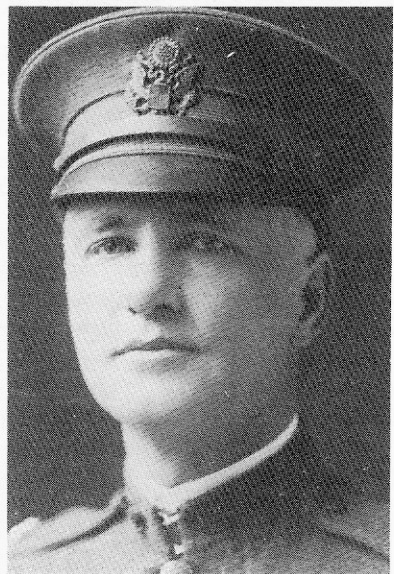
H. J. Webb, M. D.



D. A. Angus, M. D.



L. A. Quaife, M. D.



D. R. Campbell, M. D.

first real drug store Doctor Webb had kept bottles of medicine on some shelves on the other side of the door from the first post office pigeon holes in the home of postmaster, Orville Stewart in 1881.

The story goes that at the time Pullman was being considered as the site for the new Agricultural College, Lieutenant Governor Laughton, while visiting Pullman, was taken ill and remained at his hotel until he recovered. M. J. Chapman, cashier at the bank, became acquainted with him. One day just as he was about to leave Pullman, the Lieutenant Governor came to the bank to ask to have a \$500 note cashed. Chapman gave him the money and took his note.

After the train had left Pullman for Olympia, the cashier informed Doc Webb about the transaction. Doc went "straight in the air" claiming Laughton now had \$3500 of Pullman's money instead of the original \$1500 they intended him to have.

It was then necessary that while Laughton was staying in Pullman, some of the residents felt if they could persuade him to a kindly attitude toward Pullman, they might get the school located there. So they delegated Doc Webb to convey to the Lieutenant Governor's possession a certain inducement in the amount of \$1500.

Doctor Webb hid the money in the chamber pot under Laughton's bed, thinking he would find it and realize the purpose of the money. Being approached by certain citizenry later Laughton denied any knowledge of the money.

It was then necessary for the people of Pullman to raise the money again and this time, Doc Webb, accompanied by Judge Neill, M. J. Chapman and another man, took Laughton to the rear of the train he was taking from Pullman and gave him the \$1500 in person. Thus his favorable influence was assured.

Doctor Webb received \$1000 for the sale of the patent rights to his invention of a broadcast seeder and he refused an offer of \$10,000 for his rights to the invention of a new type of window screen.

Lacking the means to patent the air brake he had invented as a boy, he lost all rights to that invention.

According to the **Pullman Herald** of Dec. 8, 1888, Dr. Webb won \$1050 on an election wager that year.

The beloved doctor passed away on March 4, 1894 in Pullman. The autopsy report follows:

"Pullman, March 5th, 1894—We the undersigned, being legal practitioners of medicine and surgery in the county of Whitman, state of Washington, having this 5th day of March, 1894, been called to hold an autopsy on the body of Dr. H. J. Webb, deceased, after making a careful examination, in our opinion find that the deceased died of an acute attack of meningitis, resulting in congestion and cerebral hemorrhage, blood clots being found.

W. L. White, M.D.  
Pullman, Wash.

Cal M. Boswell, M.D.  
Colfax, Wash.

J. L. Powell, M.D.  
Pullman, Wash."

G. B. Wilson, M.D.  
Johnson, Wash.

The funeral was held in the Auditorium building which was filled to overflowing. The Rev. L. O. Baird of the Congregational Church preached the service. Dr. Webb had drawn the plans for the church and had seen them adopted in his own house, but the church was too small to hold the crowd which gathered to pay their last respects this day.



Fifteen hundred people gathered to mourn the doctor. He was interred at the city cemetery on Sunnyside Hill where a fitting monument was later erected on the grave site. Vandals have since moved the tombstone off its pedestal. □

**Dr. David Alfred Angus** opened his offices in Rosalia in 1905. A graduate of Rush Medical School in 1896 and of Whalen Academy, Dr. Angus practiced in Chicago, Illinois before he came to Washington in 1901. He took a special course at the Illinois College of Electro-Therapeutics.

Dr. Angus married Mabel Meuli in January 1915. Mrs. Angus a native of Whitman county still resides in the family home in Rosalia, she graciously furnished the editor with this biographical sketch.

