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August

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“A Little History of Early Days” & “More History of an Earlier Day”

*Two letters penned by Thomas Edward Irish
and published in the Deer Park Union
on April 1st and April 15th of 1920 Respectively.*

Introduction by Peter Coffin.

About T. E. Irish:

Thomas Edward Irish was born in McDonough County, Illinois, on December 10, 1858, and died in Deer Park on October 18, 1931. He came to the Spokane area in 1884 and moved to his Williams Valley homestead in 1888 (the NW/4 Section 24, Township 28 North-range 41 East WM just southeast of the Williams Valley Hill Cemetery). He married Emma Louise Helsing on October 30, 1888, in Spokane. They had five children. He served as a Stevens County Commissioner and was appointed to the position of deputy sheriff a number of times. — P. C.

... letter published April 1, 1920 ...

With a multilevel headline reading, "A Little History of Early Days — Tom Irish Recounts Experiences and Conditions When He First Arrived in This Section — Bank Accounts were Lean," Mr. Irish's first letter begins, "To the editor of the Union: In your issue of March 25, you stated that on the 23rd of March, 1884, J. D. Walters and myself landed in Deer Park. I would like to correct the statements by saying we landed in Spokane on that date.

"Possibly a little early history of this valley might be of some interest to your readers.

"The first settler in this valley was A. T. Williams in 1887 (see Further Reading box below). The spring of 1888 brought many settlers in here. From memory I will give the names of some: E. C. Casberg, George Werner, L. A. Fields (L. C. Fjeld), T. J. White, W. H. Harvey, J. A. Prufer (see Further Reading box below), Frank Wagoner, Thomas McDougal, James Hattery, Frank Bittrich (Bittrick), S. Swenson (see Further Reading box below), H. G. Campbell, John Dunn, J. H. Browe, Ed

Kratzer, F. S. Irish, Nathan Newell, and myself.

"They called me the kid at that time and some people say I am a kid yet when I go to some dance.

"This country was a wilderness at that time, and it took lots of nerve, gall, and patience to stay here. There was no town nearer than Spokane, no transportation but cayuse* teams and ox teams. The writer's outfit consisted of a saddle 'hoss' and three yoke* of cattle. Some outfit, people would say now, but they were gilt-edged property those days.

"We had our barn-raising, and log rolling, and all pulled together to make homes for ourselves. We were a contented bunch, and as our bank accounts were all the same size (\$0.00), there wasn't any envy nor bolshevism among us.

"There are only four or five of us left here. Some moved to other states, and a great many have gone to that country from whose bourne no traveler returns."

(The 1906 edition of *The Century Dictionary* defines the word "bourne — a variant of old French" — as suggestive of a

*Cayuse (normally lower case) — a horse, especially and Indian pony.
*Yoke — a pair of cattle/oxen. Three yoke — six cattle/oxen.

Further Reading: Williams Valley Pioneers.

"Abraham Theodore Williams: Williams Valley's Namesake," by Peter Coffin. Mortarboard #72, April, 2014 — page 873 — Collected Newsletters, Vol. 19. http://cdphs.org/uploads/3/4/2/0/34204235/mortarboard_issue_72_singlepage.pdf

"J. A. Prufer," copied from the June 29th, 1939 Deer Park Union. Mortarboard #49, May, 2012 — page 607 — Collected Newsletters, Vol. 13. http://cdphs.org/uploads/3/4/2/0/34204235/newsletter_49_downsizedsinglepageweb.pdf

"More About J. A. Prufer," by Sharon Clark. Mortarboard #49, May, 2012 — page 609 — Collected Newsletters, Vol. 13. http://cdphs.org/uploads/3/4/2/0/34204235/newsletter_49_downsizedsinglepageweb.pdf

"Simon Swenson: Williams Valley Pioneer," by Peter Coffin. Mortarboard #78, October, 2014 — page 957 — Collected Newsletters, Vol. 20. http://cdphs.org/uploads/3/4/2/0/34204235/mortarboard_issue_78_doublepage_web.pdf

"Louis Olson (Sr.): Businessman/Builder," by Peter Coffin. Mortarboard #89, September, 2015 — page 1133 — Collected Newsletters, Vol. 24. http://cdphs.org/uploads/3/4/2/0/34204235/mortarboard_issue_89_doublepage_web.pdf

"limit" or "boundary." — Ed.)

"I don't know whether the short period of 2 years would make any perceptible difference in climate or not, but the seasons are very different from what they were in the days when the county was first being settled. We had a great deal of snow in winters and much more rain in summer at that time.

"Let me say that I have always been a booster for this country. It has a bright future. I love its valleys, its mountains, its people, and its sacred institutions.

"I expect to leave it someday to live the closing chapter of my earthly career among the flowers of the sunny south, but there is a touch of sadness in the thought.

"You can buy a home anywhere, but you can't buy friendship and old acquaintances. Respectfully yours — T. E. Irish."

... letter published April 15, 1920 ...

With a multilevel headline reading, "More History of an Earlier Day — But Few of Early Settlers in Clayton Country Alive Now, Says T. E. Irish — Snows Heavy in Those Days," Mr. Irish's second letter begins, "To the Editor of the Union: In my former article relating to the early settlement of this section, I gave the names of those who located in what is called Williams Valley. However, there is another section close to us (once called the Black Swamp), that had some early settlers. I am speaking of the Clayton country, and the Big Foot Valley.

"The names of those who settled in that part of the county, so far as memory serves me, are: Those who came in 1888 —

William Hutchins, George Cheney, Jess Cheney, Charles Worm (Wurm?), Joseph Faulter (Falter?), Louis Olson, Sr. (See Further Reading box, page 2346). 1889 — It's R. J. Stephenson (J. R.?), Thomas Burk, Barney Smith, Jacob Gibson, Gottlieb Relstab (Relistab?), Robert Knowles, and Chris Bouler (Bouier?).

"Of these men but three are alive that I know of, namely William Hutchins, Jacob Gibson, and Louis Olson Sr.

"That swamp country where they settled was the most God-forsaken looking place I ever saw in 1888. It was covered with a dense growth of black pine and tamarack, and if a man got a quarter of a mile away from his cabin he was dead sure to get lost. I know whereof I speak, for I had that experience.

"Those men so far as I know were in the same shape financially as we were down here, but they were hustlers and were instrumental in opening up a good country.

"Permit me to speak a word of praise for the hospitality of these early settlers. They were princes. They shared their bed and board with all. When night overtook the weary traveler, if he found their cabin, he was never turned away.

"I don't know whether the people who come here now ever give us — the pioneers — any credit for what we did, but in our own minds and hearts we feel that we did something for our country and future prosperity.

"There is another class I wish to speak a word of praise for — the mothers who left civilization and endured the privations and hardships of a pioneer life. Take off your hats to them. They are entitled to every considera-

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are available
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tion.

“In my former article I spoke of the snows in early days. And I want to tell of just one snowy winter. I could tell many more, but this one will do for the present.

“In the spring of 1894 a man by the name of Thomas Holland hired J. Hattery and myself to move a sawmill boiler from the Falk place south of Deer Park to Clayton. We started with it on the 28th or 29th day of March, 1894. We had five yoke of cattle to draw it with and we had three men to help us with a cayuse team to haul the feed and grub. There was three feet of snow on the ground when we started. It took us five days to get through and

it snowed every day on the trip. It took lots of moral suasion and some profanity to get that bull outfit though that snow and over those crooked trails.

“As Tom Holland said, we had the devil’s own time, but we had some fun, too, and as that was before the day of the prohibitionists, we sometimes found a wet spot (as generally understood at that time, the term ‘wet spot’ referred to a place where distilled alcohol — legal or otherwise — was available for imbibing). Respectfully yours. — T. E. Irish.”

