

**2017**

## **STORIES FROM MEET THE PIONEERS**

Living History Tours presented in Jacksonville, Oregon's Pioneer Cemetery.

[2017 – Our Eleventh Year](#) (Note: There was no Meet the Pioneers program presented in 2016)

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# MEET THE PIONEERS 2017



## Character

George W. Acree  
Jesse Applegate  
Sister Gerard  
Claire Hanley  
Mrs. Anna Marple  
Mrs. Addie Marsh  
Judge James Neil  
Minnie Helm Neil

## Player

David Sours  
Robert Hight  
Lara Strazdas  
Vivienne Grant  
Constance Jesser  
Anne Peugh  
Seth Weintraub  
Lynn Ransford

## Character

John Obenchain  
Margaret Obenchain  
Sister Pascal  
Dr. Elijah Pickle  
Mrs. Martha Rapp  
George F. Schumpf  
Mariah Schumpf  
Mrs. Louisa Winn

## Player

Steve Carlson  
Mary Ann Carlson  
Carolyn Kingsnorth  
Jim Davidian  
Marcy McQuillan  
Steve Casaleggio  
Ann Wilton  
Jois Harkness

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### **First Vignette, one of three presentations - The Jacksonville to Fort Klamath Military Wagon Road**

The name Applegate is well known in Southern Oregon and has a place of honor in Oregon's early history. Jesse and his brother Lindsay played an important part in the settlement of pretty much all of Oregon back in the 1800's.

They and their families came west from Missouri in 1843, following the Oregon Trail along with a lot of other folks looking for a better life. Sadly, as they approached the final part of the journey and one of the toughest parts, coming down the Columbia River, each lost a son when the boat they were riding in capsized, and they were drowned. Both men were determined to find an easier and safer way for folks to come west without having to come down the treacherous Columbia River.

A few years later the Applegate brothers led a survey team that found a new route. It branched off the existing Oregon Trail in Idaho and came south through Nevada and across the top of California and up and into Oregon. It continued right through the Rogue Valley and went all the way up to the Willamette Valley. While it has been known by a number of names, the South Road, or the Southern Oregon Trail, folks in these parts prefer to call it the Applegate Trail.

While this new route was successful it also created another problem as it went straight through some pretty rough Indian country near Klamath Lakes. The Indians were not pleased with all these settlers passing through what was their land. Unfortunately, this resulted in loss of life on both sides.

Lindsay Applegate, who was now in the Oregon Legislature, sponsored a bill to establish a fort near Klamath Lakes. The bill passed in 1863 and Colonel Charles Drew selected a location. Fort Klamath was quickly built by Captain Kelly and the 1<sup>st</sup> Oregon Volunteer Cavalry.

Next, a road was needed to allow wagons with men and supplies to go to and from the fort from Jacksonville and other points. Colonel Drew saw to the building of the road which, from Jacksonville, crossed to the east near Butte Falls following an old Indian path called the Rancheria Trail. The road also brought the first sawmill into the Klamath area, allowing for large scale harvesting of the region's immense stands of Ponderosa and Sugar Pine.

Unfortunately, the first Jacksonville to Fort Klamath Road turned out to be seasonal. The higher portions crossed the north side of Mount Pitt, which made it impassable from winter through spring due to the area's heavy snowpack. The military soon built a less snow-bound route further north, and the last of the civilian wagons rolled over the original road in 1909.

Jesse A. Applegate, son of Lindsay Applegate, died on January 4, 1919, at the age of 83 and is buried in the City Section of the Jacksonville Cemetery in Block 231, Plot 5.

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## **First Vignette, second of three presentations - A Young World War I Recruit Dies in Basic Training**

The editorial that appeared in the Medford Mail Tribune best describes and tells the story of this brave young man and his service to our country.

**Sunday Morning, January 27, 1918**  
**FRANCIS W. WINN - (Editorial)**

"The first young man in Jackson County to lay down his life for his country, in the present war, was buried yesterday.

His name was Francis W. Winn, the son of Mr. and Mrs. G.M. Winn of Wellen.

There was no public ceremony at his funeral. As far as any grateful recognition by the community was concerned, Mr. Winn might have been a casual victim of disease in times of peace.

We don't believe this attitude represents the true sentiment of the people of Jackson County.