Mrs. Angus recalled the Spanish influenza epidemic of 1918 as one of the worst diseases to hit Whitman county. Everyone in town had it. The druggist was down with it and whole families were prostrated. The doctor had three drivers at that time to drive him around-the-clock because the only rest he had was in the car between patients. Country roads at that time were pretty rough going. The doctor often arrived at the patient's home to find the whole family so ill that no one had eaten, infants were in convulsions and livestock stood unfed and unattended. The doctor proceeded to ring up the neighbors until he could find someone well enough to come to help clean, cook and care for the family. Someone else would arrive to take charge of the stock until conditions improved. The doctor would treat the convulsed baby by placing it first in warm water and then in cold and kept this up until the seizure stopped. People died overnight with this disease. Cases of it followed for several years but were not quite so severe.

Typhoid was often another serious disease caused mostly by poor water and contaminated milk, stated Mrs. Angus.

Dr. Angus had one of the earliest X-ray machines in the area. Use of the early machine was finally barred in Rosalia because it interfered with radio reception.

Dr. Angus continued to practice medicine in Rosalia for 36 years, until his death in 1941.

**Dr. D. A. Angus in his typical early day doctor's office. Picture taken about 1912 or 13.**



**Dr. Laurence A. Quaife** a graduate of Grinnell College and the University of Iowa Medical School, began his medical practice at Rosalia in February of 1907. There were three doctors in Rosalia when he arrived. They were Dr. Angus, Dr. Brand and a Dr. Anderson who moved to Spokane.

Dr. Quaife came to Washington as a medical director for the Chicago, St. Paul & Milwaukee Railroad. A new rail line was being built at that time from Mowbridge, South Dakota to the Pacific coast. Through the Rock Lake district blasting accidents were a frequent occurrence and the doctor drove to the various railroad camps to treat the patients until the railroad acquired a building in town which was used as a treatment center for railroad employees. A nurse was on duty there at all times.

A man in town cared for the doctor's two horses which were needed to pull his buggy on the rounds of the camps and to visit patients of his private practice in the surrounding countryside. It was often great distances from one patient to



another and back home at night, so a fresh horse was needed each day.

Dr. Quaife later established a 22-bed hospital at Rock Lake when there were no other hospitals in the area. About 1910, he built the large brick building in Rosalia that stands at the corner of Main and Whitman, for his offices and offices for other professional people in town. The rooms once used as the doctor's offices are now occupied by the Country Kitchen restaurant. On display at the restaurant are many relics of that period including quarantine signs for scarlet fever, smallpox, measles, typhoid and diphtheria which had been left in the building.

Dr. Quaife had married Louise Woodbridge at Nashua, Iowa in 1907 and brought his bride West with him. They had four children one of which died in infancy. In 1914-15 Dr. Quaife built the fine big house in Rosalia in which his widow lives today. □

**Dr. Daniel R. Campbell** was born June 14, 1875 in Pine River, Wisconsin. A graduate of music of Ripon College, Ripon, Wisconsin, he later held a pharmacy degree from the University of Minnesota and also his medical degree.

He and a nephew, Clement Campbell, received their pharmacy degrees at the same time and operated a drug store to finance their medical educations.

Daniel Campbell received his surgical training at Johns Hopkins University. He practiced in Bismarck, North Dakota, then went west to Pullman in 1907.

Housing was short at the time so Dr. and Mrs. Campbell and their four year old son, Daniel, lived with the Dr. Fred Kayler family on State street that first winter. Dr. Kayler was a dentist.

They later found a house on Montgomery street which is now Campus Ave., where they lived until the new 17 bed hospital was built on the corner of Montgomery and Star Route in 1909. Those streets are now Campus and Maple. The residence entrance faced Campus and the hospital entrance faced Maple. The house still stands and had been converted into apartments.



**Pudge Campbell [Mrs. Perry Combes] in front of the hospital**



The barn on the back of the lot has been gone for many years. Dr. Campbell kept the horse and buggy for rural calls for as long as he was in Pullman. He had a Maxwell car for town driving. His many trips to rural areas, such as Almota on the Snake river required a saddle horse.

There were many stories of treatments and operations performed on the kitchen table at the patient's home. If the doctor did not have the right instrument for the job a makeshift was produced in the farm shops. When asked who gave the anesthetic for these operations Dr. Campbell said he would get a grandmother if he could because "you could always depend on a grandmother."

During the 1910 flood in Pullman, Dr. Campbell and his horse, Nell, were the last ones over the Kamiaken street bridge before it was washed out. The doctor lived in his office a few days until a temporary bridge was established so he could go home.

His office was first in the Flatiron Building and later on Kamiaken street behind the Corner Drug Store.