— end —

Regarding Some of the Names Mentioned in Mr. Irish’s Letters.

by

Wally Lee Parker

... Frank Bittrick ...

On August 22nd, 1891, the following article appeared in the *Spokane Daily Chronicle*. “Thursday night Frank Bittrick, from near (the) Hazard Post Office, drove a span of gray horses into Spokane, and upon going to get them later they could not be found. Mr. Bittrick reported the loss to the police headquarters, and also to the county sheriff, (stating) that his team had been stolen. But after a very thorough search the horses were found, and the owner went home happy.”

In his two 1920 letters to the *Deer Park Union* regarding Williams Valley’s original pioneers, Thomas Irish included the above Frank Bittrick among those listed — though in the article his last name was spelled Bittrich. That surname is familiar to most residents of the Williams Valley area in the form of Bittrich Road. That said, research suggests the

above Frank was the son of another Williams Valley pioneer, a gentleman by the name of August Bittrick — who should have been included in the pioneer list as well.

With a “Certificate of Naturalization,” dated November 2nd, 1891, the Superior Court for Spokane County “ordered and adjudged that he, Frank Bittrick, (cursive spelling appears as Bittrich) is hereby admitted to be a citizen of the United States.” One of the witnesses was Abraham Williams — the namesake of Williams Valley.

Another “Certificate of Naturalization,” this dated August 31st, 1899, notes that August Bittrick has become a citizen.

The Stevens County census for 1892 lists August Bittrick, 45, Hulda Bittrick 43, Atta (the cursive likely meaning Otto) Bittrick, 18, all reportedly born in Germany. Minnie Bittrick, age 10, the last name on this page of the census, is again marked as being born in

Germany. The next page begins with Lizzie. This child is again stated as age 10, but unlike Minnie and the others, the birthplace is reported as Wisconsin. Since 10 appears to be the designated age for both Minnie and Lizzie, it implies they’re twins, and both born in Wisconsin. All that said, data recorded in the census is often suspect, and it’s quite possible Lizzie was closer to 8 years old, and the only child born in Wisconsin.

Beyond this mention of Minnie, I’ve yet to find any records for her. And she might not be the only missing child.

According to his death certificate, patriarch August was born on October 5th, 1847 and passed on January 1st, 1927. His wife’s maiden name was Hulda Wutchke — that confirmed on her death certificate. She was born on the 1st of January, 1850 and died on May 11th, 1929.

Just below Lizzie’s name, the census records then 27-year-old Frank Bittrick. Frank’s death certificate (April 12, 1933) gives his date of birth as June 11th, 1866 and identifies his father as August Bittrick. I can’t be absolutely certain, but it seems likely he was August and Hulda’s firstborn. The census form also states that Frank’s lifelong profession was “merchant.”

The 1896 Spokane City Directory list the “Bittrick Bros., Frank and Herman,” as “dealers in grain, feed, and wood, 341 Sprague Avenue.” Herman’s death certificate (August 24, 1950) records his birth date as April 17th, 1871.

It’s clear from the above that 1892’s census — taken while they were still residing in Williams Valley — didn’t represent all of August and Hulda’s children. Very likely their second born was Louis Bittrick. The only record of him — said gender assumed — is that he was born in 1868 and passed in 1892 — one would assume just before the 1892 census was taken. He’s interred at Williams Valley’s Hillside Cemetery.

1910’s federal census places August and Hulda as living in Spokane. By this time they’re both in their early 60’s. As far as I’ve

been able to discover, the last of their children to pass away was Otto, born on the 10th of May, 1873, and giving up the ghost on the 8th of May, 1960. Passing just before him was Louise, her death certificate recording her demise as January 14th, 1960. As of now it appears Louise (Myers) was likely the lastborn of August and Hulda’s children, her birthdate being June 19th, 1884. As to why Louise wasn’t represented on the 1892 census, she might have been. One piece of documentation suggests she was known within the family as Lizzie. Her age would have been closer to eight. But then as noted, data recorded by census — especially when written in cursive — is often suspect.

The Bittrick family likely left Williams Valley just a few years after 1892’s census. That said, it’s a high probability that they bequeathed their surname, slightly altered, to one of the valley’s roads.

... Joseph H. Browe ...

Following are the words his neighbor and friend, Thomas Irish, penned for Williams Valley farmer J. H. Browe’s obituary — that found in the January 13th 1921 edition of the *Deer Park Union*.

“Joseph H. Browe was born in the shadows of the famous Green Mountains in the State of Vermont in 1849 (November 10th), and passed away on January 8th in the Paine Sanitarium in Spokane. There were seven children in the family. The writer had no acquaintance with any of them except the deceased and his brother, M. (Moses E.) Browe of California.

“Mr. Browe attained manhood in his native state and soon after becoming of age he went to New York State, where he remained for some time. Later he emigrated to the southern part of Illinois, where he was employed on a farm. Then he drifted further west to the territory of Montana. Later he came to Rathdrum, Idaho, where he was employed in the woods. In the summer of 1887, he came to Williams Valley, where he had resided for 33

years.

“His was a quiet, kind disposition. His life was an open book. He lived as near as it is possible to live to the teachings of the Golden Rule.

“The sickness that caused his death dates back some seven or eight years. He made a trip to southland some years ago and regained his health, but the call of the northland was strong, and he returned.”

According to Mr. Browe’s death certificate, the above noted disease was “*Chronic Brights*” — a long-term inflammation of the kidneys generally associated with secondary cardiac problems.

... **Edward Christian Casberg** ...

According to his Certificate of Naturalization, this dated May 25th, 1897, Mr. Casberg had immigrated from Norway. His death certificate gives his date of birth as April 18th, 1853, and the date of his passing as June 27th, 1947.

Edward’s obituary, this from the July 3rd, 1947 issue of the *Deer Park Union*, states, *“When Mr. Casberg first came to this district, the entire county was covered with a dense growth of heavy timber. It was he who suggested naming Williams Valley after Mr. Williams, the first settler. He was the first road boss in the district, laying out the roads to Clayton and Deer Park. He was a brick mason by trade, and was proud of the buildings he helped build in Deer Park and Spokane.*

“An ardent church worker, Mr. Casberg helped establish the Williams Valley Sunday School, and was superintendent for many years. He also helped organize the Williams Valley School. He was always active in the project for betterment of the community.

The obituary also notes, *“Since the death of his wife, 20 years ago, Mr. Casberg made his home with his son and daughter-in-law,”* that in Big Foot Valley.

Regarding Mrs. Casberg — first name Carrie, as recorded on her death certificate — she was born in Norway on the 24th of

December, 1851 and passed away at her Williams Valley home on July 11th, 1927. In part, her *Spokesman-Review* obituary states, *“She was married to Edward C. Casberg November 27, 1872, and they came here February 6, 1888, when Williams Valley was a wilderness virtually without roads.”*

... **John Dunn** ...

Mr. Dunn was born on the 25th of September, 1857. His obituary — copied from the July 27th, 1939 issue of the *Deer Park Union* — recalls him as *“a well-known pioneer farmer of this district. He was born in Canada 81 years ago. At the age of 15 he came to the United States and secured his citizenship. He lived on his farm until a few years ago when he sold and came to town. He made his home at the Deer Park Hotel until three weeks ago when he became so ill that it was necessary to remove him to the hospital for attention.”*

On July 22nd Mr. Dunn passed away at the Broadacres ‘County’ Hospital near the town of Spangle. A single man, he was survived by one brother living in Spokane.

... **Joseph Falter** ...

I’ve only found a few fragments regarding Joseph Falter — his name spelled Faulter in Thomas Irish’s second letter. The oldest trace of this revised name so far located is 1892’s Stevens County census. There the gentleman is stated as being 51 years of age. The unique cursive on that document may be suggesting his original home was the German state of Bavaria. It would seem this Mr. Falter was without a spouse when the census was taken.

