

JACKSON CO. SEEN IN SEPT. 1875 AND SEPT. 1909

By J. G. MARTIN

Mr. Editor, Medford Tribune: As I look out on the busy streets of Medford today and watch the floating autos pass by, I say to myself, "the old order changeth" and memory at once recalls to mind this September 20, 1875. Thirty-four years of transformation has passed since that date which was also my first visit to the Rogue River valley in Southern Oregon which I reached by way of the California and Oregon overland stage coach from Roseburg, the terminus of the Southern Pacific railroad and my warped bent form, bag and baggage unloaded on that bright, cheerful autumn morning a pleasant reminder today at the Franco-American hotel and a dandy it was, kept by the landy Madem Holt, in Jacksonville, the county seat, the pioneer mining city of life, fashion and the shipping and trading center for all southern Oregon and Klamath county. Here I was a stranger in the strange, hospitable city. My first impression was it was a wet town, but as moral and orderly apparently as today. My attention was called to a small frame building in the distance which they told me was Jackson county's courthouse and jail, a remnant which still stands I think on the south side of the present magnificent courthouse building, a gentle reminder of the dim past, and if I don't mistake, was occupied by the Hon. P. P. Prins as circuit judge; Hon. Silas J. Day, the veteran pioneer, as county judge, Mr. Furry as clerk and J. M. Manning as sheriff. Some of the able jurists and pioneer citizens have long passed away, but their bright, memorable business lives are indelibly inscribed in memory and on Jackson county records, whose pages are bright as the noon-day sun. I recall very pleasantly today the September 20, 1909, my first acquaintance formed on the busy streets of Jacksonville, which none other but, was Mr. Geo. A. Jackson, one of our city's highly respected pioneer citizens today, and one that held the blue ribbon as the potato and melon king of southern Oregon for 15 consecutive years and the lath string at his hospitable home on North Rogue river, some 20 miles distant, always hung on the outside to welcome the stockman and jaded traveler at that remote period. This beautiful, fertile valley, the cream of all Oregon, consisted mostly of donation selgins of 320 acres and was partially owned and farmed by the pioneer settler, but much of his broad fertile acres were still lying in its virgin, dormant state, waiting for the New Jackson county settler with capital, and as the rich gold mines of the county were apparently exhausted, grain, hay and stockraising were the principal industries. Fruit raising was limited to small orchards, which were cheap and plenty, as the deer, bear and quail and Rogue river salmon which could be had without money. The county was democratic three to one, and the nomination was equivalent to election, but few costly school buildings were to be seen dotting the county and fewer church steeples pointing heavenward. All goods were freighted by teams to Jackson county from Roseburg, 100 miles, and the accommodating merchant never forget to add the freight to your bill of goods. County taxes were paid in cash as today, with her scrip at 50 cents on the dollar and the only cash the small farmer could realize from his fathogs or beef animal was through Mr. William Bybee, that grand old pioneer citizen, since deceased, was then at his zenith of usefulness and one of the most extensive farmers and stockraisers of the county, and during his four years as sheriff and 40 as a private citizen found a cash market for the taxpayers' fat hogs, Happy Camp, in northern California, which he drove to annually. There were two rival newspapers published in Jacksonville at that time, the Democratic Times and Oregon Sentinel, the former democratic and the latter republican, and I recall today the first time the veteran editor, Charles Nickell, approached me with his favorite question: "Any marriages or births in your section?" Well, being an entire stranger and fresh from the regular U. S. army and not accustomed to the modern ways of civil life, I no doubt looked the green Missourian to perfection, but his apology was a sample copy of his paper with a request to subscribe for it,

which I did for 15 consecutive years. Mr. Nickell at that time was well and favorably known, as he should be today, as one of the most popular editors and successful in southern Oregon should be recognized as one of our county's most faithful pioneer citizens, not alone for his actual social worth to his family and legion of friends, but for the prominent part he has wielded in the upbuilding and advertising the present new Jackson county.

For ten dull uneventful years of the county history there seemed to be but little hope for the betterment of old Jackson county's mossback condition. There was an abundance raised in those old horse power threshing machine days, and much of the grain and surplus produce was freighted 84 miles to Fort Klamath to supply the government troops and Indians, but when the gap was competed between Oregon and California by the Southern Pacific Railroad company and the iron horse came thundering along and the Rogue river bridges made free, these and many other minor improvements brought about a reaction completely changing the old mossback Jackson county to our new, modern county, whose history of the past ten years tells the whole story of her incorporated cities, railroads, telegraph and telephone lines, free mail delivery, costly schools, churches, residences and thousands of acres of commercial orchards not dot the Rogue River valley since September 20, 1875.

J. G. MARTIN.

"A KNIGHT FOR A DAY"

"A Knight for a Day" that comes to the Medford theatre on Thursday, Sept. 23rd, is one of the most timely, frothy, clean and entertaining musical shows that has ever been conceived or concocted, as you prefer; moreover, it is new, completely and entirely new and will be seen here for the first time, for its Chicago run of one solid year has detained its road tour until now. There has been nothing better here this season and for several seasons there will be nothing to surpass its novelty. It awakens an interest from the start by the handsome stage settings and fetching chorus upon each arrival of the principals the merriment increases. The company without exception, presenting this musical furor is a clever one. Edward Hume, a comedian of rare ability, creates a laugh every minute he is on the stage in the part of Jonathon Joy. Mr. Hume is all that the name implies, and one critic remarked "when Hume can't get a laugh it is because he is performing in amogure with a number of stalls empty." Grace DeMar as "Tillie Day" divides the honors with Mr. Hume. She is a fearful and wonderful creation when it comes to provoking laughter. Her appearance is good for a smile, and when she makes a move there is a ripple of laughter, and when she acts the audience becomes boisterous. The entire cast is far and away above the average talent provided for these up-to-date musical organizations. The singing beauty chorus is not only very pleasing to look upon, but is costumed in gorgeous raiment. One of the features of the program is the encores that have been provided for several of the musical numbers, particularly the finale to the first act to the popular hit, "Life is a See-saw," which is elaborate, expensive and effective.

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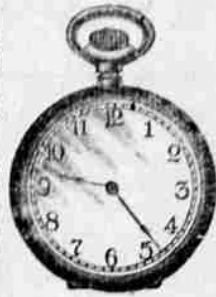
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