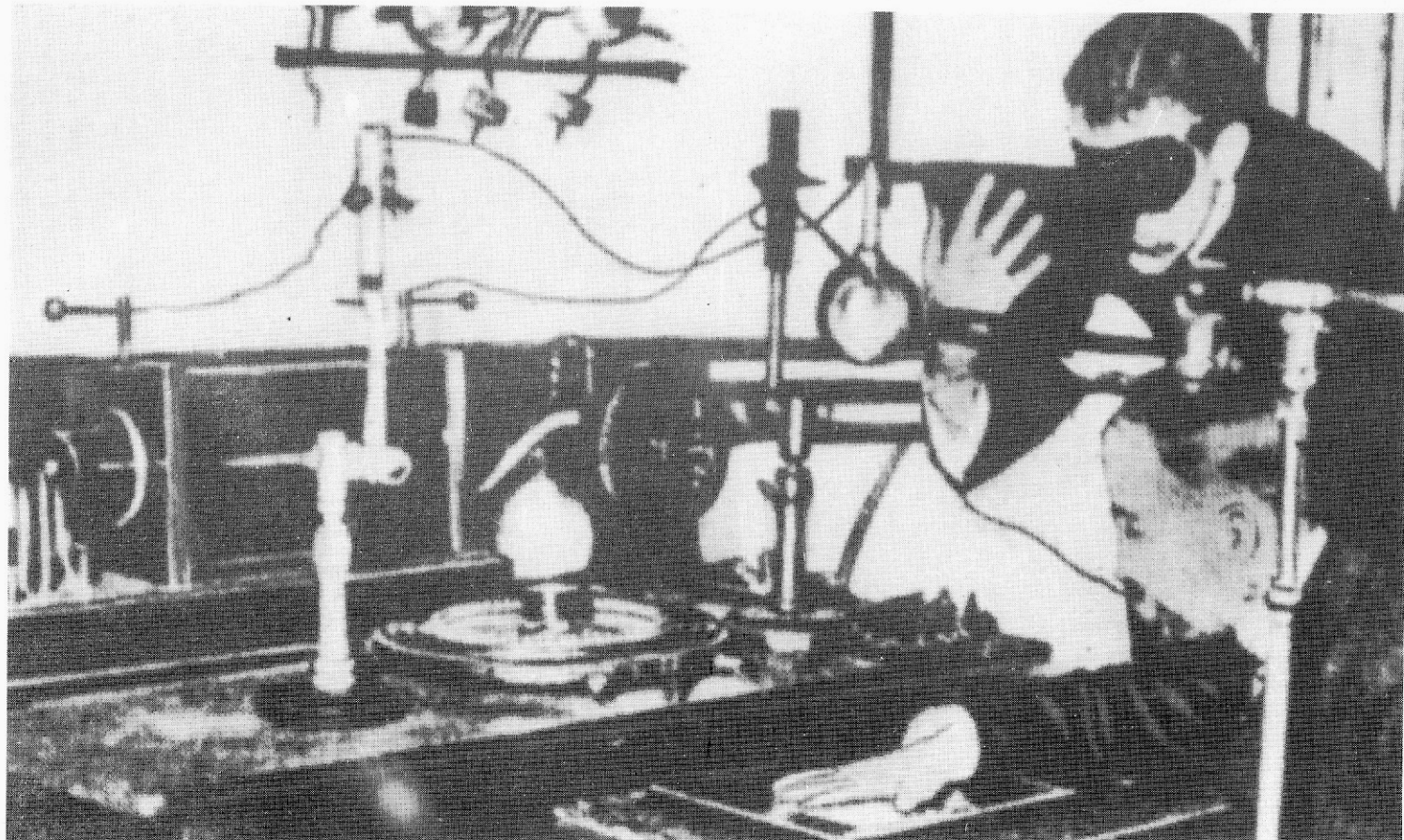
Dr. Campbell served in World War I, returning to Wisconsin after his discharge where he practiced until his retirement. He retired in Walla Walla, Wash.

During World War II when other doctors had been called by the military, he filled in for Dr. Pollock at Rosalia and Oakesdale until his death. □

## Whitman County Doctors in 1904

J. F. Hall—Albion	Walter S. Dartt—Palouse
Jeremiah Kenoyer—Albion	Walter Farnham—Palouse
John Benson—Colfax	E. T. Hein—Palouse
T. D. Ferguson—Colfax	F. E. Whittaker—Palouse
Wilson Johnston—Colfax	A. J. Swain—Pine City
Palamountain & Balsiger—Colfax	Alice A. Benton—Pullman
J. N. Pocock—Colfax	J. L. Harris—Pullman
C. M. Post—Colfax	H. P. Marshall—Pullman
A. E. Stuht—Colfax	C. H. Russell—Pullman
W. E. White—Colton	J. B. Anderson—Rosalia
W. N. Divine—Elberton	D. A. Angus—Rosalia
B. D. Henry—Endicott	W. W. Brand—Rosalia
P. W. Johnson—Endicott	F. M. Crosby—Tekoa
J. F. Grimm—Farmington	Charles James—Tekoa
Leutz & Gage—Farmington	W. A. Mosier—Tekoa
L. J. Coberly—Garfield	C. E. Baumgartner—Thornton
J. A. Dix—Garfield	A. L. Heglar—St. John
T. F. Harrison—Johnson	J. W. Lockhart—St. John
C. M. Baker—Oakesdale	Douglas McIntyre—St. John
W. S. Gaines—Oakesdale	Wagner LaFayette—St. John
Krous & Miller—Oakesdale	Anton Holzer—Uniontown
G. T. Boyd—Palouse	W. W. Miller—Uniontown
W. C. Brandon—Palouse	A. L. Victor—Winona