Spokane’s marriage records for 1896 reveal that Joseph Falter, 56, then a resident of Clayton, married 48-year-old Mary Huber of Trent, Washington. The records indicate this was not the first marriage for either.

We have an obituary and death certificate for Mary. She was born in Germany on

January 22nd, 1846, and passed away in Spokane, July 11th, 1919. A short obituary stated she had six surviving children, the surnames of the three boys each being different — suggesting she’d been married at least three times before. She’s interred at Spokane’s Greenwood Cemetery.

Further traces of Joseph Falter are yet to be found.

... **Lars Christianson Fjeld** ...

On September 24th, 1890, Mr. Fjeld, born in Norway on the 9th of August, 1856, filed his Declaration of Intention to become a United States citizen. He received his Certificate of Naturalization on June 30th, 1897.

The *Spokane Chronicle’s* August 16th, 1930 edition carried a photo of Mr. Fjeld, a lifelong bachelor, sitting heartbroken among ashes with a tent behind him being his new abode. As the photo’s caption noted, in 1888 Lars had established a homestead *“eight miles west of Deer Park.”* Since settling, he had worked to *“hew a ranch out of the forest, to make a place where he could spend his declining years in comfort.”* But that all changed a few days prior as a forest fire roaring *“over the hills from the northwest burned his barns and his sheds and his cabin, parched his potato crop and his apple trees, burned the feed he had put up for his livestock. So, Lars Fjeld, 75, is starting all over with a tent as his home.”*

“Louis Field, 89, Disappears,” was the lead to a front-page article in the *Deer Park Union’s* October 25th, 1945 edition. *“Friends, neighbors, sheriff officers and others have been hunting the past few days for Louis Field, 89, who disappeared from his home west of town last Friday night. Field, also known as Carl Fjeld and Lars Field, was last seen by Ralph Kriek, his closest neighbor.*

“Sheriff Beryl Warren of Stevens County reported that the man is small and rather stooped, is bald-headed and apparently was wearing only a shirt and a pair of socks when he disappeared. Cash totaling \$1,817.

36 was found in his cabin.”

And a week later the *Union* reported, *“The body of Louis Field, 89-year-old Williams Valley resident, who disappeared from his home the night of October 20, was found in a brushy draw about a mile from his cabin late Monday afternoon. He was found by Mrs. Jesse Lynch.*

“The aged man had no known relatives. ...

“An autopsy performed Wednesday morning by Dr. Snyder of Deer Park and Dr. Carson of Chewelah determined that exposure was the cause of Field’s death. No evidence of foul play was discovered.”

... **Jacob Gibson** ...

I located a trace of Mr. Gibson in 1892’s Stevens County census. This Jacob is an apparently single 37-year-old immigrant from Germany. The next record is a Marriage Record dated May 2nd, 1904. With his residence listed as Clayton, his birthplace Germany, and his occupation farmer, he states that on his last birthday he was 49 years old — which fits with the data in the 1892 census.

The other party on the record is Nellie Berg, age 25, also of Clayton. She gives her birthplace as Norway.

The federal census for 1910 indicates the two original Jacobs has expanded by one girl and three boys.

Jacob’s birthdate, as recorded on his death certificate, was September 3rd, 1854. His obituary, that in the *Deer Park Union’s* April 9th, 1942 issue, reported that *“Jacob Gibson, who had lived in the Clayton district for over fifty years, was laid to rest in the Trysil Lutheran Cemetery Easter Sunday, April 5. ... The eighty-seven-year-old pioneer passed away on April 2 after a short illness. ... He leaves his wife, Nellie of Coeur d’ Alene, Idaho; four sons, Emil, Deer Park, Jacob, Prineville, Oregon, Paul, Clayton, and George, Portland; Two sisters (should read daughters), Catherine Garvey, Coeur d’ Alene, and Selma Erickson, Prineville: and thirteen grandchil-*

dren.”

And then this was found in 1948’s June 10th *Spokesman-Review* under the date-line, “*Coeur D’Alene, Idaho, June 9. — Nellie Gibson, 69, who came here 21 years ago, died yesterday at a local hospital. She was born in Norway. Survivors include two daughters, Mrs. E. J. Garvey (Catherine), Coeur d’Alene, and Mrs. Selma Erickson, Sutherlin, Oregon., and four sons, George Gibson of Drain, Oregon, Jacob of Mount Vernon, Oregon, Emil Gibson of Deer Park, Washington, and Paul Gibson of Clayton, Washington. ... Interment will be at Clayton, Washington.*”

... *William Harvey* ...

The documentation for Mr. Harvey was light. His obituary was found in the June 2nd, 1938 edition of the *Deer Park Union*. The single paragraph stated, “*Wm. H. Harvey, 74 (this should actually read 84), a pioneer resident on R. F. D. 3, died in a Spokane hospital on Saturday, after a long illness. The funeral services were held in Spokane on Wednesday and interment was made in Peace Abbey Mausoleum at Fairmont Cemetery. He was one of the earlier pioneers of this district, having owned property in Williams Valley prior to locating in the Blake’s Lake District (aka Eloika Lake).*”

William’s death certificate gives his date of birth as June 4th, 1853, and date of death as May 28th, 1938. His profession for the 50 years prior to his retirement in 1934 was stated to have been a self-employed “*Painter Contractor.*” His place of residence at the time of death is listed as Deer Park — possibly having returned there after retirement.

A widower, the certificate states his former wife’s name was Fannie. I did find an obituary for 67-year-old Fannie Harvey in the

October 31st, 1928 edition of the *Spokane Chronicle*. Her obituary states she was a long-time resident of Spokane, and that her husband, W. H. Harvey was also “*of Spokane.*” Besides the names, the only thing that seems to confirm a relationship between our William Harvey and this Fannie Harvey is that the obituary gives her place of internment as the above noted Peace Abbey Mausoleum. While there doesn’t appear to be a Fannie Harvey interred at the mausoleum, there is a “*Mrs. W. H. Harvey.*” Her date of death is listed as October 26th, 1928, and the record indicates she was 67 at that time.

... *James Hattery* ...

So far I’ve only found two documents that clearly disclose something about T. E. Irish’s inclusion of James Hattery among the Williams Valley pioneers — one of such once again the 1892 Stevens County census. On that document Mr. Hattery’s place of birth is stated as Illinois, and his age 34. His wife, Annie, was 28. Her place of birth, Mississippi. At that time they had five children — Dora, age 12, born in Arkansas; Minnie, age 6, also born in Arkansas; Siddle (uncommon, but clearly identified as a girl’s name), age 5, place of birth difficult to translate from an abbreviated cursive, but likely meaning “*Indian Territory;*” the same is given as the birthplace of Lottie, her age also difficult to discern from the document’s cursive; and the last name on the list, once again a daughter, this time born in Washington, appears to be Sadie — her age, like Lottie’s, difficult to make out.

I did find this snippet in the April 3rd 1896 edition of the *Spokane Chronicle*. “*James Hattery of Clayton was in town this morning on land office business. Mr. Hattery*

Looking Up Townships, Ranges, and Sections.

Here’s a handy interactive Washington State Department of Transportation map for finding the township, range, and section description of locations within the state.

<https://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?layers=97a5ae98d8d04458860f64e201d155c4>

thinks good crops may be expected in that vicinity this year, and much progress is to be looked for in the newfound mines in the neighborhood.”

Lastly of course, there’s a substantial likelihood that the name of Williams Valley’s Hattery Road is derived from this family.

... *William Hutchins* ...

This was the Hutchens family as represented in 1892’s census. The father was W. M. Hutchins, born in North Carolina, January 27th, 1848, and the mother, Mary Hutchens, born in Indiana on July 15th, 1851. Following was Frank (William Franklin Hutchens), born in Minnesota on January 8th, 1875. Next came Robert, born April 11th, 1876, then Herbert, September 6th, 1879, and Frederick, September 4th, 1882. All the above likewise born in Minnesota. The last in line was Walter, the only one born in Washington — that on April 14th, 1884.