Francis W. Winn was a student at the Medford High School when war was declared. Although under the draft age, he was among the first to enlist. It was his misfortune to suffer exposure, contract pneumonia, and in a damp and cheerless Virginia village instead of amid the thrill and excitement of mortal combat at the front, he made the supreme sacrifice.

But because he succumbed to a pneumonia bacillus instead of a Bosche bullet, detracts not one whit from the glory of his service. His death was as direct a result of his enlistment as if he had fallen in No Man's Land with a bullet in his heart.

And being the first young man from Jackson County to give his life for his country, we feel that he should not be forgotten. We feel that there should be some formal recognition on the part of the people of this community of the sacrifice that he made, and the fine spirit of patriotic devotion that his death exemplifies.

This war is to be won by the spirit shown by Francis W. Winn. It would seem that the least that could be done by those of us who stay at home would be to grant him, and the comrades that will follow him, the place on the roll of honor to which they are so surely entitled."

Private Francis W. Winn was a Marine in the 6<sup>th</sup> Regiment 70<sup>th</sup> Company also known as the Fightin' Marines stationed in Quantico, Virginia. While in basic training he contracted Scarlet Fever and languished in the hospital until he finally succumbed to pneumonia on December 18, just one month after his 19<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Francis W. Winn died on December 18, 1918 at the age of 19 and is buried in the Catholic Section of the Jacksonville Cemetery in Block G8, Plot 3. We continue to honor Francis and all our Veterans by placing a flag of the United States at their grave sites each Memorial Day. The flags are maintained and are removed following Veterans Day in November.

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### **First Vignette, third of three presentations – The S. S. Jacksonville and World War II**

In 1942, the United States began an emergency ship building program which would play an important role in the assault at Normandy, some eight months away. Anticipating the need for adequate fuel reserves and the timely transfer of them to Europe, four shipyards across the country in Pennsylvania, Alabama, California and Oregon started to build ships. A total of 481 oil tankers would be built and all from standardized plans. The tankers were necessary to haul the massive amounts of fuel that would be required to supply the tanks, trucks and planes to press further into Germany.

A total of 147 oil tankers were built in Oregon at Kaiser's Swan Island Shipyard in Portland. Two of those ships would pay tribute and be named for a place or city in Southern Oregon's Rogue Valley. The S. S. Table Rock was commissioned on Sunday, November 28, 1943, with Jackson County Judge Arthur Powell, Mrs. Atlanta Parker Naffziger and John Ross in attendance by invitation. Mrs. Naffziger's father, George Parker named the Table Rocks while passing them in 1846 in a wagon train led by his brother-in-law Jesse Applegate. John Ross's father was Colonel Ross, an early pioneer to Oregon and a volunteer soldier during the Rogue Indian Wars. He also served as translator during the peace negotiations that were signed on the grasslands at the base of Lower Table Rocks.

The S. S. Jacksonville slid down the ways and set sail for the European theater following ceremonies that were held on December 23, 1943. Representing Jacksonville and Jackson County was Claire Hanley, secretary of the Jackson County Pioneer Society. Her grandfather Michael Hanley was one of the earliest settlers in Jackson County.

Because of the U.S. Maritime Commission censorship codes at the time, exact launching dates could not be revealed until six days before the actual events took place. Therefore, those who were invited to the launchings had to check the newspaper daily for updated information from the U.S. Maritime Commission.

Each ship built cost nearly three million dollars and would be manned by fifty sailors and become part of the Merchant Marine fleet. Typically, a ship could be built and ready to launch in only eighty-two days and could easily carry 141,000 barrels of oil or gasoline for 12,000 miles without refueling.

On August 30, 1944, after approximately eight months of service, a German U-Boat made a direct torpedo hit on the S. S. Jacksonville. It was split in two following a massive fireball, but the ship refused to sink. It reportedly stayed afloat for another fifteen hours before it sank, taking forty-eight Merchant Marine Sailors and twenty-eight members of a U.S. Naval Armed Guard detachment down with her. The S. S. Table Rock lived a much longer life, being purchased by France, then Canada and finally sold for scrap in 1985 to Portugal.

Claire Hanley was buried in the Masonic section of the Jacksonville Cemetery on June 26, 1963, in Block 363, Plot 2. She was 66 years old.

