



ROGUE VALLEY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

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Grand Prize Winner, First Annual RVGS Writing Contest



The Small Iron Kettle

by Sue Waldron

The broken cast iron kettle takes up little space. It holds a couple marbles, some buttons and a few nails. In 1855 it was probably intended as a serving kettle, allowing smaller amounts of food to be brought from the cooking fire to the table. Yet this small kettle has been treasured in my family for over 150 years. I wonder what stories it could tell. Hmmm.

My first sensations were of extreme heat and of being surrounded by pressure, pushing me into an unfamiliar shape. Then gradual cooling, a loud noise and suddenly I was free! They twisted and turned me and a raspy file scraped my seams. Then three very hot spots burned my bottom! What was happening? After the burning stopped, I had three of the most cunning feet and I could stand tall. Well, five and one half inches isn't very tall, but I was sturdy and level and I could hold six cups of liquid! More heat on each side and I had handy loops. Now a twisted wrought iron bail was fitted into the loops. I was given a rub with a soft cloth and I was done. How handsome I was sitting on the shelf in the general store in Olean, New York.

I don't know how long I sat there before Harriet Peet came in with her parents Charles and Sarah Evens. It was March 8, 1855.¹ They were collecting supplies for her trip west. Harriet lifted me down from the shelf and checked for flaws, as if! She checked to make sure I was level then added me to the box that her father was holding. Then I was out in the fresh air. There was a lot of shuffling around and jostling as I rode in the wagon the seven miles north to her home in Hinsdale.

I sat on the floor in the bedroom for several weeks and learned that Harriet and her husband James would be going to Minnesota Territory! He wanted to go to Oregon. But since James had not yet been ordained, the Methodist Missionary Board decided a few years of experience in Minnesota would help him reach his goal.² On March 22,³ James began packing boxes and trunks for the trip. Twenty feet of a rag rug that Harriet just finished weaving, went into one box.

¹Harriet Peet, 1855 Diary

²James Peet, 1855 Diary

³Harriet Peet, 1855 Diary

The quilt Harriet's friends helped her finish went into another. I was one of the last items packed so that I would be easy to find.

The next thing of which I became aware was the sensation of cool air blowing on my sides as I was lifted out of a spring that ran into the Allegheny River. James set me near the fire. How nice it was to finally be useful. It was April 9⁴ and I was helping Harriet cook for 29 men. They had been rowing and poling huge rafts of logs down the river. I sat in many campfires over the next several weeks. Harriet used me to quickly heat water as she frantically cooked two meals a day.

There were many comments among the crew when the rafts floated past the Great Western Iron Works nail factory at Brady's Bend.⁵ Supposedly over 1,000 men worked there with four furnaces going full blast.

On April 13⁶ we floated past Herrs Island. That was where George Washington camped after falling in the river, December 27, 1753⁷, on his way back east after conferring with the French. What if he had frozen to death? Who would have been our first President?

The men worked hard dodging in and out of the heavy river traffic around Pittsburgh. Suddenly we were no longer on the Allegheny but on the Ohio River. We had to stop a few days out of Wheeling to retrieve logs when a couple of the rafts came apart in high water. Harriet and I labored hard to feed those hungry men. Finally we were outside Cincinnati. After a couple days of negotiations, the logs were sold and James was paid for his labor. (Harriet's labor paid for their passage down the river.) I was vigorously wiped dry and put back in my box. Harriet was rather apprehensive about the upcoming trip on the "Monarch." She had never been on a steam ship of that size and there were so many strangers. I wasn't worried; James would take care of everything.

I next became aware as I came up from the well filled with water and carried into a house. I was just the right size for the rather small fireplace in the snug, if somewhat primitive, room. I soon learned we were in the lumber town of Stillwater in Minnesota Territory. Harriet, James and I shared a small house with the E. I. Pennock family.⁸ The town was newly incorporated and filled with Swedish lumberjacks. Over the next few months, James and Harriet visited many of the families in town. James talked frequently of trying to save souls, for he was a Missionary and burned with the zeal to make this town a better, more Godly place.

An icy wind whipped around me when I next became aware. I had been tied to the side of a sleigh and we, Harriet, James and the Reverend E. F. Ely were sliding through the snow on our way to a new town located on the southwestern tip of Lake Superior. The 150 mile trip from St. Paul took fourteen days (with a day layover for the Sabbath.) Several times a day I was put to the fire to melt snow to drink. It was on Saturday, February 16, 1856 at about 4:00 pm⁹ that the world went topsy-turvy.

⁴Harriet Peet, 1855 Diary

⁵Harriet Peet, 1855 Diary

⁶Harriet Peet, 1855 Diary

⁷G. Washington History, internet

⁸Harriet Peet, 1855 Diary

⁹James Peet, 1855 Diary

Everything in the sleigh was now lying on top of me and I was between Harriet and a large tree. She was seven months pregnant at the time and could hardly move. James finally had to cut down the tree to get us free. A couple inches of my upper rim were broken off, but Harriet would not hear of leaving me behind. She always told the story of how I saved her life.