There was one other boy. It seems the Hutchins family, upon arrival in the Washington Territory, first tried farming in Lincoln County — that reflected in the county’s 1885 territorial census. On August 22nd, 1886, the family’s then third son, Samuel — born January 15th, 1878 — passed away. He’s interred at the Pleasant View Cemetery near Mondovi — now classified as a populated place within Lincoln County.

Other than Samuel, the only above noted members of the family missing from Wild Rose’s cemetery are Frank (William Franklin) and Robert. The former is at rest at Spokane’s Memorial Gardens, the latter in Spokane’s Fairmount Memorial Park.

As for the family’s patriarch, this is from the *Deer Park Union*’s June 2nd, 1921 issue. “*William Hutchins, 73 years old, and a pioneer of this section, died Tuesday at Sacred Heart Hospital in Spokane after an illness of considerable duration. He was a native of North Carolina, but served with the Union Army in the Civil War and was a member of the G. A. R. He came to Wild Rose in 1883(?)*

and had lived on a farm here continuously since. ...”

... *Edward McClelland Kratzer* ...

This obituary for Edward Kratzer was found in the *Deer Park Union*’s December 20th, 1956 edition. “*Edward M. Kratzer, who was 93 in November, passed away at his home in Williams Valley December 13 after suffering a stroke.*

“*He was born near Mariasville, Pennsylvania (Mariasville is currently identified as a “populated place” within Venango County) and came to Washington in 1889. At that time the post office was at Hazard. Deer Park consisted of two shacks and a small fenced in yard where a man kept two deer. Perhaps this is where our townsite got its name.*

“*Mr. Kratzer built a house on a patch of meadowland and began to clear away the trees that surrounded him. He homesteaded the 160 acres on which he has lived ever since. With other settlers Mr. Kratzer cut trails through the timber for the lumber wagons. In recent years he enjoyed sitting by the fire and reminiscing about the early days and the hardships they encountered.*

“*Mr. Kratzer leaves two daughters, Mrs. Marion Trowbridge of Spokane and Mrs. Dale Milner at the home, four grandchildren, Harold and Carold Trowbridge of Spokane, Mrs. Donald Ball and Luella Milner. He also leaves nieces and nephews in the East and Texas.*”

Stevens County’s 1892 census lists E. M. Kratzer, a 29-year-old farmer. The next name down on the form is Marion Kratzer, a three-year-old female. Though Mr. Kratzer is identified as married, his wife’s name doesn’t appear to be written on the form. To this puzzle a headstone of Williams Valley’s Hillside Cemetery holds the answer. Annie M. (Crawford) Kratzer was born in 1867 and died in 1891 — before the 1892 census was taken.

Several years before Edward Kratzer death, the *Deer Park Union* printed this re-

garding the October 11th, 1952 passing of his second wife. “Mrs. Lucy B. Kratzer died at her home in Williams Valley where she had lived since her marriage in 1895. She was 90 years old last July. She was born in Waterloo, Wisconsin, and came to Spokane Falls in 1886. She taught school until her marriage. Among schools she taught were Clayton, Wild Rose, Valley, Latah, and Reardan. She is survived by her husband Edward M., at the home; two daughters, Mrs. Dale Milner of Deer Park and Mrs. Marion Trowbridge of Spokane; a sister, Mrs. Grace Eickmeyer of Deer Park; four grandchildren, Harold and Carol Trowbridge of Spokane, Mrs. Lorraine Ball and Miss Luella Milner, both of Deer Park. She was a member of the Happy Home Baptist Church, Women’s Christian Temperance Union, and Williams Valley Home Economics Club.”

... Thomas McDougal ...

Eighteen ninety-two’s Stevens County census places Thomas McDougal — a 56-year-old immigrant from Canada — in Williams Valley. Just below Mr. McDougal’s name is 47 years old Kate McDougal.

Data from the records of the Williams Valley Hillside Cemetery, where the above Mr. McDougal is interred, gives his birthdate as March 1st, 1836, and his birthplace as Buss River, Kent County, New Brunswick. This place still exists, though the actual name is Bass River. It appears in the last few decades of the nineteenth century this was a community of between three and four hundred souls. It’s now a designated place — meaning a store, gas station and post office clustered near a crossroads within an otherwise rural community.

No further trace of the wife mentioned in the 1892 census, Kate McDougal, has been located as of this writing.

Below the dateline “Deer Park, Wash., November 1,” a short statement in the November 6th 1908 edition of the *Spokesman-Review* reports that “Thomas McDougal, a

pioneer of Williams Valley, died today. Mr. McDougal has been ill for some time with asthma, which together with old age, caused his death.”

Though our data on Mr. McDougal is scant, the county road bearing his name keeps a small trace of his historic presence alive.

... Nathan Newell ...

The first mention of Nathan Newell so far located was this from a segment listing “Homestead Entries” in the January 6th, 1891 issue of the *Spokane Falls Review*. “Nathan Newell, of Hazard, on the south half of the southeast quarter of the southwest quarter, and lot 7 of section 6, township 28, range 42.” This is well within the Williams Valley district.

The 1892 Stevens County census also records Nathan Newell — though such is spelled “Newal” in said document. The document gives Nathan’s age as 44 and his place of birth as Indiana. His 34-year-old wife, Emily, is also from Indiana. Five children are listed, all apparently born in Iowa. Fanny, age 15, Maud, age 12, William, age 8, May, age 6, and “N” — no further data legible other than that he was a male, age 2.

The next document was 1910’s federal census. Compared to the 1892 census, several differences were noted regarding the Nathan Newell family. First, they had moved from Williams Valley into the Riverside Precinct of Stevens County, which, I’m assuming, includes Scotts Valley. Said document gives Nathan’s wife’s name as “Sarah E.” Data from the Scotts Valley Cemetery indicates the “E” stands for her middle name, Emily, which, it appears, she commonly used. Also of interest is that her 30-year-old unmarried daughter was still living at home. The name given was Stella. Comparing ages with the children listed in the 1892 census suggests this was then given as Maude. Added to the list since 1892 were Leroy, 16 at the time of 1910’s census, Ethel, age 13, Hazel, age 11, and Roy, age 8.

The next document found was Emily’s obituary, this from the May 30th, 1919 edition of the *Deer Park Union*. It’s clear from this that at some point prior the family left Williams Valley. “Emily McNeal was born April 27, 1858, in the State of Indiana, removing to Iowa, where she was married to Nathaniel Newell, January 6, 1876. Of this union 12 children were born, nine of whom, with the husband, one brother and one sister, survive her. Of the former, Lawrence Newell lives in Edmonton, Alberta, Mrs. Fannie McCracken, in Vancouver, Washington, Mrs. May Bollinger, San Jose, California, Mrs. Maude Clarke and Mrs. Ethel Cups at Long Lake, William Newell in Scotts Valley, Hazel, Ray and Roy with the husband at her late home in Scotts Valley, where she departed this life May 26, 1919, and where the funeral was held attended by many friends. The burial was in the little local cemetery overlooking Long Lake.”

And lastly there was this from the *Deer Park Union*’s January 25th, 1937 edition. “Funeral services for Nathan Newell, pioneer resident of the Scotts Valley district, were held at the cemetery on Monday, death having occurred at the home of his son, Ray Newell, at Ford on Friday of last week. P. B. Nordby, pastor of the Full Gospel Church of Deer Park officiating. The deceased was 91 years of age and was one of the early settlers in Scotts Valley. He is survived by eight children, among whom are Ray and William Newell, both well known here, and a large number of grandchildren.”

Nathan is buried in the Scotts Valley Cemetery as well.