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## **Second Vignette, first of three presentations – Mrs. Martha Reames Rapp, Pioneer of 1852**

Martha E. Reames Rapp was born on October 26, 1841, in Grayson County, Kentucky. In 1852, she and her family arrived in St. Helens, Washington after crossing the plains by ox team. Martha's father, Woodford Reames, soon went to work for the Hudson Bay Company.

A year later Martha's parents, Woodford and Mahulda Reames, moved the family, which included Martha and her siblings, to a Donation Land Claim that they had filed for 320 acres in the Rogue Valley near Talent. These were hard and difficult times, but the Reames family did well and settled into life in Southern Oregon

When Martha was nineteen years of age she met up with Ed Ackley, described by some as a "sporting man," and as Martha said at the time, they eloped. The couple headed north to the mines for what Martha thought would be an exciting life. Things didn't work out so well, and Martha soon returned to her family in Southern Oregon.

Fortunately, Martha met Joseph Rapp and they were married in 1876. Martha was 35 and Joseph was 58. They made their home on what was likely most of James Thornton's Donation Land Claim, around 300 acres that Joseph purchased in 1872. The property was near Talent on Wagner Creek. Joseph originally came west to California during the gold rush and had been a successful miner before coming north to Oregon to farm.

Two years later their first born, a son named Edward, died in infancy. In 1880 their second child was born, a healthy baby boy who they named Fred.

Following the death of Martha's husband Joseph in 1897, she moved to Ashland and lived with a niece. Her son Fred was an excellent farmer and managed the farm spending his entire life on it. Martha returned to the farm in 1915 to give Fred some help after he and his wife went their separate ways. Fred would later marry Lennie French and giving Martha three grandsons.

Martha's older brother Thomas and younger brother Evan both became very successful businessmen with a store in Jacksonville and one in Klamath Falls. Thomas was also a postal inspector, a sheriff and once ran for Oregon Secretary of State in 1878, while Evan became a banker. Thomas Reames' home still sits on California Street across the road from the Beekman House.

Rapp Road in Talent, Oregon was named for the Rapp family.

Joseph Rapp died on September 21, 1897, at the age of 79.

Martha Reames Rapp died on March 22, 1916, at the age of 75.

Both are buried in the Masonic Section of the Jacksonville Cemetery in Block 414, Plots 3 and 3A.

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## **Second Vignette, second of three presentations – The Bullis Logging Railroad Train Wreck**

Denver Marsh was the son of John and Addie Marsh who were married in Eureka, California in 1889, and moved to Jacksonville where Denver was born on August 11, 1890. John, who was from New York, was a carpenter by trade, and Addie was originally from Canada.

Denver worked alongside his father as a carpenter for some time before becoming a motorman on the biggest thing ever to come to Jacksonville, the newly electrified Rogue River Valley Railroad! Denver loved his job and made a lot of friends among the trolley's riders going back and forth between Jacksonville and Medford. When Mr. Spencer Bullis, the owner of the trolley line, decided to build an extension beyond Jacksonville to haul lumber and minerals out of what is now called the Jacksonville Watershed, or the Forest Park, and do it with a steam engine, Denver jumped at the chance to be the engineer.

Denver's young neighbor and friend, Charlie Schumpf, also got a job with the new railroad and helped Denver on the logging runs. Charlie, who was seven years younger than Denver, was more like a kid brother and, most likely, Denver helped Charlie in securing employment.

Denver helped care for and support his parents as his father was pretty much crippled up and unable to work. His salary from his work on the railroad helped them to get by.

Then on July 20, 1917, everything changed when a terrible accident occurred. Denver, Charlie and the rest of the railroad crew were up in the hills, a mile or so beyond the reservoir, loading logs. The regular Fireman, Mr. Dailey, and the others had just finished loading the first car and asked Denver to back the engine down the hill a bit to position the second car in place for loading.

Charlie, who was acting as Fireman, jumped down and pulled the chocks from behind the wheels allowing Denver to ease the engine back. When the empty car was in place to be loaded, they hit the air brakes, but the train wouldn't stop! It just kept rolling down the hill, picking up speed as it went faster and faster.

Now totally out of control, the train reached the bottom where it would have to make a slight turn to cross the trestle, but it was going much too fast. The engine made it across, but the log-heavy cars fell into the ravine causing the engine to derail against an embankment. Denver was trapped underneath the wreckage, badly injured.