Somewhere over the years the broken piece of my rim was misplaced. After that I didn't work often but sat in a place of honor where ever we lived. Although . . . there was that one time Harriet wanted to make a point. It was during the bleak winter of 1857. The lake was frozen, supplies and money were short. James taught school to make ends meet, while Harriet stayed at home with baby Robert Warren.

With the first break up of ice on the lake in the spring, several leaders of the church came into town to see how the mission was prospering. They were older men. They huffed and puffed around then invited themselves to supper. Harriet was in a dither; what could she feed them? There was no food in the house! She filled me with water and set me beside the fire. Then she put her nicest covering on the table, set out dishes and utensils. She poured cold clear water for everyone to drink. They all sat down to table and one of the leaders gave a long winded blessing. After the "Amen" one of the gentlemen asked, "So, Sister, what have you got for us?" Harriet calmly stood, walked over to the fireplace and picked me up. Setting me carefully in the middle of the table she used a ladle to fill each bowl and then she sat down. Each of the men tasted the warm water, set down their spoons and looked puzzled. "Sister?" one of them asked. Harriet said, "That is what we have for supper tonight." The men left the house silently. The next day groceries were brought to the house and I went back up on the shelf.¹⁰

Harriet and James lived in Superior for almost three years. They buried baby Robert there when he was a year old. Second son, Olin was born in Superior. James was finally ordained as a Methodist minister in 1860 and the family moved to their own church in Anoka (just south of Minneapolis) where Edward and Mary were born. When the Civil War began, James volunteered to serve his country. He was sworn in as Chaplin for the 12th Louisiana Volunteers. The troops later became the 50th Colored Infantry Regiment and served outside Vicksburg and then in Mobile. After the war, James returned to Minnesota where he passed away from consumption.

Harriet's daughter, Mary, inherited the small kettle and passed it on to her oldest daughter, Louise, who in turn passed it on to her youngest daughter, Marella. Marella, childless, passed it on to her first cousin, once removed (me) in 2008. We were next door neighbors and good friends for over twenty-five years.

¹⁰Conversation with Ora Mae Waldron, 1988

Second Prize Winner, First Annual RVGS Writing Contest

The Old Bridle

by Colista Bailey

In August of 2007, I was at a family gathering following a memorial service for Aunt Luetta Straube, who was my father's third younger sister. After nearly everyone had arrived at the house and were seated, my cousin brought out an old cardboard box filled with a lot of old pictures and snapshots. The box was passed around the room for those who were interested to browse through. As it was passed to me, I flipped through the pictures noticing that some were of the early 1890 to 1900s on the cardboard backing and others were of later years judging by the clothing and hair styles. Not recognizing anyone from the West side of the family, I had imagined it contained only pictures that were of the Straube family. Most of them were unknown to me and I saw very few pictures of people that I recognized. As I was about to pass the box on, an old faded picture of three young children on a horse and a lady standing beside the horse holding two smaller children caught my eye. Closer examination revealed something that looked familiar. It was the bridle on the horse!

Immediately I recognized it as the one that my Father, Fred West, had used on his saddle horses. That was proof that this picture had to be a "West" picture.



I called my brother, Gary West, over to the table to take a look at the picture. I asked him if he didn't think that was the same bridle that we both knew so well. He agreed that it was the same bridle, and he has possession of the bridle now.

Then we had to dig back in our memories to figure out what this picture really meant.

Studying the picture further, we believe it is of the Joseph Alexander West and Maggie Belle Hinshaw West family, my paternal grandparents, taken when they were living in the Emmett, Idaho area. The boy in front on the horse, is a spitting image of my brother, Gary West, when he was about that age. The picture of the lady, although she is mostly hidden by the babies she is holding, resembles pictures of my aunt, when she was a young lady.

So my assumption is that the first boy is my Father, Fred West, the dark haired girl in the middle is a Hinshaw cousin and the older boy in the back was thought to be Oren West. He was my Dad's older brother who died when he was about 13 years old. The lady is thought to be their mother, Maggie Belle Hinshaw West, holding my Father's younger sisters, Edna and Laura West. If my assumptions are correct, that means the picture was taken about 1912, before my Aunt Luetta was born. About that time the West family had a large place in the Emmett, Idaho, area that they farmed using work horses. They raised cattle and sheep and grazed them on range land. My Grandfather was an experienced horseman and owned a good string of saddle horses.

The bridle is the real link in this mystery. It is the one that my Father had ever since I can remember. When I was old enough to ride, the bridle was fitted to the gentle horse that I learned to ride on. My Dad had told me the bridle was one that his father, Joe West, had used as a young man. When he was no longer able to ride horseback, he had given all his riding tack to my Dad.

