

# The Story of Jane McCrea



CAPTURE OF JANE MCCREA—From painting by F.C. Fisher, Courtesy Glenn Falls (N.Y.) Insurance Co.

By ELMO SCOTT WATSON  
MOST Americans know that the assassination of the Austrian archduke at Sarajevo, Serbia, in 1914, was the spark which set off the greatest conflagration in the history of mankind, the World War, but how many of them knew that the murder of an American girl by Indians in 1777 played a part in determining the destiny of their own nation? Yet there are historians who will agree that her death, the one hundred and fifty-third anniversary of which comes on July 27 of this year, was a factor in the so-called "turning point" in our struggle for independence. In these years so many sequential celebrations of important battles of the Revolution are being held, it is fitting that Americans should hear again the story of lovely Jane McCrea and her tragic fate.

In June, 1777, Gen. John Burgoyne with an army of 7,000 British and Hessians and a large force of Canadian and Indian allies swept down from Canada for the invasion of New York by the way of Lake Champlain. After he had captured Ticonderoga, Crown Point and Fort Edward, he expected Sir William Howe to come to the Hudson river from New York and join him at Albany. Thus they would drive a wedge between New England and the other colonies and put an end to the rebellion. Fort Edward was in a dilapidated condition and was held by only a small rear guard of Gen. Philip Schuyler's army, which had been forced to retreat before Burgoyne's greater numbers.

Near Fort Edward stood three cabins, one of which was occupied by a Mrs. McNeil, who is described as "a fat and talkative old woman, who had been twice widowed." She was a cousin of Brig. Gen. Simon Fraser of Burgoyne's army, and for that reason felt no apprehension at the approach of the invaders, even though Burgoyne's Indian allies had been killing and scalping settlers as they advanced. On July 27 she welcomed a guest into her home—Jane McCrea, a twenty-three-year-old girl, who lived with her brother, John McCrea, a lawyer and colonel of the local militia, near the mouth of Moses Kill, south of Fort Edward. Jane McCrea was noted throughout the countryside both for her beauty and for her long and lustrous hair which would reach to the floor when she stood and let it down.

Because of the near approach of the enemy, John McCrea was preparing to move to Albany, but his sister refused to go with him or even to stay at their home on Moses Kill. The reason was that she had a lover, David Jones, a neighbor who, being a Tory, had fled to Canada soon after the outbreak of the war and was now returning as an officer in one of Burgoyne's Loyalist regiments. He had written to her, proposing that she should ostensibly pay Mrs. McNeil a farewell visit, then slip away to the British lines and she would have the chaplain marry them. There are several contradictions in the various stories of the Jane McCrea tragedy. One of them is in regard to how she happened to fall into the hands of the Indians. According to one story Jones sent a party of Indians under the leadership of a half-breed to escort her to the British camp, and Burgoyne's account of the affair gives color to this version.

Some historians, however, do not mention this fact. According to their version, about nine o'clock on the morning of July 27 a party of Indians attacked and drove into the fort a picket guard of the Americans, killing the commander and capturing one man. Incidentally, this man's name was Standish and he was a descend-



ant of the valiant Miles Standish of Pilgrim fame. The Indians then discovered the two women in the cabin, entered it and dragged them out. Standish saw them rushing their prisoners along the trail up the hill to a place where they had two horses.

They tried to place the women on McCrea on one. But fat old Mrs. McNeil was a different proposition and, try as they could, the savages could not lift her into the saddle. Meanwhile the others led Jane McCrea away and, as she and her captors passed near the spot where Standish was held captive, he saw two of them engaged in an angry dispute. Suddenly one of them turned and shot her from the saddle, scolding her as she fell. Then, according to their savage custom, in which she was going to meet her lover, and mutilated her body horribly. They then continued on to Burgoyne's camp, where they told what had happened and exhibited her scalp.

While this was taking place fat old Mrs. McNeil was having her troubles. Although she had not been injured by her captors, they had stripped her to a single undergarment and in this she appeared in camp where the Indian turned her over to her cousin, General Fraser. That officer was much embarrassed, for he was not able to find in camp any woman's clothes large enough for Mrs. McNeil. Finally, out of his own wardrobe, he produced a great coat large enough to cover her. All the while he was forced to listen to a torrent of abuse from the late old lady because of her treatment at the hands of his "rascally Indians."

But this comic aspect of the affair soon became a tragic one when Jane McCrea's scalp was shown to her. She recognized it at once, as did David Jones, who then learned of the fate of his bride-to-be. Upon being informed of what had taken place, General Burgoyne immediately held an inquiry, ordered the Indians to hand over the murderer, put him under arrest and announced his intention of executing him. But St. Luc, the French-Canadian leader of the Indian allies, informed the general if he did that the Indians, who were already resentful of Burgoyne's efforts to restrain them from the atrocities which they had been committing against the settlers, would desert in a body and go home, probably solving themselves by killing any whites they found, whether Loyalist or Patriot. So Burgoyne yielded to St. Luc and pardoned the slayer.