Somehow, before the crash, Denver managed to push his friend and co-worker off the train, saving his life. By the time the others reached the wreckage and were able to get Denver and Charlie to the hospital in Medford, it was too late for Denver. Charlie, thanks to Denver's quick action, only suffered a broken leg and some minor scrapes and soon recovered.

Denver Marsh died on July 20, 1917, at the age of 27 and is buried in the IOOF Section of the Jacksonville Cemetery in Block 526, Plot 4.

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## **Second Vignette, third of three presentations - A Gypsy Curse**

Anna Eliza Rizeor was born on May 10, 1842, and married Ezekiel Marple on May 30, 1858 in Benton County, Oregon. Ezekiel was twelve years older than Anna, which was not uncommon at the time. They made their home on the Donation Land Claim that he settled on in 1854 in Corvallis, Oregon. Their son, Richard Ezekiel "Gus", was born in 1861.

The marriage started to fall apart and, in 1882, Ezekiel and Anna divorced. Anna went to live with her son Gus and his family in the small town of Lafayette. She found things and life in the household to be rough. Gus wasn't the hard worker and provider that his father and Anna's husband Ezekiel was. Gus was lazy and always looking for the "easy way out." Before long, Gus was on the local Sheriff's list of "usual suspects" and his family, which now included Anna, was near destitute.

Anna met and befriended David Corker, an honest and hardworking man and all the things her son wasn't. David was a little deaf, something that Gus picked up on in a conversation with his mother, saying that might make David an easy man to rob! Anna, feeling very ashamed as Gus suggested that they relieve David Corker of some of his hard-earned money, talked herself into it, thinking it might be OK, because of Gus's children and her grandchildren.

Then on the fateful night, Anna fixed David a nice stiff drink and made sure he got to bed early and opened a back window. The plan was for Gus to come in through the window, get the cash and leave before David knew what happened. Unfortunately, things didn't go as planned, and poor David Corker ended up on the floor, bloody and dead with an ax near-by.

It wasn't long before Gus and Anna were both locked up in jail. A jury found Gus guilty of murder and the Judge sentenced him to hang. Anna was eventually released but soon faced additional anguish.

On two occasions the Judge had to reschedule the date of Gus's hanging because of oversights in Oregon law, no hangings on Sundays and sixty days from sentencing date. Then on November 11, 1887, Gus was hanged, but the noose slipped, and his death was by strangling and not by a broken neck, taking some eighteen minutes before he finally died.

Reportedly those in attendance, of which there were thirty some, claimed Anna screamed out vile curses proclaiming her son's innocence and threatened to torch the town for the travesty of her son's death.

Several days after the hanging, Gus Marple's cell mate claimed that Gus confessed his guilt to him and told him that his mother "took up" with David Corker to gain his confidence, drugged him and struck the first blow. He also said that Gus had confessed to two earlier killings in 1879. This confession led to the release of James King who had been falsely convicted of one of those murders.

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## **Narrative, Historical Event – Southern Oregon’s Spanish Flu Epidemic**

The future was once again looking bright and full of promise as World War I, also known as the Great War, or the War to End All Wars, was drawing to an end. Then the dreaded Spanish Flu that raged in Europe was now on our shores and here in the Rogue Valley.

Reportedly, in October 1918, a young soldier traveling home to Texas stopped over in Ashland, got sick and died. Was he the cause, or were all the troops returning home from the war in Europe carrying this dreaded disease with them?

The good Sisters of Providence at Sacred Heart Hospital, now called Providence Hospital, were caring for these very ill patients the best they could. The Sisters of Providence offered Mayor Gates the second floor of the hospital for twenty-five flu victims if the City of Medford would purchase the necessary bedding, which the City immediately did, \$230 worth of pillows, sheets and blankets.

Four cases of the flu in October sounded the alarm and by November the number was up to one hundred, some of them entire families and most of them very poor who arrived not only ill but hungry as well.

The painful symptoms as described by the Sisters included severe headaches, coughing so hard that some patients broke ribs, lips and fingertips turned blue and nose bleeds. The illness came on extremely fast and patients could die within twenty-four hours. The Sisters, as well as the doctors were surprised that people in their prime of life, men and women in their 20’s and 30’s, the strongest and healthiest were struck down as if they had been shot.

Medford Mayor Gates banned all church services, funerals, lodge meetings and dances. Schools, theaters and moving picture shows were ordered to all close. Then, when more cases were diagnosed, he required all homes where someone was sick to post a blue sign saying: “Influenza Contagious.”