Reprinted from Polk's Directory of Whitman Co.—1904



Primitive X-ray equipment. Doctor shown checking X-ray beam with hand fluoroscope.

# John M. Risley - Palouse City Dentist

By Juanita Risley Ankcorn

John Mathis Risley was brought west at age five in the year 1875. His father John Mathis Risley Sr. after leaving the family home in New Jersey as a young man, and after stops in Illinois and Iowa, brought his wife and young family of seven to Albany, Oregon. The trip was made by train to San Francisco, then north to Portland by ship. Their farm home just north of Albany, with rich land, fruit trees, and oak and laurel, provided a happy home for the growing family. Here John received his schooling at a near-by rural school and high school in Albany.

John was nineteen when the family followed the many others who were attracted by the enthusiastic reports of wheat lands and other advantages in the Palouse country. They moved to Palouse in 1889 and bought land northeast of town one and a half miles or so. There were twelve children, eight boys including two older sons who were already farming their own land near-by.

Among the neighboring families, there were the Kincaids, the Merry-mans, and also a family who had arrived about a year earlier, the H. H. Budge family with Mary Mabel Langlois, the eldest daughter age thirteen. To recall the stories told of the good times; the sing-songs, the going-to-meetings, and get-to-gether of these large families, surely gives a picture of typical rural living and entertainment during the 1890's.

There was an evident need for dentists and medical doctors, with the towns and communities ever expanding. One of these fields would be a worthwhile career to follow. John determined to study dentistry.

Here was the interlude which gave him the experience of a side career in school teaching. This would be an opportunity to save for college. After taking the required county examinations for teachers, he was ready to accept a county school teaching position. There followed a year or two at Angel school south of town perhaps others. Then two years as teacher at the Berry school which building is now the club house of the



J. M. Risley, D. D. S.

## FOOTNOTE:

Mrs. Ankcorn and her husband, Henry, reside in Palouse where he operates the hardware store founded by his father.

Will-Do club five miles northeast of Palouse near the Potlatch highway to the north. This school house was originally located about a half mile south of its present site, on the lane leading south toward the river.

John M. Risley was graduated with distinction from the Chicago College of Dental Surgery in 1901. This school was a highly rated dental school, then a branch of Northwestern University. It was one of the few such dental schools established at the turn of the century in the United States. The curriculum covered not only dentistry, but stressed the principles of medicine and included the study of anatomy.

In May 1900, Mary Mabel Langlois and John Mathis Risley were married in Lafayette, Indiana. (She and her family had left Palouse several years before.) They spent their first year of marriage living near the college near north Michigan Avenue, and not far from the land mark, the Old Water Tower. During all our growing-up years, we heard glowing accounts of the social and cultural advantages that Chicago had to offer. These included active participation in the downtown First Baptist Church and membership (and soprano soloist) in the choir. Some references left me with a chilling impression of icy-cold early dawns in the dark wintry streets of Chicago as John worked at his job as manager of circulation in the area for the Chicago Tribune. This position he held during his stay there. It was a much sought after job among the college men.

Palouse was a booming town of 2,000 in 1901. It was center of distribution for the grain and lumber industries and others, and was a junction for two railroads. A great amount of transporting was done to and from Potlatch and the lumber camps beyond. There was a flour mill and a lumber mill or two. The potentials for growth, as well as other advantages of the area including the nearness of the colleges, made this a promising place to set up a practice. There was electricity in town on a twelve hour basis, making electric lights available for the offices, and power for the drill and other powered equipment. The predictions proved true. He soon had almost more than he could do.

During the next few years, the town was having development troubles. There were civic problems concurrent with a boom town. The streets were not paved. Transportation was by team and wagon, buggy, surrey or some other horse drawn conveyance. The crowds in town on Saturday night were getting out of hand, as the hordes of lumber camp workers and others descended on the many saloons to spend their week's wages. Dr. John Risley saw a need, as did others, to clean up the town. He served as mayor during some of that turbulent period in 1903.