It is doubtful if even the loss of his Indian allies would have been as severe a blow to his hopes as were the results of the murder of Jane McCrea. From the beginning of his expedition the excesses of his savages had brought down upon him criticism in England and furious denunciation by the Americans. Patriot propagandists had let loose blasts of scorn and bitter anger at him because he had employed

savages. Of course, they were ignoring the fact that during the wars with the French the Colonists had been glad enough to have the aid of Indians, over whom they had little more control than had Burgoyne over his allies. They were ignoring, too, the fact that early in the struggle for freedom, they themselves, had solicited the aid of Indians from Stockbridge, Mass., were fighting on their side. "But propagandists then, as ever since that time, have not always been concerned with telling the whole truth.

Burgoyne had hoped that not only active Loyalists, but those whose allegiance was doubtful would rally to his army as it advanced. When he captured Ticonderoga so easily, it was such a blow to the Patriot cause that it began to look as though the whole rebellion might collapse, especially since there were so many Colonists who cared little for either king or congress and wanted only to be allowed to continue in their peaceful pursuits. But the unpunished murder of Jane McCrea made even those, who might be inclined to swear allegiance to the crown and receive a certificate of loyalty, waver. If the bride of an officer in his army was killed by his savages, what assurance would they have that anyone would be safe from his painted demons, they asked themselves. Among those who favored the Patriot cause her death helped fix in them a stubborn determination to resist the invader to the end and to quicken them into action. "Remember Jane McCrea!" became something of a rallying cry along the hurried frontier of New York, for the fame of the victim made the story of her death spread like wildfire and greatly stimulated recruiting.

Thus the story of Jane McCrea was spread broadcast throughout the colonies. It became a leading item of Patriot propaganda. No doubt that master propagandist of them all, essay Ben Franklin made good use of it. Just as he used the famous "inventory of scalps" story (which he had manufactured) so efficiently in stirring up the Patriots to a high pitch of fury against the British. Although it is impossible ever to lay a finger upon the definite results of propaganda, there can be no doubt that this story had an important effect upon Patriot morale at a time when it was very low. It took the fighting of a Whillet and a Gansvoort at Fort Schuyler (Stonewall), of a Stark and a Warner at Bennington, of a Morgan and an Arnold at Saratoga to crush the invader and to make his defeat one of the fifteen decisive battles of the world and his surrender the real turning point in the American Revolution. But the beautiful girl who was struck down by an Indian bullet that July morning, 153 years ago, deserves a share in that great victory. Unwittingly she played an important role in a mighty drama. So Jane McCrea did not die in vain.

(By Western Newspaper Union)

## OREGON STATE NEWS OF GENERAL INTEREST

Principal Events of the Week Assembled for Information of Our Readers.

The annual convention of Oregon Christian church was held at Turner last week.

Mr. and Mrs. William Gauntlett of Randon celebrated their golden wedding at their home recently.

Caterpillars stopped a train a few days ago on the Yajima branch of the Southern Pacific railway.

The Eastern Oregon Pioneers' association will meet at the camp grounds on the John Day highway July 25, 26, and 27.

Hay balers are being put in condition by owners in the Dayton vicinity in anticipation of a good run to begin July 26.

Claude Hale, Imbler mayor and deputy sheriff, was struck by a hit-and-run motorist when he attempted to stop the speeding car.

With weather conditions improved materially, both black and Royal Anne cherries began flowing into Salem canneries from all parts of Marion county.

The Astoria chamber of commerce will send a delegation to attend the laying of the keel of the new United States light cruiser Astoria at Bremerton, September 1.

Uncle Jim Whitford, believed to be the oldest Mason in point of years in the country, died at the Masonic and Eastern Star home near Forest Grove, at the age of 103 years.

The Eastern Clackamas County Pioneers' association held its annual picnic recently in the Eagle Creek Grange hall and picnic grounds with nearly 100 in attendance.

A bee which got under her eyeglasses so frightened the driver of a California car on a highway near Redmond that she lost control of her car and the machine went into a ditch.

Growers as a rule are getting better prices for berries this year than last, reports the Western Oregon Packing corporation of Corvallis. The demand for berries is reported to be excellent.

The Bend fire department has issued an order that all sprinkling and other lawn irrigation work must be suspended for one hour after a fire alarm has been sounded, to secure adequate pressure.

All of three school districts and parts of seven others near Halsey were formed into union high school district No. 6 by the Linn county school district boundary board a few days ago.

Of the 11,776 loans made by the state to world war veterans under the state aid act, only 653 properties have been foreclosed. This was announced by Frank Moore, secretary of the state bonus commission.