The quarantine helped, and by Thanksgiving Mayor Gates lifted the ban on public gatherings as there had been no new cases reported. World War I ended earlier that month, on November 11, and now everyone happily looked forward to Thanksgiving and Christmas and getting back to a normal life.

Things quickly took a turn for the worse with all the soldiers returning from the war in Europe. By early December the number of cases of Influenza had increased to over 160 people and the City of Medford reinstated the ban that had been put in place in early October. In addition to the rules and regulations in the previous ban, people were now required to wear masks that covered both the mouth and nose. Reports of some of those wearing masks ranged from downtown Medford looking like a fancy ball as women wore veils, handkerchiefs and even white bridal veils over little derby hats. Reportedly, a man who was wearing his mask also provided one for his horse! A fine of \$5 was put in place for those failing to wear the required mask.

Business owners suffered as a result of the quarantine and mask ordinance, and some protested and wanted the mask ordinance repealed. Medford's City Health Officer, Dr. Pickle, appealed to citizens to comply and reminded businessmen that if they and their customers wore masks, people could continue to shop in their stores.

There was some glimmer of hope that the ban on public gatherings might be lifted sometime before Christmas, however the mask ordinance might stay in effect a while longer.

While there was no question that the quarantine and the mask ordinance certainly helped to curtail the spreading of this awful epidemic, the cause was still unknown. It was believed that the flu was carried on water droplets, so having people cover their coughs and sneezes was very important. The three "C"s: clean mouth, clean skin and clean clothes were something people were reminded of as there was no specific medical treatment or cure for the flu.

At the time people were trying different things to stay healthy and avoid catching the flu such as: Not shaving, Wear fresh pajamas, Don't worry and keep your feet warm, Take castor oil, Don't take castor oil, Rinse mouth with lime water and inhale hot water and turpentine fumes, and Wearing a pouch containing asafetida gum around one's neck.

It was thought that the strange name, Spanish Flu, was the result of Spain, which was a neutral country in World War I, not censoring the press. Newspapers in countries fighting the war, like France and Germany, did not print anything negative in order to prevent lowering the morale of its soldiers or citizens.

On December 23, masks were no longer required to be worn, and the ban on public gatherings had been lifted. By Christmas the Spanish Flu epidemic in the Rogue Valley was over. Worldwide the epidemic lasted for two years, from 1918 to 1920. However, at least 50% of all deaths occurred between September and December of 1918, which was the same period that it was at its worst in the Rogue Valley. In the valley there were over 300 victims and 12 deaths.

The Spanish Flu was the deadliest epidemic in history, killing more people in a year than the Black Death of the Middle Ages killed in a century. In World War I, more men in the military died of the flu than were killed on the battlefields.

Scientists estimate the worldwide death toll was between 50 and 100 million. To put this number in perspective, there are about 60 million people living on the west coast of the United States in Washington, Oregon and California. This flu would have killed everyone living in those states.

**I had a little bird  
Its name was Enza  
I opened the window  
And in-flu-Enza**

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### **John and Margaret (Peggy) Obenchain, Pioneers of German Descent**

Reportedly cousins, both born in Germany at the turn of the century in 1800, later married, John and Margaret came to the United States seeking a better life. They first settled in Botetourt County, Virginia where their first two children were born, Mary and Bartlett.

Two years later they left Virginia and settled in Indiana where three more sons joined the family. Then it was off to Illinois where they had another son and finally another move, this time to Iowa and where son Madison was born.

In 1850 their eldest son Bartlett married Nancy Morse whose cousin was Samuel F.B. Morse, the inventor of the telegraph and the Morse code which helped bring the news to the New Territories.

In 1862 the Obenchain Klan left Iowa and made a six-month crossing of the Great Plains to California. After about six months of mining and deciding this was not a life for them, they moved north and arrived in Southern Oregon. The family, with the exception of Bartlett and Nancy, settled in Butte Falls. Bartlett and Nancy settled in Central Point on a nice farm of 149 acres where they raised a family of twelve children.

John and Margaret's new homestead in Butte Falls was situated on what was then a narrow dirt wagon trail, just over the top of a mountain halfway between Eagle Point and Butte Falls. There they started farming and raising stock with sons George Washington, John Allen and Madison. About a year later the new military road between Fort Klamath and Jacksonville was finished. John and Margaret made the homestead into a stage stop and way station where guests enjoyed Margaret's German meals including sauerbraten. The family loved hearing all the news from around the area that visitors happily shared with them. This new venture helped to supplement their income.