Although the predictions proved correct, and a fine practice developed, there was a growing conviction that there was need for and room for another flour mill which could produce a special flour, add another industry for Palouse and the processing here would save much shipping out of grain. A note in the Palouse Republic states in 1905, that Dr. Risley had sold his practice and the explanation was that he wished to be away from the confinement of the office at least for a time, and that he had other business interests. (And explained the sale made and the reliable qualifications of Dr. C. A. Couplin who would be taking over the practice.)

In 1905, John Risley and partner, W. F. Smith, opened the Palouse Electric Flouring Mill on a site directly east of the old Northern Pacific depot—and now Palouse Grain Growers elevator. With this opening, electricity was brought into town around the clock. The feature was a wheat flour and a graham mix advertised as best for bread. The name: Risley's Best. The business thrived and



they were sending out as many shipments as they could handle. Some to far away places. Mr. Risley purchased the half interest of W. F. Smith in 1907. Mr. Oliver Heitzman then had a partnership interest and C. A. Rands is listed as a partner, at least at a later date.

One fateful Monday morning in 1911 or 1912 when the office was opened for business, the funds which had been stashed and readied to pay the farmers for delivered grain were missing. This was a tremendous loss amounting to many thousands of dollars. John Risley was advised and urged to assume bankruptcy but he preferred to pay the debts personally, and did so over the next number of years. He returned to his dental practice in 1912.

The office equipment of the years from 1912 on was adequate and much of it fundamentally not too different from that used today. Probably all would have a somewhat Victorian look, including the lights with green shades, hanging with a long cord from a high ceiling; the adjustable light at the chair. The dentist's chair, stark and severe compared to the latest being introduced, was adjustable, padded leather upholstered, and was raised and lowered by a foot pump pedal. No doubt the drill has been improved the most, as the late ones have practically no 'grit' or noise, and work with jet-like speed. Soon after returning to practice, the offices were moved from above Fredericks' (LEO'S) to the corner rooms above the Farmers' State Bank (now Arlands' Realty). There was steam heat. The reception room was furnished with a Mission style type of furniture. On the walls were the graduation class picture and finely framed certificates: the diploma and permits to practice in the State of Washington. A more stream-lined chair and equipment replaced earlier types as time went on.

Viewing the entire practice from here and now, it seems to have been a feat of great endurance. Taking care of the large clientele, the hours were long, six days a week. So different from today, this dentist, at least, did all his own laboratory work. He had no anaesthetist, receptionist or appointment maker. Only years later did he have some assistance with book work. An exception, too, was in the making of dentures. After making the pattern, choosing the type, shape, color of teeth and making the model using plaster, the whole set was mailed to a laboratory specializing in the final step.

The office was a fascinating place to me, and I loved watching the careful, easy and sure technique of this skilled dentist, my father. Of great interest too, were the slim implements, all different, and neatly lined up; the small drawers in the cabinet, each holding its certain type and size of implements or tools and fittings, all neatly in place; the shimmering magic of the quick-silver in the little wooden vial.

The small area used as a laboratory (generally 'off-limits' mostly) had that intriguing aroma of cold plaster, the alcohol lamp, the spicy chemical and antiseptic smells, all of which were wonderful to me as a child.

The creative operation of making a gold inlay filling was a challenge my father enjoyed. The so intricate work, forming the tiny wax model, preparing the plaster mold and the molten gold and alloy, and finally the casting, made the triumph of the finished product, a perfect fit, indeed an accomplishment. The casting machine using the principle of centrifugal force was, in the 'teen years, operated by a highly geared and tuned hand-crank, which achieved a terrific speed on its sensitive axis. It didn't take long, and the casting was done. An exciting process, and the result, literally a work of artistic skill.

Orthodontia was, I think, a newly named rather old practice of straightening teeth. Dr. Risley used the 'new' technique of tempered metal in wire form, which



was bent around and over teeth as needed and after being exactly fitted, the brace was removable. Some of my young friends were benefited for life, by this process of straightening otherwise less attractive teeth.

During the World War I years there were undoubtedly problems of getting equipment and supplies. All persons were affected by shortages and restrictions. Shortages of metals, gold and silver, as well as necessary drugs, must have been a prime concern to dental and medical professional men. The severe outbreak of Spanish Flu compounded the hardships of one long bleak winter.

Sometimes payments were slow due to the vicissitudes affecting farm prices and all. Sometimes payments were eased, but sometimes they were cancelled. It was usual to have country eggs and butter delivered regularly, as well as a side of pork, bacon, etc., as payment or partial payment for dental work done. Among these barter items that came along in place of cash were, in time, a pony, complete with saddle. This was gleefully accepted by one-half of the family. Then there was a violin. The purchase of one had been considered and discussed. No need to look further as all parties were agreeable.