Leater Brookshire of Mitchell accidentally swallowed a large shoe tack. The lad was brought to Prineville, where an X-ray plainly showed the tack in such a position that it was thought best to leave it.

The decrease in the population of Umatilla and Morrow counties, as reported by the 1930 census, automatically will decrease the salary of Circuit Judge Fee of the sixth judicial district from \$5000 to \$5500 a year.

A group of airplanes is dusting 2000 acres of central Oregon's clover field near Redmond. The sulphur dusting is done early each morning. About three seconds are required to the acre. Dusting from the air is very effective.

The annual fish fry held at the Crooked Creek hatchery in Klamath county recently was the largest event of its kind ever held in the county. Several hundred people enjoyed the 200 pounds of fish furnished by members of the Klamath Sportsmen's association.

**THE MARKETS**  
**Portland**  
Wheat—Big Bend bluestem, \$1.07½; soft white, western white, 93½; hard winter, northern spring, western red 91½.

Hay—Alfalfa, new crop, \$18.50; valley timothy, \$20.50@21; eastern Oregon timothy, \$22.50@23; clover, \$17 out hay, \$16; oats and vetch, \$16.

Butterfat—27@30c.  
Eggs—Ranch, 20@23c.  
Cattle—Steers, good, \$9.50@10.25.  
Hogs—Good to choice, \$9.25@10.60.  
Lamb—Good to choice, \$6.25@7.50

**Seattle**  
Wheat—Soft white, western white hard winter, western red and northern spring, 94c; Big Bend bluestem, \$1.07.  
Eggs—Ranch 20@26c.  
Butterfat—34c.  
Cattle—Choice steers, \$9@10.  
Hogs—Prime light, \$10.85@10.95.  
Lamb—Choice, \$7@8.

**Spokane**  
Cattle—Steers, good, \$7.50@8.  
Hogs—Good to choice, \$10.25.  
Lamb—Medium to good, \$6.00@7.

A campaign to remove unattractive and irregular sidewalk advertising signs in Eugene and to replace them with signs of more uniformity will soon get under way in Eugene after long agitation before the city council.

The old Oregon Trunk railroad crossing over The Dalles-California highway near Madras has been destroyed by fire of undetermined origin. One of the most dangerous obstructions on the highway has thus been removed.

By killing 20 cougars during the 11 months ending June 1, Bud Kinzley of Fall Creek, Lane county, has won the \$175 cash prize offered by the state game commission to the hunter with the largest kill of cougars during the year.

Starting July 1, village postal delivery service was instituted in Vernonia, which was the first town in Columbia county to have such service. Two deliveries are made daily within the city limits, and one delivery a day to Oregon American hill.

More than 6000 acres of flax will be harvested in Marion county this year as against 4999 acres last year, according to F. J. Galbraith, superintendent of the Miles Linn company. He estimated the crop would average 2½ tons to the acre.

A new star mail route between Medford and Prospect was inaugurated recently with additional deliveries on the route. A Sunday morning delivery has been added to the line. A star route has also been extended from Medford to Applegate.

Everett Williams of Cove has the record of picking 1000 pounds of cherries on the L. Townsend farm, north of Salem, in 13 hours one day last week. Williams received \$15 for the day's work. The previous high record in 12 hours was 800 pounds.

Two Myrtle Point men, Bert McMillan and H. P. Gjellstad, are sluice mining for gold on the beach near Heceta Head. Some years ago this style of mining was carried on successfully at this same point and a considerable amount of fine gold obtained.

An electric smelter will be erected on the Rogue river near Hill this summer, according to plans announced at Medford recently by Dee Williams, engineer. The company will quarry and smelt ore in the district. The plant will employ about 60 men.

An organization that will handle the bulk of the pear and apple crop of the Umpqua valley has been effected. Growers who are not members of the association will be given an outlet for their fruit by paying a specified price per box for packing and marketing.

Curry county residents were eating smelt for several days recently when a tremendously large run entered the harbor at Port Orford. For two days the fish were taken by dip nets and other available receptacles. The run was one of the largest reported there in some years.

Two hundred and ninety-seven new families located in Oregon during the first six months of 1930, according to the regular monthly report of the Oregon state chamber of commerce. These families, according to the report, included \$1,282,384 in Oregon property, including 50,514 acres of land.

Visitors at Rockaway beach observed a herd of more than 100 sealions swimming in the breakers and close inshore. The herd is evidently following a school of fish that has been passing the last few days. Many eastern razor clams have been coming in on the beach the last week.

Harvesting of the cherry crop began with a rush in the orchards in the hills surrounding Sheridan, and most of the young people of that vicinity are busy at the work. A bumper crop is looked for in some of the orchards, and hundreds of tons of Hings, Royal Annes and Lamberts are ready for the harvesters.