... R. J. Stevenson ...

I didn’t find a J. R. Stephenson listed in 1892’s Stevens County census, but I did find R. J. Stevenson. So, this is totally circumstantial, but the early census states Mr. Stevenson, born in New York, was 58 at the time of that census. His wife, only identified with the initial M., also recorded as born in

New York was a stated 52 at that time. Three children were listed, a boy 24, possibly C. F. for his initials, a girl, Eliza, 22, and another, Carrie, age 17.

The only other bit of data on hand is from 1910’s census, Clayton Precinct. That has Robert J. Stevenson, a 76-year-old from New York and his wife, Martha, 69 and also from New York. Their ages are close enough to those from 1892’s census that there’s a good likelihood we have a match.

... James T. White ...

In his letters, Mr. Irish mentions T. J. White. It seems likely that these initials are reversed and the gentleman he was actually referencing was James T. White. Then 37 years old, James was listed in 1892’s census as a carpenter by profession, born in Virginia, with a wife, Alice E., age 35, and five children. The first three, Edgar, Nina, and Bessie, were born in Mississippi. The last two, Beatrice and Hazel, were born in Washington.

Alice’s death certificate gives her birthdate as January 13th, 1859, January 16th, 1926 — meaning she’d just turned 67 when she passed. Her remains were interred at Fairmount Memorial Park’s Peace Abbey Mausoleum in Spokane.

The mausoleum records are where I found James Tilmon White’s birth and death dates. The 27th of November, 1854, and March 21st, 1937.

Connecting James T. White to Williams Valley was the following “Notice for Publication” found in the May 12th edition of the *Spokane Review*. Dated “Land Office at Spokane, Wash., April 3, 1893,” the article said, “Notice is hereby given that the following named settler has filed notice of his intention to make final proof in support of his claim, and that said proof will be made before (the) United States Land Office at Spokane, Wash., on May 28, 1893, vis: James T. White, who made H. D. No. 7, &US, for the sw. ¼ Sec. 24, twp. 28 n., range 41 east, W. M.

“He names the following witnesses to

prove his continuous residence upon and cultivation of said land, Viz: W. H. Harvey, John Dunn of Hazard, Wash., Frank Irish, T. E. Irish of Deer Park, Wash.”

An obituary for Mr. White found in the March 23rd, 1937 edition of the *Spokane Chronicle* said, “He is survived by four daughters, Mrs. Nina Yeager and Miss Hazel White, both of Spokane; Mrs. Herbert Kippen, Seattle, and Mrs. R. E. Leslie, Portland, and one son, Dr. Edgar White, Lewiston, Idaho.”

... other names, hints and no hints ...

Links to biographical data on William Valley’s namesake, Abraham Theodore Williams, as well as J. A. Pruffer, Simon Swenson, and Louis Olson Sr., as they appeared in prior issue of the *Mortarboard*, can be found in the “Further Reading” box on page 2346 of this issue.

Searches for the following individuals have proven either unproductive or dubi-

ous as to accuracy. Other investigators with access to deeper resources might have better results. That said, we can confirm the name Frank Wagoner, that having appeared among the witnesses for certain homestead claims as published in Spokane’s newspapers for the Wild Rose, Williams Valley, Deer Park and Clayton areas. Also among such was the name Charles Wurm — possibly the Charles Worm in Mr. Irish’s script. Another such witness filing printed the name Gottlieb Relistab — possibly Mr. Irish’s Gottlieb Relstab.

I couldn’t establish anything definite regarding George Werner, George Cheney, Jess Cheney, Thomas Burk, Barney Smith, Robert Knowles and Chris Boulder. I did find a trace of H. G. Campbell in 1892’s census, with some similarities to a listing for one Henry G. Campbell in 1910’s — the latter in the Arden area just south of Colville. The similarities are tantalizing, the divergences problematic.

— end —

Letters, Email, Bouquets & Brickbats

— or —

Bits of Chatter, Trivia, & Notices All Strung Together.

... a history of Chattaroy on YouTube ...

A resident of the Deer Park area named Shelah Riggins recently posted a link to the ‘Spokane History Researchers’ page on Facebook, said link opens a 12-minute video on the history of Chattaroy. It proves to be a very interesting and well-researched video.

As such, a link is provided below for any interested.

A quick search revealed that the below noted Ormel Floyd Ogden was born in Spokane on the 14th of October, 1908. He passed away on January 21st, 2000. He, along with his wife, Margaret Lois (Gray), are interred at Chattaroy’s cemetery.

A Video History of Chattaroy.

“Chattaroy: From the ‘Memories and Musings’ of Ormel F. Ogden, Lifelong Chattaroy Resident, Local Historian, and Artist,” as retold by Debbie Toner-Ogden.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d3c5YLrkkkQ>

It does appear that Mr. Ogden led a remarkable life. And the *Mortarboard* would enjoy hearing from anyone that might be able to add some depth to our understanding of it.

... everything we know about the Gwen ...

The society has accumulated a remarkable amount of data on two of Loon Lake’s most talked about relics, one Evan Morgan’s long lost steam launch Gwen, the other Moose Bay’s drowned boat — which

our research suggests is Evan Morgan’s second powered launch, this one named the Loon.

Most of the oral traditions regarding Loon Lake’s drowned boat assume it’s the Gwen, with any gaps in that narrative thread being filled over the years by speculations that time has transformed into a whole litany of sometimes conflicting “facts.” What the society has done over the last four years is try to develop an alternate view based primarily on documents, with just a sprinkling of speculation to spice things up — though, when such is

Searching for the Steamboats Gwen and Loon.

“In Search of the Legendary Gwen (Part One),” by Wally Lee Parker.
Mortarboard #115, Nov., 2017 — page 1565 — *Collected Newsletters*, Vol. 33.
http://www.cdphs.org/uploads/3/4/2/0/34204235/newsletter_115_web_.pdf

“In Search of the Legendary Gwen (Part Two),” by Wally Lee Parker.
Mortarboard #116, Dec., 2017 — page 1581 — *Collected Newsletters*, Vol. 33.
http://www.cdphs.org/uploads/3/4/2/0/34204235/newsletter_116_web_1_.pdf

“Letters/Brickbats: Regarding Evan Morgan’s Park” by Wally Lee Parker
Mortarboard #120, April, 2018 — page 1651 — *Collected Newsletters*, Vol. 34.
http://cdphs.org/uploads/3/4/2/0/34204235/newsletter_120_web_1_.pdf

“Letters/Brickbats: More on Loon Lake’s Drowned Boat,” by Wally Lee Parker.
Mortarboard #124, August, 2018 — page 1713 — *Collected Newsletters*, Vol. 37.
http://www.cdphs.org/uploads/3/4/2/0/34204235/newsletter_124_web_.pdf

“Groff’s Boat: In Search of the Gwen’s Lost Engine,” by Wally Lee Parker.
Mortarboard #129, January, 2019 — page 1792 — *Collected Newsletters*, Vol. 37.
http://www.cdphs.org/uploads/3/4/2/0/34204235/newsletter_129_web_.pdf

“Letters/Brickbats: More on Evan Morgan’s Boats,” by Wally Lee Parker.
Mortarboard #133, May, 2019 — page 1859 — *Collected Newsletters*, Vol. 38.
http://cdphs.org/uploads/3/4/2/0/34204235/newsletter_133_web_.pdf

“Letters/Brickbats: A Gwen Photo Floats to the Surface,” by Wally Lee Parker.
Mortarboard #139, Nov., 2019 — page 1966 — *Collected Newsletters*, Vol. 40.
http://cdphs.org/uploads/3/4/2/0/34204235/newsletter_139_web_.pdf

“Clinker Boats on Loon Lake,” by Wally Lee Parker.
Mortarboard #142, Feb., 2020 — page 2013 — *Collected Newsletters* Vol. 42.
http://cdphs.org/uploads/3/4/2/0/34204235/newsletter_142_web_.pdf

“Letters/Brickbats: More About Loon Lake’s Drowned Boat,” by Wally Lee Parker.
Mortarboard #149, Sept., 2020 — page 2152 — *Collected Newsletters* Vol. 44.
http://cdphs.org/uploads/3/4/2/0/34204235/newsletter_149_web_.pdf

added, our typical modus operandi has been to clearly denote it as such. The other thing we've typically done is give our sources — meaning supply enough information regarding where our "facts" are coming from that anyone interested can confirm their accuracy for themselves.