This chosen work was a satisfaction to my father. The enjoyment of working with people and giving service that he knew was beneficial was gratifying to him. He embraced the thought that 'hard work brings its own reward' but his life was in sharing with others. While he was his own man, he was active in civic affairs, business men's associations, the Masonic lodge, and was a dedicated pillar of the church. He backed and endorsed improvements for betterment of town and country.

Appreciation for work done came back to him sometimes by letter. One such letter from up in the 'back woods' carried great impact in the profound thanks expressed. In halting broken English and an un-schooled scrawl, this man left no doubt that he was deeply thankful for the care and effort put forth, and the happy result of sound useful teeth again.

Many times we heard patients express their gratitude with wonder that —'their rheumatism was now gone'—and their new teeth made them feel like a new person. (This regardless of the declarations one hears today about the cures of rheumatism.)

There was the high school junior, who had been doing the work of a lumberjack up in and woods and came in one day or was brought in, with all his upper front teeth broken off straight across. A heavy cable had snapped and hit him with great force. This patient was so grateful after this major repair work, to have healthy, sound and even teeth again, his appreciation was without bounds. He planned then to take up dentistry himself.

As the proverbial 'country doctor', so this 'small town dentist' did his share of spreading comfort and good cheer. John Risley, with his trust in God and his fellow man, his concern for people, coupled with his keen sense of humor and ready wit, projected happiness and confidence to those around him. The world is indeed a better place for his having lived in it.

In August of 1925, Dr. John M. Risley succumbed at the age of forty-four after being stricken with sleeping sickness (encephalitis), caused, it was determined at the time, by a certain kind of biting mosquito or fly, which carries the deadly germ. He left a widow and four children.□

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We are most grateful to Mrs. Quaife, Mrs. Angus, Mrs. Combes, and Mrs. Ankcorn for their help in this issue.

# “Flu” Epidemic Kills 20,000,000 in 1918-19

Considered the greatest plague to have occurred in human history, the Spanish influenza or “flu” took an estimated 20,000,000 lives throughout the world in the fall and winter of 1918-19. The death toll in the United States and in the military forces reached 548,000. The Palouse country did not escape its ravages.

On December 13, 1918, there were 300 cases reported in Tekoa, more than 100 in Oakesdale and 50 cases in Palouse. Garfield, Colfax, Malden and other communities had large numbers ill with the disease. The epidemic had started in September and by early October had reached such proportions that all public meetings were banned in churches, schools, theaters, saloon and others. Many schools remained closed for nearly three months thus causing concern as to promotions from grade to grade or graduation from high school. Parents were urged to insist on home study by their children.

In some cities the wearing of surgical-type masks to cover nose and mouth was required when outside one's home anywhere in public. Small bags containing pieces of camphor or asaphetida worn around the neck on a string, hopefully to ward off the disease, were not at all uncommon. The camphor fumes were not unpleasant, but those from the asaphetida were “pretty stout.”

The course of the disease was rapid, overwhelming and prostrating to the patient. Often pneumonia developed, being followed all too frequently and quickly by death. The disease appeared to strike young, robust, healthy persons as readily, or more so, than the frail and elderly, with many fatalities among the otherwise large, young and strong.

Physicians, nurses and anyone able to care for the sick labored to exhaustion caring for those who were struck down. More than one country doctor fed the stock and cooked for the sick farmer and cared for whole families until help could be found or some member recovered. Often it was necessary to bring in help from other communities due to local people having no one able to care for them.

While there have been many cases of “Hong Kong” flu and other strains of the disease in recent winters, the Palouse has never again had a visitation of the virulence of the Spanish flu of 1918-19. Hopefully, it never will. □

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## Treating Diphtheria with Carbolic Acid

In a communication to the Chicago Medical Journal, Dr. Magill describes a method of treating diphtheria, from which he can secure better results than from any other. He uses an ordinary hose, from three to five feet long and about one inch in diameter. One end is placed over the spout of a common tea kettle, into which has been put half a gallon of water and half an ounce of carbolic acid; the kettle is then placed on the stove over a good fire, and when the water reaches the boiling point the free end of the hose is carried under a blanket thrown over the patient's head. The room must be closed. In a short time the patient will perspire freely. If persevered in at short intervals, the breathing becomes softer, and presently, after a succession of quick explosive efforts, the patient throws off a coat or tube of false membrane. The acid vapor seems to prevent the reformation of exudations. Alcohol and sulphate of quinine are used in conjunction with the acid. □

Walla Walla Union—Nov. 11, 1882

# Cure for Smallpox

Here is a recipe for smallpox which is guaranteed absolutely to cure that disease in a few hours; also the scarlet fever. It was first published in the California papers, and the statement is made that it was never known to fail. The correspondent who offers it says:

"Here is the recipe as I have used it and cured my children of scarlet fever; here it is as I have used it to cure the smallpox. When learned physicians said the patient must die, it has cured: sulphate of zinc, one grain; foxglove (digitalis), one grain; half a teaspoon of sugar. Mix with two teaspoonfuls of water; when thoroughly mixed, add four ounces of water. Take a teaspoonful every hour. Either disease will disappear in twelve hours. For a child, smaller doses, according to age. If counties would compel physicians to use this there would be no need for pesthouses. If you value advice and experience, use this for that terrible disease. □

—The Pullman Herald, Dec. 1, 1888

## Local Smallpox Reports in the 1880's

Mr. Spalding writes from Almota: "Please say in your paper that there is no case of smallpox in or near Almota. Geo. McClure is at Tom Duff's, 8 miles from here, which is the nearest case to here." **The Commoner**, Aug. 1882

C. O. Brower has recovered from his attack of varioloid and will be dismissed from the pest house soon.

The pest house and everything thereabouts will be thoroughly fumigated with disinfectants. We feel confident this is the last of the smallpox scare in Colfax and so do the physicians.

A correspondent of the **Spangle Record** who recently visited Colfax, says many think our case of smallpox was measles and that the scare was gotten up by the doctors, for the dollars they could rake in through vaccination. All a mistake, it was a genuine case of varioloid. □

**The Commoner, December 1888**

## The Farr Family - Early Settlers

by Chester D. Farr

James Cravens Farr came from Bruno, Mo. to Pullman, Washington in 1886. He worked for the State Bank in Pullman for Two years as a bookkeeper. He then went to work for the McConnell and Chambers, general merchandise store as a bookkeeper.

His sister, Joanne Angeline Webb, Aunt Lina, married the local doctor in Missouri. She was fourteen years older than James. She married **Dr. Henry Jacob Webb**. They knew that James was badly in need of care. So they kept him until he was old enough to go to St. Louis to business college, where he graduated in 1887.

Aunt Lina and Uncle Jake came out west in 1881. They settled in Three Forks, where three streams met and mingled into the south Palouse river. Uncle Jake was the sole doctor in this area at that time and was kept busy calling on

### FOOTNOTE:

Mr. Farr states that family records show Dr. Webb's name as Jacob Henry although the headstone and local accounts give it as Henry Jacob. Mr. Farr presently lives in Coos Bay, Ore.

people for miles around the city. He would ride a horse over the hills following the Indian trails to where the homesteaders had built their homes. He would go as far as Wai-Wai, Albion, and the breaks of the river where the road plunged down to Penawawa and Almota, Vollmer, Viola, Johnson, Colton and Genesee.

He was a member of the Chamber of Commerce in Pullman and talked them into the plan to ask a very close friend, George Mortimer Pullman the man who owned the Pullman Co., for an honorarium for the 4th of July celebration 1887. This would be for the naming the city of Pullman in his honor. Mr. Pullman obliged and came to Pullman that year to make the presentation of \$1000 at the official celebration.

Dr. Webb was named by that same chamber as a member of a committee of three to prepare and present to the State Legislature a prospectus, showing the need for an agricultural college and it should be located in Pullman. This committee had a most difficult time to reach Olympia. They traveled by train to Walla Walla from Penawawa. Then by stage to Hood River where they crossed the Columbia in a boat to Stevenson, farther down the river. Then they went by horse-back and stage to Vancouver and on to Olympia by railroad.

The prospectus was presented to the Washington legislature. The bill was passed that located the Washington State Agricultural College in Pullman. This gave it the benefit of the Hatch and Adams funds from the U.S. Government. The Committee returned to Pullman in the same manner as they had gone.

James C. Farr had three brothers who came to Pullman ahead of him, L.P., Robert Andrew, and Bolin. Uncles Bolin and Andy organized a realty company, through which they acted as brokers for real estate. Farr's addition to Pullman was named after this arrangement. They asked James C. to work for them. Here is where he was in 1893 when hard times hit everyone. Wheat sold for five cents a bushel. The early rains had ruined most of the crops in Whitman county. There was very little business done and cold winter was in the offing. James C. Farr, as a representative of the firm, knew about a ranch on which the mortgage payments had not been met and he knew that the man who controlled the ranch wanted to sell out. So he bought the ranch. It cost about \$5.00 per acre. There was only twenty acres that had been plowed. He and his hired hand broke the rest of the land and planted a crop of wheat, and in the spring oats and barley.