The three sons knew how to care for the stock and were well known for breeding horses as well. During the winter of 1880, it was especially cold and wet from rain and snow, and about thirty-five horses had been suffering from exposure so badly that they nearly lost all the hair on their backs. The boys lost some horses, but they were able to shelter, treat and save most of them.

Life on the farm was very hard work, and there were many hardships in those early days. Late one Saturday evening Washington, or Wash as his family called him, heard something disturbing the cattle. Upon checking he found a very large grizzly bear in the area. The next morning, as soon as it was light, he and his two brothers took their rifles and dogs and rode off on horseback in search of the grizzly. It wasn't too long before the dogs found the bear and had cornered him. The brothers got off their horses and shot the bear who took off into the brush. Wash jumped on his horse and followed to where the dogs had the bear corned once again. Being in close quarters, he shot the bear with a load of buckshot and the angry bear knocked Wash off his horse.

The bear now had a hold of Wash, but the dogs kept going after the bear from the rear and causing the bear to turn his attention on them. They saved their master from further mutilation while Wash's brothers caught up and John shot and killed the bear.

The brothers managed to get Wash back to the farm then rode thirty miles to Jacksonville to fetch Dr. Aiken who came and dressed the wounds. Wash was seriously injured with nine serious flesh wounds, the most dangerous being where the bear bit him through the legs. The bear was enormous, thirty-eight inches across the back and weighed in at about 1200 pounds. It had been a pest in the area for several years and those on the neighboring farms and ranches were grateful to the boys for getting rid of it. Dr. Aiken had one of the bear's paws in his Jacksonville office as a trophy.

By 1870, John and Peggy moved into Jacksonville with sons Madison and John. Son Wash was nearby after losing his wife Hannah in childbirth. In 1874, Madison married Minnie Krach, and unlike his parents, they only had one child, a son Franklin. Madison was now in the butchering business and providing a good market for the cattle that his brothers were caring for on the Butte Falls ranch. By 1880, Madison moved his family to Klamath County to raise cattle on a grand scale and eventually holding around 400 acres near Bly. His wife Minnie and son Frank spent the winters in Jacksonville and returning to the ranch in the spring.

When Madison became ill, the family moved back to Jacksonville where Madison passed in 1896. His son Frank was only sixteen at the time and, as he loved the cattle ranch, took it over following his father's death. Frank married Carrie Wendt, a member of another prominent German family from Jacksonville.

Frank was recognized as one of the wide-awake and successful farmers in Klamath County, progressive and continually adding to the improvements made by his father. He kept adding acreage until his Sprague River Valley cattle and horse ranch was several thousand acres in size.

As pioneers, the Obenchains had a reputation as a family of high ideals who taught their children to be hard working and solid conservative citizens, and to take care of each other and the community. The Obenchain name was respected throughout Southern Oregon.

Obenchain Mountain, located between Eagle Point and Butte Falls is named for the family.

John Obenchain died on August 8, 1884, at the age of 83.

Margaret Peggy Obenchain died on June 5, 1888, at the age of 88.

Both are buried in the City Section of the Jacksonville Cemetery in Block 148, Plots 11 and 12.

The beautiful family monument that stands in the Block was made by J.C. Whipp, owner of the Jacksonville Marble Works, and was commissioned by sons, Bartlett, John and Madison in honor of their parents.

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## **George Washington Acree, a Confederate Soldier**

George Washington Acree was born in Bluff City, Sullivan County, Tennessee on April 17, 1843. In 1861, at the age of eighteen George, along with a group of men from Sullivan County, were mustered into the service in Knoxville. They became soldiers in Company K of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tennessee Infantry of the Confederate States of America.

Thirteen days later they found themselves in Manassas, Virginia and the first Battle of Bull Run. They were called the Shelby Greys. General Jackson, who led the First Brigade, later picked up his nickname "Stonewall" following this battle. A short time later, Private Acree became very ill with remittent fever, later known as malaria, and spent two months in the hospital.