Just to make all this a little easier, on the prior page is a listing of all the stories we've published on this subject, and links to the same. I will warn you that these articles are thick reading — meaning they're fact heavy materials of an investigative nature. While we don't have all the answers, the ones we do have can be trusted to get us quite a bit closer to the truth. And that's what real history is all about.

... Deer Park's first postmaster — maybe ...

Someday somebody will explain all this, but our research keeps stumbling over the apparent fact that there's more than one first postmaster for Deer Park — that at least when taking into account what we've been telling ourselves up to this point. To amplify, here's an outline of the specific bits of documentation that leaves us floundering.

According to the December 24th, 1886 issue of the *Washington Standard* — a twice-weekly newspaper published in Olympia — "The mail route from Spokane Falls to Hazard, from January 1, 1887, is changed to embrace Mayer, between Spokane Falls and Hazard, and to extend the route to end at Forreston, increasing the distance ten miles."

While that seems plain enough, a slight complication enters when we consider

this clipping from 1887's *Official Register of the United States containing a List of the Officers and Employees of the Civil, Military and Naval Service*. The above term "Civil" is highlighted in Volume Two of this set of books, the title of which adds "The Post Office Department and The Postal Service." Scrolling to the pages listing the Washington Territory's "Post-Offices and Postmasters," we find the wayside of "Forreston" listed as a post office within "Spokane" county, with "P. E. Myers" (as spelled) as its postmaster. Under the postmaster's compensation we find three dollars and ninety-one cents — plus the number 2 in superscript. Checking the footnotes at the bottom of the page, the designated footnote reads "From August 26, 1886."

To me, that would suggest that Peter E. Meyers had been appointed postmaster at Forreston on the footnoted date. The small amount of compensation may have been linked to the fact that the actual opening of Forreston's post office was delayed until a date sometime in the first half of 1887 — as suggested by the *Washington Standard's* December 1886 story.

Next is a snippet from the April 16th, 1890 issue of the *Spokane Falls Review*, which explains that "Railway and mail service has been established between Spokane Falls and Colville, Wash., six times a week via Peone, Chattaroy, Forreston and Chewelah." The problem with delivering the mail to Forreston's post office was that said office was two miles and change away from the newly laid tracks of the Spokane Falls & Northern Railway. That considered, the postal service's headquarters in Washington, D.C. already had

Searching the National Archives for Data on Vintage Area Post Offices:

If you'd like to search vintage post office records for Washington State, follow the link provided below. The scanned images are grouped by county. For those linked below — counties S through W — Spokane is first, followed by Stevens and so forth alphabetically. By name, the post offices themselves are also ordered within their respective counties alphabetically. This research should prove enticing, and occasionally puzzling.

<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/68818135>

Subjoined Questions Regarding the Application for the Establishment of a Post Office at Deer Park. March 24, 1890.



Post Office Department,

OFFICE OF THE FIRST ASSISTANT P. M. GENERAL,

WASHINGTON, D. C., *Mekree*, 1890

Sir: Before the Postmaster General decides upon the application for the establishment of a post office at *Deer Park*, County of *Spokane*, State of *Washington*, it will be necessary for you to carefully answer the subjoined questions, get a neighboring postmaster to certify to the correctness of the answers, and return the location paper to the Department, addressed to me. If the site selected for the proposed office should not be on any mail route now under contract, only a "Special Office" can be established there, to be supplied with mail from some convenient point on the nearest mail route by a special carrier, for which service a sum equal to two-thirds of the amount of the salary of the postmaster at such office will be paid by the Department.

You should inform the contractor, or person performing service for him, of this application, and require him to execute the inclosed certificate as to the practicability of supplying the proposed office with mail, and return the same to the Department.

Very respectfully,

J. S. Clarkson
First Ass't Postmaster General.

To Mr. *W. J. De Merchaux*
care of the Postmaster of *Forreston*, who will please forward to him.

STATEMENT.

The proposed office to be called *Deer-Park (one word)*

Select a short name for the proposed office, which, when written, will not resemble the name of any other post office in the State.

It will be situated in the *W.* quarter of Section *2*, Township *28* (North or South), Range *42* (East or West), in the County of *Spokane*, State of *Washington*.
It will be on or near route No. *43, 2, 2, 2*, being the route from *Spokane Falls* to *Forreston*, on which the mail is now carried *one* times per week.
Will it be directly on this route?—*Ans. Yes.*
If not, how far from it?—*Ans. 140 Rods.*
If not on any route, is a "Special Office" wanted?—*Ans. Yes.* To be supplied from *Spokane Falls*.
The name of the nearest office to the proposed one, on one side, is *Worwath*, its distance is *2 1/2* miles in a *N. W.* direction from the proposed office.
The name of the nearest office, on the other side, is *W. A. Hayward*, its distance is *6 1/2* miles in a *N. W.* direction from the proposed office.
The name of the other nearest office to the proposed one is *Chatteroy*, its distance by the most direct road is *8* miles in a *N. W.* direction from the proposed office.
The name of the most prominent river near it is *Spokane*.
The name of the nearest creek is *Spokane*.
The proposed office will be *7* miles from said river, on the *North* bank, side of it, and will be *2* miles from said nearest creek, on the *South* side of it.
The name of the nearest railroad is *Spokane Falls and Chewelah*.
If on the line of or near a railroad, on which side will the office be located; how far from the track; and what is, or will be, the name of the station?—*Ans. Near W. A. Hayward, Spokane Falls and Chewelah.*
If it be a village, state the number of inhabitants.—*Ans. 100.*
Also, the population to be supplied by the proposed office.—*Ans. 100.*
A diagram, or sketch from a map, showing the position of the proposed new office, with neighboring river or creek, roads, and other post offices, towns, or villages near it, will be useful, and is therefore desired.
A correct map of the locality might be furnished by the county surveyor, but this must be without expense to the Post Office Department.

ALL WHICH I CERTIFY to be correct and true, according to the best of my knowledge and belief, this *seventeenth* day of *April*, 1890

(If Sign full name.) *W. J. De Merchaux*, Proposed P. M.
I CERTIFY that I have examined the foregoing statement, and that it is correct and true, to the best of my knowledge and belief.

P. E. Meyers
Postmaster at *Forreston*, *Washington*.
(OVER.)

Applications for post offices must be accompanied by petitions of the citizens interested.

Be careful to answer the inquiries fully and accurately, or the case will not be acted upon.

a solution in the works.

Of recent the Library of Congress has made a number of images of early post office documents available online, among them this questionnaire sent to Forreton's postmaster, P. E. Meyers, regarding the establishment of a new post office at Deer Park. The form (*see prior page*) was to be forwarded by Forreton's postmaster to Deer Park's proposed postmaster, Wilferd (*as spelled*) J. DeMerchant, for completion — the "*proposed P. M.*" being the exact wording used on the document to describe Mr. DeMerchant.

Said document, dated March 24th, 1890, began, "*Sir: Before the Postmaster General decides upon the application for the establishment of a post office at Deer Park, County of Spokane, State of Washington, it will be necessary for you to carefully answer the subjoined questions, get a neighboring postmaster to certify to the correctness of the answers, and return the location paper to the Department, addressed to me.*" The "*me*" mentioned would be the First Assistant Postmaster General — his name, written in cursive, being indecipherable."