The bridle then became mine to use when riding with my folks when we went to the hills to attend to the cattle. Our cattle grazed in the upper ranges of the Red Butte and Glade Creek areas in the Yale Creek Watershed. In the spring a cattle drive was made to move the cattle to the summer range. In the fall the cattle were rounded up and driven back to the ranch before winter set in.

Those were the good days when it was done by horseback; now cattle are hauled by truck and trailer to and from the summer ranges.

After my folks sold their farm, they had no use for any of the bridles or saddles, so my Dad sold most of them. He kept this bridle since it was a family heirloom. After my folks were both gone, the prized family possessions were divided among family members. My Brother, Gary West, took the horse stuff and he has this bridle now. It still is a prized family heirloom and it no doubt will end up on someone's living room wall, to be handed down through future generations.





Hidden Treasures at the Library

by Anne Billeter

Humboldt County, California; Reno County, Kansas; Guilford County, North Carolina; Denmark, Scotland, Scandinavia, Suffolk; the former Evangelical United Brethren Church; Illiana; Batchelder; Potter; Weatherbee. What do these places, topics, and surnames have in common? The Jackson County Genealogy Library has bulletins from each place, and about each topic and surname...and many more.

Imagine: 41 years of *The Redwood Researcher* from Humboldt County, California, including an index of marriages, 1854-1874; burial records, 1905-1927; the 1896 Voting Register for Blue Lake. Eleven volumes of *Sunflower* from Reno County, Kansas, including plat maps showing landowners. Nineteen volumes of the *Guilford Genealogist*, including apprentice bonds abstracted from original indenture papers in the North Carolina Archives.

The bulletins are arranged in alphabetical order by state in the JCGL classroom. The last state, WI for Wisconsin, is followed by the mysterious "MU," which stands for "multiple." This is where you will find the bulletin entitled *Bush-Meeting Dutch*, "a quarterly newsletter of local history and genealogy of the former Evangelical United Brethren Church, its predecessors and sister churches." Also in "MU" are *"Illiana Genealogist,"* (16 volumes) with articles about Illinois and Indiana, and 10 volumes of the *"Colonial Genealogist."* Explore MU for more bulletins on other surprising topics. After MU is "FAM," where you will find bulletins devoted to a single surname, including Batchelder, Potter, Weatherbee, and more. "FAM" is followed by foreign countries and regions, including Canada, Denmark, England (Surry!), France, Germany, Holland, Scandinavia, and Scotland.

When you're doing research, don't stop with the JCGL books and online subscriptions. See if JCGL has a bulletin that might break through your brick wall or add a tidbit that gives more insight into your ancestor. I did. Years ago I checked out 4 issues at a time of the *Buffalo Chip*, published by the Fort Kearny Genealogical Society of Buffalo County, Nebraska. I found the explanation for why we had so much trouble finding my grandmother's 1886 birthplace, Armada, Nebraska. In 1890 Armada lost the battle to locate the coming railroad on the north side of the Wood River. Instead, the Miller Townsite Company convinced the railroad to locate south of the river, laying out a town site on a buffalo wallow. The 250 Armada residents were offered free lots of their own choosing, the deeds to be given when the house or dwelling was on the lot or when a new structure was actually begun. Later, as further inducement, the speculators agreed to move the buildings without cost to the owner. For this wholesale move a huge 60 foot bridge was constructed. With the move, the "new" town was named Miller. So my grandmother was born in Armada, but before her 4th birthday Armada, with a slight move, became Miller.¹ Hmmm. I found this information years ago...I wonder if JCGL has newer *Buffalo Chips*. I may find more about my grandmother's family!

¹"A Brief History of the Armada **** Miller Community, especially of the United Brethren of Christ Church" by Albert Roy Murdoch, minister, a booklet probably written in the early 1940's, republished in two parts in the *Buffalo Chip*, vol. 12, no. 1 & 2, Spring and Summer, 1989.



Discontinued Post Offices of Jackson County, Oregon

The title of this book may not sound very glamorous, but what a treasure house of information! RVGS member Nancy Swan presented the JCGL Library with a copy of her philatelic exhibit, now available in the JCGL Library collection. (979.527 H388 Swa) Color copies of envelopes with postmarks of Jackson County post of-

fices that no longer exist provide a vivid window into our past, accompanied by the facts that bring our history alive. Did you know there was a White Point in Jackson County? Not White City, White Point! The post office was established 8 August 1883 and discontinued 8 April 1892. "White Point was close to the California border on the old stage road (now Colestin Road) from Ashland (16 miles north) over the Siskiyou to Yreka. The locale was named for an outcrop of white rock – some form of granite, visible from the Cottonwood Creek Valley. White Point had a railroad station which was only abandoned in the late 1930s." Although White Point post office was closed, local residents were not without postal service: on the same date White Point was discontinued, the Colestin post office one mile away, and with the same postmaster, was established. Read Nancy's book to find out why Colestin was named Colestin, where it was, how long it operated, and where it was moved to! Discover long forgotten Jackson County locales: Deter, Kubli, Watkins, Pioneer, and many more.