The original ground was covered with bunch grass, wild sunflower and rosebushes. The rose bushes had to be dug out. But the sunflower was the thing that made the job of breaking most difficult. For, as sharp as you can make a plow share it would take power to pull it through a 3 inch sunflower root. Three large draft horses were hitched to a 14 inch prairie breaker. In some cases there would be a team of two hitched as leaders. The plow was a wooden beam sodbuster. It had a long roll to the mould board and it would roll the sod over the bottom side up into the furrow. This would kill all of the plants which grew there, like the buttercups, bluebells, violets, cowslips, and wild parsnip. The camas plant was a bulb and it would persist longer than the others. But it bothered little in the crop cereals. The wild oats came with the cropping and was a great pest. It lowered the grade of wheat.

The south east corner of the ranch adjoined Guy which in now Albion. The original road went up and over the hill to Guy. But when Mr. Whetsel broke that forty he put in a crop of wheat. This made it necessary to go around the hill and to build a bridge across the river near the railroad bridge. This was the roadway until 1915 when a road was made along the right bank of the river and into the city of Albion.

In 1889 or 1900 James C. Farr sold to Mun Myers the south forty, which included the island in the river where he had always had the best garden.

James C. Farr married Alice Gertrude Heywood in December 1889. Her mother was Helen Webb Heywood who was a sister to Henry Jacob Webb. To



**James C. Farr and Alice G. Farr in 1925**

this union was an issue of five children, four sons and one daughter. Chester and Cora were born in Pullman. The twins, Ed and Ted were born at the ranch as was the youngest, Roby.

A brick two story four room school was built in Albion in 1890. The only schools were what were called "subscription." In the summer of 1896 Prof. Kicker from Oregon rode a horse around the community and got enough students to begin a school in one lower room of this school house. He furnished the fuel for the fire, the chalk and erasers. Each student bought his own books, pencils, and slate. The desks were a part of the furniture of the school. They were double with a drop leaf table that locked the cabinet where the student kept his equipment. A shelf on top, the same width as the box beneath, gave a place for extra pencils and an ink bottle.

Pearl Newkirk, a neighbor girl on the next farm north and five years older than I, walked over the hill with me to school. We carried our lunch boxes and when we arrived at school I wanted to sit with Pearl. But the boys sat only with boys and likewise the girls sat together. School took up at 9 a.m. and at noon there was one hour of recess. A fifteen minute recess was called at 11 a.m. and at 3 p.m. We all went home at 4 p.m. I liked to go to school. I learned the A.B.C.'s, the alphabet, how to count to one hundred, and how to write my name. We read from our reader the second year.

An interesting anecdote regarding the change of name from Guy to Albion. There were two families that lived in or near Guy, the Whetsels and the McReynolds. Each one had a son who was named Guy. For some reason unknown to most of the people who lived in Guy, a small green bird began to flutter and one of these families began to say the city of Guy was named after their son. The other family was just as sure it was their son who should receive





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the honor. It was not long until the community had a meeting and they decided the best way to settle the argument was to change the name. Someone suggested that the Celtic name for England would be appropriate on account of the many hills that surrounded the city. This seemed to be a good idea, so a petition was prepared and most of those who were getting their mail addressed to Guy signed it. It was presented to the U.S. Government and the name was changed February 18, 1901. It was several years later before the railroad made the change.

It was in 1909 when the farmers near Albion organized a cooperative store and grain business. They elected James C. Farr as their manager. He took over the grain warehouses and made his daughter Cora manager of the store. This continued for several years until he wished to spend his winters in California. Eventually the Pullman Grain Growers took over the business.

James Farr was a promoter for the line-fence telephone business in and near Albion. Lou Wright was the man who had talked him into it. It was not long until a central was located in Pullman which made it possible to connect with the other systems about the country. Mr. Wright's son Earl operated this central. But there were too many people on one line and the lines were too often grounded. So Mr. Wright sold the deal out and moved to Castle Rock.

The first threshing rig that James Farr had to thresh his crop of grain was powered by a tumble rod that was laid on the ground from a horse powered machine to which six or eight horses were hitched to long sweeps and they walked around the machine. Then came the straw burning steam engines and later it was found that it was better to burn coal. These were owned by farmers for their own crops and then they would do custom threshing. There were twenty-two days in which the threshing could be done. Then the rains would come and the wheat in shocks would sprout and grow. So James Farr and Dad Cunningham decided to form a partnership and buy a 28-inch separator with a blower-stacker, and a steam engine. James Farr was made the manager of this and this kept him busy for two months each year.

James C. Farr and Alice, were truly hardy pioneers of the Palouse country. He passed away on the 3rd of December 1938 in Savannah, Mo. at seventy-five years of age. His wife, Alice Gertrude, lived until the 12th day of August 1951, dying at eighty-two years of age in Lewiston, Idaho. They lie in the cemetery at Albion. □