Of special interest within the questionnaire was this exchange — Wilferd's answers enclosed by parenthesis. "*It will be situated in the (S.W.) quarter of section (2), Township (28), Range (42), in the County of (Spokane), State of (Washington). It will be on or near route No. (43208), being the route from (Spokane Falls) to (Forreton), on which the mail is now carried (one) times per week. Will it be directly on this route? — ans. (no). If not, how far from it? — ans. (140 rods).*"

Now, 140 rods translates as 2,310 feet. That's just a standard city block shy of

half a mile. All of this put together seems to suggest that up to that point the mail was being delivered along designated route number 43208 to the Forreton post office — said route apparently still trundled by horse drawn wagon. And Mr. Pease's route — V. H. Pease apparently being the contractor for route 43208 — didn't come closer than the designated approximate half mile of Deer Park from either the north, south, east, or west.

Adding the above to the postal form's following question leaves a particularly noteworthy impression. "*If on the line of or near a railroad, on which side will the office be located; how far from the track; and what is, or will be, the name of the station? — ans. (east side, 100 feet from track, Deer Park).*"

Signed by Mr. DeMerchant and stamped as received by postal headquarters on April 24th, 1890, one would expect Deer Park's proximity to the railroad and the resultant savings in contractor fees by eliminating that segment of Mr. Pease's route clinched the acceptance of the application — that being announced thusly in the July 8th, 1890 edition of the *Spokane Falls Review*. "*Two new post offices have been established in Washington, at Agate, Lewis County, with William Hostetter as post-master, and at Deer Park, Spokane County, with W. J. DeMerchant as postmaster.*"

We know that Mr. DeMerchant served as postmaster for a time at least, that being noted in 1891's editions of the *Official Register of the United States ... Volume Two*. In the segment of said volume dedicated to the postmasters of the new State of Washington, Deer Park's postmaster is listed as "*W. J. DeMerchant.*" His compensation is \$133.76.



Join the Mortarboard's Editorial Group!

Advise and Participate in the Creation of the Society's Magazine/Newsletter. Proofread issues Prior to Publication. Assist in Research Projects. Your Eyes and Thoughts are Needed. Contact the Editor — bogwen100@msn.com.

Adjoining that number in superscript is the letter "K." Checking the footnotes, it says "*From July 2, 1890,*" which I'm assuming would be the official date of the creation of said position. The Official Register gives the "*First of July, 1891*" as the ending date for its listings, so I'm assuming said compensation does not represent any wages past that point.

What we can say is that by November of 1890, Peter E. Meyers, prior postmaster at Forreton, was being represented in the Spokane papers as the postmaster at Deer Park. I've no clue what happened to Wilferd DeMerchant after he left the post, or on what date he may have done so. The only other Wilferd J. DeMerchant so far located within Washington State during the decades after our Mr. DeMerchant's stint as postmaster was residing in Okanogan County, and despite sharing the same name, we've yet to link that DeMerchant in any way to Deer Park's history.

The story of Deer Park's early postmasters continues — though it doesn't seem to become any less complicated. If able, we'll attempt to untangle some of those compilations in a later issue. In the meantime, exploring the National Archive's vintage postal documents via the link provided on page 2358 should keep everyone occupied.

... on becoming history ...

I'm feeling really old. The only consolation is that the society's president, Bill Sebright, is five days older than me. Well, sure. It's only a few days. But us old people — between the pains, the aches, and the obituaries — have learned to squeeze every little droplet of delight we can from whatever opportunities fate or chance might provide.

I'll tell you how old I am. Or better

yet, I'll tell you how old Bill is. I remember my first day ever at school. It was Bill's too. It was a late summer morning in 1951. More than likely the sun was shining, it usually did in early September back then. Our classroom at Clayton's school was on the first floor in the southeast corner. A group of boys with chalk in hand, our Bill and Lynn Holcomb among them, were at the blackboard, seeing who could reach the highest. It quickly turned into a jumping match that was finally settled when Lynn pulled over a chair, stood on that and leaped, leaving a chalk mark inches above the blackboard. That mark stayed on the wall at least through our last days at the Clayton school. I know that because every time I had reason to go into that room, I checked. Even then I understood remembering is important.

You know another way to tell how long ago that was, the blackboards were really black — or maybe dark green. Though I think the dark green came a bit later. Then too, we used real, environmentally benign chalk.

Shockingly, that was seventy years ago. But at times it still feels like yesterday.

As for Lynn, having lived an oft-tough life, he left us coming on a decade ago. Below is a link to 'Lynnie's' story as told by his best friend, Eddie Nordby. It's written from the heart, as most of the best stories are. And it's well worth reading.

Thinking about Bill and me back in the first grade, I don't believe either of us has changed that much, at least inside. He always seemed a nice kid. Bright. Social. And he seemed to enjoy being up in front of the class. Is it any wonder he ended up a teacher, and now head of a historical society he was instrumental in founding? I think not.

Now me, I disliked being in front of the class. Still do. I always felt best by myself — out on the farm, walking in the woods.

Further Reading: Lynn Holcomb & Eddie Nordby.

"Growing up in Clayton in the 1950s," by Eddie Nordby.
Mortarboard #67, November, 2013 — page 810 — Collected Newsletters, Vol. 17.
http://cdphs.org/uploads/3/4/2/0/34204235/newsletter_67_downsizinginglepageweb.pdf

One of the few favorite things I recall about school was the books. Not particularly for reading. Getting a taste for that took a while. I just liked books. I liked the look, the feel, the smell. And how you could be alone with a book, but at the same time not be alone.

Then, in the nineties, home computers happened. Then the internet. And over the years it became possible to open books in libraries all over the world without ever leaving your house.

Books can do many wonderful things. But one of the things they do better than most anything else is speak for those long gone. They can reach through the dust of centuries to say “I was here. I lived. I loved. I was important to other people.” How magical is that?

And now, in my old age, I understand what I was sensing in the books that surrounded us whenever we went to the library. They’re chock-full of ancient voices that can be reanimated by the simple act of reading.

And finding those voices is what historical societies do. We rummage through the past for bits of prior lives and draw them back into the light. We’re giving those who came before a chance to be remembered. It’s often hard work, but it always feels important.

If you get old enough, you’ll understand the silence left when people pass. But if we keep their stories alive, they’re not gone altogether. And there’s a comfort in that.

———— *Wally Lee Parker* ————

Minutes of the Clayton ♦ Deer Park Historical Society ———— July 10, 2021 ————

In attendance at the society’s meeting hall, 300 Block ‘A’ Street, Deer Park: Marilyn Reilly, Bill Sebright, Mike Reiter, Roberta Reiter, Winnie Moore, Scott Moore, Pete Coffin, Judy Coffin, Bill Phipps, Janet Janson Kemp, Craig Olson, Susan Olson, Linda Sanders, Mike Wolfe, Jeff Clark, Rachelle Fletcher, Mary Jo Reiter, Jessie Tennant, Damon Smathers, Don Ball, Elaine Ball, Chuck Lyons, Tom Costigan, Amy Lindh, Jay Lindh, Wally Parker, Tracy Strong, Kathy McLaughlin, Lorraine Nord, Roxanne Camp and Marie Morrill.

Society President Bill Sebright called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. He reported that: 1) Amy and Jay Lindh are still going through Marilyn Lindh’s pictures. When they have the material together we will be able to scan the pictures. They found a large “C” that Don received for sports. 2) He received an email from Charlotte Brunje. She was looking for information on a relative, Olaf Westby.