George returned to duty and found his former Company K had been reorganized to Company E 63<sup>rd</sup> Tennessee Voluntary Infantry. They were attacking Union positions at Drury's Bluff, Virginia when he was captured. He was held prisoner in one fort, moved to another, put in the hold of a ship bound for New Jersey, and then on a train to upper New York State. George and his fellow prisoners thought things were real bad and were anxious to get out of the cramped conditions, until they arrived at the Union prisoner of war camp in Elmira, New York.

The camp was originally built as a Union army camp but, in the last year of the war, they converted one of the barracks into a prisoner of war camp. It opened on July 6, 1864, and was considered suitable for around 5,000 prisoners. When George and his fellow prisoners arrived less than three weeks after the camp opened and by the end of August, over 9,000 prisoners were crammed in with 132 already dead.

Some observation towers had been constructed across the street from the camp, and townspeople paid for the opportunity to come and gawk at the prisoners down below. There were no hospital facilities, sanitation was nonexistent, and water came from Foster's Pond, dirty and stagnant. Eventually the numbers rose to well over 12,000, and the so-called mess hall only seated 1,500 and that only if there was food to be had. When the Camp Commander received reports about Andersonville and other Confederate prison camps, he retaliated by cutting rations in half. Reportedly prisoners started catching rats and selling them for five cents apiece. It was a thriving business and also kept some of the prisoners from going mad.

It was also one of the coldest winters that part of the country had seen and, for those Confederate soldiers, something they were not use to. There were well over 900 prisoners still in tents, and hundreds of men froze to death or died from disease.

Private George Washington Acree was paroled on March 10, 1865, four weeks before General Lee surrendered. He had to take an oath of loyalty to the Union, but he did what he had to do to get out of "Helmira," as it was called by the prisoners. Nearly 3,000 men, one in four, never made it out, dying from exposure, malnutrition and disease.



Following his release, George returned to Sullivan County, Tennessee where he farmed the land. He married Francis Louise Rowley on December 18, 1873.

George, Francis and their family came across the plains in 1895 and were among the last of the pioneers to arrive by wagon train. They settled in Phoenix where they farmed, and George started working for the railroad as an engineer. George and Francis were parents to eight children, four sons and four daughters.

An item that George treasured was a small cloth bag that contained soil from Tennessee that Francis brought along.

George Washington Acree died on June 4, 1920, at the age of 77.

Francis Louise Rowley Acree died on April 15, 1934, at the age of 79.

Both are buried in the City section of the Jacksonville Cemetery in Block 136, Plots 1 and 2.

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## **George Francis Schumpf and Mariah Dillon Schumpf - The Town Barber**

George was born on August 20, 1839, in Laubach, Alsace, the French/German province. He was fluent in both the French and German languages. As a youth growing up in France he apprenticed for several years as a barber. George and his family immigrated to the United States in 1851.

When the Civil War broke out in this country in 1861, George who was living and working as a barber in Ohio joined the 70<sup>th</sup> Ohio Infantry. There is a strong possibility that he continued to practice as a barber while in the service. Barbers back in those days not only cut hair but some also performed minor medical procedures such as extracting teeth, setting fractures, and letting blood to name but a few. These types of things are something that George would certainly have been called upon to perform. In 1864 George extended his enlistment and at the end of the war he was honorably discharged in Little Rock, Arkansas. In 1867, George petitioned to become a U.S. citizen as he had been living in America since 1851 and served in the military for four years.

In 1868 he married Maria Dillon, a native of County Clare, Ireland whose family immigrated and settled in Pennsylvania. Maria's brother Matthew Dillon was a fellow soldier and friend of George's.

In 1871, George and Maria, at the urging of her brother Matthew, joined him and headed to the west to seek their fortunes. Choosing to avoid the long and difficult crossing of the plains by wagon they took the faster but harder sea route around Cape Horn. They first settled in Kirby but soon moved into Jacksonville.

Within two years of arriving, George was able to purchase the established barber shop that sat on California Street in Jacksonville, from Mr. Blockwell. Soon advertisements appeared in the local newspapers announcing the new barber shop on California Street and new proprietor George Schumpf. George offered that he was fully prepared to do all kinds of work in the best manner at reasonable prices. Haircutting, shaving, shampooing and ladies' hair cutting done first class style. Razors carefully put in order. He was even offering a new discovery, a dandruff lotion for cleansing the scalp and restoring the hair to its satisfactory vigor, priced at \$1.00 a bottle.