Ancestry.com Enters Partnership With Oregon State Library

Ancestry.com, a major provider of genealogical information online, has just signed a letter of agreement with the Oregon State Library. Under the terms of the agreement, Ancestry will digitize and index documents of interest to their customers. The State Library will receive copies of the digital images for use as part of the documents collection. Images of state pub-

lications will be included in the Oregon Documents Repository. The first priorities for scanning will include the bibliography card index taken from Salem newspapers throughout the early 20th century. Additional materials may be scanned as part of the Library's partnership with the Willamette Valley Genealogical Society. Digitization work will begin this spring.

--*Letter to Libraries Online*, an electronic newsletter from the Oregon State Library, March, 2010, vol. 20, issue 3.



Nine Myths About Our American Ancestors

Myth 1 - When our American ancestors moved they always moved West.

Fact: While most early settlers came to the eastern shore of North America, it was logical for most expansionist movements to flow westward. However, there are many documented cases showing movement northward, southward or back to the East after pioneers became less than enchanted with raw frontier.



Myth 2 - Because of travel conditions, prior to the railroads, families rarely moved more than once or twice in a lifetime.

Fact: A study of Revolutionary War pension applications reveals that many of these veterans moved six or more times and quite often lived in as many different states.

Myth 3 - Our ancestors usually moved, like Abraham, not knowing where they were going.

Fact: In-depth study into the migratory habits of our ancestors shows that in most cases they had received many reports on an "ideal" location by which they were convinced they would better themselves by moving. Sometimes, they relied on reports from relatives or neighbors who had already moved, but often a member of a family would make a preliminary trip to check out the new territory. The move usually involved several families making the trip together.

Myth 4 - Most American men were devoutly religious at the time of the American Revolution.

Fact: While most colonists gave nominal adherence to Christian values in the late eighteenth century, some historians have estimated that no more than 15 percent of the men were church members.

Myth 5 - Immediately following the American Revolution, most Southern churchmen were either Baptist or Methodist.

Fact: Following the Revolution War, the majority of Southerners of Anglo-Saxon heritage who were church members still belonged to the successor of the Anglican Church in America, the Protestant Episcopal Church. The second largest number of churchmen were the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians. The great movement to the Methodist and Baptist Churches came in the early part of the nineteenth century.

Myth 6 - Most Southern families were slave owners just prior to the Civil War.

Fact: The majority of the white Southern heads of households never owned a slave. This is substantiated through a study of slave census records.

Myth 7 - Most of the wealth of America was in Northern states just prior to the Civil War.

Fact: While industrial growth in the North had exceeded that in the South, the southeast had experienced an era of economic prosperity in the middle of the nineteenth century and, as a result, six of the ten wealthiest states in the Union in 1860 were below the Mason-Dixon Line.

Myth 8 - Due to the lack of major industry, there were no large cities in the South at the outbreak of the Civil War.

Fact: It is true that most of the large cities in the country were along the eastern seaboard during the 1850's. However, according to the 1850 census, New Orleans was the fifth largest city in the U. S., ranking just behind Philadelphia. The population of this major Southern port city at the time was 116,375.

Nine Myths (continued)

Myth 9 - Most American males were involved in some kind of military action between the American Revolution and the Civil War.

Fact: There were a number of wars on Southern soil, between 1783 and 1865, including battles of the War of 1812, the War with Mexico and several Indian Wars. However, the majority of males in this country never participated in any kind of military action beyond a militia drill during this time period.

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ADVERTISE HERE!

Advertising space in *The Rogue Digger* is now available for genealogy-related services. Publication is quarterly and is sent to all RVGS members—now more than 460 individuals. A business card-size ad will cost \$25 for a single issue or \$90 for a full year (four issues). Larger advertisements will require special pricing. All proposed advertisements will be reviewed for relevance and appropriateness. Please submit your request or questions to Karen Asche by calling the Library (541) 512-2340 or via email at info@rvgslibrary.org.

MENTORING NOW AVAILABLE

Beginning and less experienced genealogy members may now schedule free consultations to answer questions and provide research advice and direction. Interested members should contact Volunteer Coordinator Chuck Eccleston via email at cgecc@juno.com or by phone at 541-776-0778. Chuck will assist in scheduling consultations at the library with an experienced researcher. Chuck is also usually available at the library on 1st, 3rd, & 5th Mondays and Thursdays.