Ken Westby was able to give her lots of information. 3) Linda Munson emailed wondering if we had 1921- 1924 payroll sheets for the Clayton Brick Plant for her father and brother. Sue Richart was able to direct her to the Crossroads Project online to find the sheets. 4) Clarence Griffin texted that he found the 1931 Williams Valley Grange pin that once belonged to Earl Jones. Bill picked it up. 5) The log house built by Louis Olson has been taken apart. Jeremy Proctor is going to put it up on his property and Bridges Road. 6) Jeff Clark emailed asking for information on the island in Loon Lake. We were unable to add any information.

Society Treasurer Mark Wagner reported by text: 1) The main checking account ended month at \$8,599.27. There were deposits of \$80. Three checks were written, \$20 for postage and envelopes, \$690 for Brickyard Day shirts, and \$663.65 for Brickyard Day insurance. The web hosting account ended the

month at \$735.71 with a withdrawal of \$32.37 for web hosting and domain name. The Brickyard Day account is at \$591.68. 2) Mark took *Mortarboards* to Gardenspot Health Foods and Odynski’s Accounting.

Society Vice President: No one has stepped forward to become Vice President.

Print editor Wally Parker reported: 1) One hundred and twenty print copies of the July 2021 *Mortarboard* have been delivered to the Society’s clubhouse for distribution. PDF versions have been forwarded to the Loon Lake Library, The Heritage Network, and the Society’s webmaster for electronic or further print distribution. Any other institutions or organizations wishing to receive printable PDFs should contact the Society. Any duplexing printer capable of taking legal size paper, plus a saddle stitch stapler, should do the job. 2) The featured piece for July’s issue is titled “*The Standard Lumber Company’s Steam Powered Traction Engine: The Holt Company’s Roadable Locomotive.*” The Letters/Brickbats portion of the July issue outlines a bevy of subjects, among them the Wild Rose community’s first saloon; 1910’s summer of wildfires; a name for the island in Loon Lake; some data regarding the locomotive pictured standing at Deer Park’s depot in last month’s issue; some biographical data regarding the Jennie (Ross) Lawson mentioned in June’s issue as it relates to the 1900 photo of the Williams Valley school; and an update regarding Clayton’s terracotta eagle. 3) As noted in July’s issue (page 2342), Print Publications is looking for several volunteers to take on recurring research and writing projects, specifically the creation of print profiles of current society members and a recurring question/answer column, both as ongoing features in the *Mortarboard*. Having had some experience at writing, research, interviews, and the sending and receiving of correspondence, I have a fair idea of how much time and energy will be required, as well as to what degree the above noted skills will be tested, by the proposed projects. To be realized as quality writing, each of these columns will require its own writer/advocate.

If interested, send me a note.

Webmaster Damon Smathers reported: 1) The July issue of the *Mortarboard* has been uploaded to the website. 2) Society Member Marilyn Reilly requested we add the “*Class of 1955 Reunion*” to the front page of the website to gain more interest. Last year would have been their 65th Class Reunion, but it was cancelled due to the Covid. More details on the Website.

Pete Coffin reported: 1) Researched information on south Main Street residents Ernest Ingalls and Kate Clark for a Society member. In addition, provided the same member with a draft copy of the *Mortarboard* article on Bob Warner’s gas station on south Main. 2) Provided Bill Sebright with a manuscript describing the construction of the Fish Chevrolet building on west Crawford. The manuscript had been prepared last year for Jeremy Sculley because he wanted to know more about the history of the property he was buying. 3) I looked up information about a sign reading “*Joe Staley Oil and Hardware*” for President Sebright. The name is associated with a gas station in Spokane and there seems not to be any relation to local Elk Staleys or local oil distributors. This Joe Staley was an operator of a Spokane gas station. Provided President with a manuscript describing the past Deer Park bulk oil dealers. 4) Sent a 9-section map plat of southwest Wild Rose Prairie homesteaders to a Society member showing where their ancestor’s homestead was located and when title was assigned. 5) Gave Jeremy Sculley a copy of the manuscript “*Bulk Hydrocarbon Warehouses in Deer Park*”. 6) Prepared manuscripts describing the Deer Park Concrete Company and Newt Grove’s Deer Park Implement Company.

Mike Reiter reported that Bill and he attended the Clayton Fair meeting. They officially will let us move the Eagle there. After the meeting the Exec. Board, Mike and Bill chose a location near the east edge of the fairgrounds. Mike contacted Sturdy Built Company. They are 4 months out on projects and aren’t really interested in a building. He also

called Alpine Construction, but they didn't return his call.

Jay and Amy Lindh brought a tote bag with many photos, and memorabilia. Bill will scan what he can.

Jeff Clark talked about Fisch Island (aka Fish Island) in Loon Lake. Another name has been Rock Island. This led to much discussion and storytelling.

We discussed the history of Fish Chevrolet, but no one from Sculley's Automotive was there to hear it. Bill will drop off phone numbers and memorabilia at Sculley's.

Marilyn Reilly and Pearl Welch are working on a Class of 1955 reunion. If you know anyone from that class let Marilyn (276-6798) know.

There has been a big change with

Brickyard Day! We are not postponing all events. We will be having a t-shirt and a parade. The Clayton Grange will have a breakfast and a lunch. The other events have been postponed for another year. T-shirts are on sale at Yokes.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Saturday, August 14, 2021, at 10:00 AM at our building.

Meeting adjourned at 10:55.

Minutes submitted by Bill Sebright acting as secretary.

Editor's Note — We'd be very appreciative of someone stepping forward to fill the very necessary position of secretary. The society's president should be concentrating on other things.

— end —

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Comments Policy

We encourage anyone with observations, concerns, corrections, divergent opinions or additional materials relating to the contents of these newsletters to write the society or contact one or more of the individuals listed in the "Society Contacts" box found in each issue. Resultant conversations can remain confidential if so desired.

Editorial, Copyright, and Reprint Concerns

Those contributing "original" materials to the Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society normally retain copyright to said materials while granting the Mortarboard and the Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society durable permission to use said materials in our electronic and print media — including permission to reprint said materials in future Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society publications. Under certain conditions proof of ownership of submitted materials and/or a signed release may be requested. No compensation for materials submitted is offered or implied. All materials submitted are subject to editorial revision. Any material published as an exception to these general understandings will be clearly marked. When requests to reprint materials are received, such will be granted in almost all instances in which the society has the right to extend such permission. In instances where we don't have that right, we will attempt to place the requester in contact with the owner of the work in question. But in all instances where a request to reprint is made, it should be made to both the society and the author of the piece, and it should be made in writing (letter or email). The society considers the application of common business conventions when dealing with intellectual properties a simple means of avoiding misunderstandings.

From "The Coast" magazine,
April, 1907



See Yourself in Print.

The Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society's department of Print Publications is always looking for original writings, classic photos, properly aged documents and the like that may be of interest to our readers. These materials should be rooted within, though not limited to, northern Spokane County, southeastern Stevens County, and southern Pend Oreille County. As for types of materials, family or personal remembrances are always considered. Articles of general historical interest — including pieces on natural history, archeology, geology and such — are likely to prove useful. In other words, we are always searching for things that will increase our readers' understanding and appreciation of this region's past. As for historical perspective; to us history begins whenever the past is dusty enough to have become noteworthy — which is always open to interpretation. From there it extends back as deep as we can see, can research, or even speculate upon.

Copyright considerations for any materials submitted are stated in the "Editorial, Copyright, and Reprint Concerns" dialog box found in this issue. For any clarifications regarding said policy, or any discussions of possible story ideas or the appropriateness of certain types of material and so on, please contact the editor via the email address supplied on the same page.

— the editor —

About our Group:

The Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society was incorporated as a nonprofit association in the winter of 2002 under the title Clayton Historical Society. Our mission statement is found on the first page (upper left corner) of each issue of our newsletter, the Mortarboard.

Our yearly dues are \$20 dollars per family/household.

We are open to any and all that share an interest in the history of our region — said region, in both a geographic and historic sense, not limited to the communities in our group's name.