Sadly, in the early morning hours of April 14, 1874, just six months after George opened for business, the dreaded alarm for fire was sounded. The fire reportedly started in the El Dorado Saloon and quickly spread and consumed the entire block of frame buildings, including the barber shop. Being that these were some of the earliest buildings in town they were dry as tinder.

George rebuilt his shop with a new brick front and added bathing rooms with bathtubs for hot or cold baths that were available at all hours of the day. George shared some space with his friend and brother-in-law, Matthew Dillon, who was operating the establishment next door, the "Hole in the Wall" saloon which served very fine Kentucky whiskey and cigars.

In 1877, Maria and George had a large Classic Revival style home built on the corner of South Oregon and Fir Streets in Jacksonville. They entertained and held parties for friends and family on many occasions, including one to celebrate their Tin anniversary in 1878.

In May of 1882, Maria died from what was called "consumption of the bowels". George did some questionable investing in mines, perhaps his way of dealing with the loss of Maria.

In 1885 George had to sell the mine and ownership of his shop. Two years later in 1887 he also had to sell his home. The Colvig family purchased the home for \$700.

On a brighter note, George married Ellen Barry on Valentine's Day in 1885. Ellen was just eighteen and George was forty-five. Ellen lived in the Schumpf home while caring for Maria during her illness. Ellen and George had four children together with the last child born after George died in 1897 from Tuberculosis.

Maria Dillon Schumpf died on May 16, 1882, at the age of 45.

George Francis Schumpf died on June 20, 1897, at the age of 57.

Ellen Barry Schumpf died in 1932 at the age of 69.

All are buried in the Catholic Section of the Jacksonville Cemetery in Block E4, Plots 3, 4, and 5.

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### **Judge James Russell Neil and Minnie A. Helm Neil - A Tragic End**

James Russell Neil was born in Tennessee in 1841. In 1853 the Neil family packed up their belongings and headed west to start a new life. For a boy of twelve the trip was quite an adventure. Neil's family took up a Donation Land Claim of 320 acres, south of Ashland. Neil Creek near their claim was later named for James's father.

Minnie A. Helm was born in Illinois in 1845. Her parents, who also decided to head west, started across the plains in 1853, the same year as the Neil family. Sadly, Minnie's mother died along the way and was buried in an unmarked grave, a site lost in time. Minnie, who was an only child, was raised by her father.

James, who attended local schools, went on to graduate from Willamette University. He was very interested in law and studied under James Fay, one of the most brilliant of pioneer lawyers. James passed the Bar in 1865, and he and Minnie were married. The country was celebrating the end of our Nation's Civil War and the young couple was looking ahead to a bright future.

James and Minnie moved to Jacksonville where his law practice thrived. It seemed that at the time Southern Oregon was beset by lawsuits and disputed claims. In bad times, folks stood side-by-side while in good times they battled each other in law courts!

In addition to his practice, James was elected Prosecuting Attorney for Jackson, Josephine, Lake and Klamath Counties. These four counties comprised a large area which James covered on horseback. He was later elected County Judge and reelected to that position in three consecutive elections. James, who was a lifelong democrat, ran on a program that called for reform and complete transparency.

James found himself in a bit of hot water at one point in his career. It was during the trial of John Justus who had been charged with murdering his father. James was the defense attorney and absolutely felt there was insufficient evidence to try Justus. He approached a few jurors on the grand jury, in an attempt to convince them to dismiss the case. James, who was caught, made a full public confession. The Grand Jury, and later, the Supreme Court, found John Justus guilty; however, he was pardoned after a few years.

While James was busy with the law, Minnie kept busy raising a family and keeping house. She was also available to all, offering "intelligent and sympathetic counsel" to those in need. Minnie doled out good advice as well as home remedies. She was also a lover of nature and was an inspiration to all.

The Neils lost two of their children, a daughter Monrovia in 1870 at the age of just seven months, and a son George in 1896 at the age of twenty-eight.

Minnie, who had been ill for some time passed away in 1908.

After Minnie's death, James lived alone in the family home on North Oregon Street. Family members didn't think he should be there by himself, but James felt he was getting along fine.

Sadly, James died in a house fire started by a coal stove in December, 1917.

Minnie A. Helm Neil died on January 16, 1908, at the age of 65.

Judge James Russell Neil died on December 11, 1917, at the age of 76.

Both are buried in the Masonic Section of the Jacksonville Cemetery in Block 387, Plot 8.

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