A big swan, guardian of three cyglets which recently emerged from eggs in Bend's mirror pond, gave battle to a string of pack mules and won. The mules, brought from the dry range to be watered, retreated from the stream and left the swan in possession after the huge bird attacked with wings and beak.

The largest shipment of black cherries ever to go out of The Dalles to the eastern trade, an entire train of the cars, on a special schedule, left recently consigned to Chicago and Philadelphia. The cherry train was to stop at Umatilla to pick up several cars of fruit from the Yakima district, and at Pendleton for any fruit that the Milton-Freewater area might have available.

Tillamook again took almost sweepstakes honors in butterfat production in Oregon for the month of May, according to the official report just issued at Corvallis by the extension service of the Oregon State College. With 116 herds on test, producing an average of 43.13 pounds of fat, this as scattation ranked first among the ten dairy herd improvement associations in the state reported last month, and also had the honor herd, consisting of 39 cows producing an average of 49.41 pounds of fat.

## Why We Behave Like Human Beings

By GEORGE DORSEY, Ph. D., LL. D.

### Gushy Girls Waste Sex Emotion

THERE are many histories of marriage. Westmarck's, in three large volumes, is a mere sketch and was out of date the day it was printed. New marriage customs have been invented.

Marriage does not stand still. It grows—backward, forward, up and down. There are as many forms of marriage behavior as there are married couples. Possibly more; some dissolve and remarry. Marriage laws vary from state to state, nation to nation, age to age. Can marriage behavior be generalized or reduced to law?

There is no biologic excuse outside structural deficiency for unmated adult human beings. Many human societies respect that law. Other communities flaunt it, disregard puberty, indefinitely postpone mating or mate casually, and make the best of children as they do of other accidents.

In other words, we get little light on human marriage behavior from the mind of the anthropoid apes. Human marriage behavior is as distinctly and peculiarly human as is a sewing machine or the "Wedding March" of Lohengrin. The mate instinct must be there; is there, if we are born whole, we have it; the capacity to seek a mate, the impulse to find one if it takes us overseas.

Why, then, a world of sexually unadjusted: unmarrieds, divorcees, oft-marrieds, courtships, prostitutes, homosexuals, loveless marriage, childless marriages? Endless kinds.

Two general observations: (1) Europe's population has doubled in the last hundred years despite the enormous losses from wars, disease, infantile mortality, and drains overseas. The mate-hunger is not impotent. (2) We hear only of the sexually-unadjusted. There are millions of happily mated couples in America.

Now for the other side; the behavior of the mate-impulse. It leads many to marry. The marriage fails: drunkenness, cruelty, infidelity, desertion, etc. The courts recognize many grounds. Why does one man become a drunkard, another beat his wife? Marriage itself is no more responsible for such misfits than is business for arson or banking for defalcation. The man who beats his wife probably beat his sister or his mother. The man who drinks because or in spite of his wife would turn to drink under any other situation to which he could not adjust himself.

Between the age of fifteen and twenty-five are ten long years. During these years the mate-hunger impulse cannot be put to sleep, as one does a child; or locked in a closet, as one does—but should not—a naughty child. It is inevitable that huge amounts of energy be diverted. But where? What is to be its outlet?

"Raise the standard of men's morality!" But not by talk. Work will do it. Many a boy is so hard at work he has no further energy left.

The boy or girl who for ten years chases pleasure as the main business of life may be "pure," but neither will be likely to acquire any socially useful habits during that time. Both men and women can become such habitual flirts that they are abnormal; they are sexual perverts.

The normal sex-complex can be broken in many ways: disappointment in love, no response on the part of the mate, etc. The sex-complex thus becomes conditioned to abnormal methods of response; tendency to avoid or be disgusted under conditions which are neither "disgusting" nor to be avoided; prudishness; sloppy sentimentality; morbid interest in the externals or accessories of sex conduct.

The sex-complex thus comes to mean for one individual one thing; for another, quite something else. It comes to be as varied as behavior itself. What it is at any one time depends on the lessons it has learned: its experience, its habits. No man or woman enters into marriage with a sex-complex slate on which something has not been written. Until recently, it was likely to be too little on the part of the woman, an ignorance so ingrained that learning was painful; too much on the part of the man, more than he could rub off.

Foundations of habits (which means character) are laid in homes. Nineteenth of the girls that enter juvenile courts leave bad homes. As Thomas puts it, many a girl cannot be said to fall, because she has never risen. She is not immoral, but amoral. The mate-hunger is turned into love for adventure, clothes, theater, attention, distinction, freedom. And some discover that the only means they have to realize these acquired appetites is their sex. They use it as they would a coin to buy advantages and pleasure.

Thomas cites Dumas as saying that girls in Paris lost their virginity as they lost their milk teeth: they could give no plausible account of the loss.

Or they marry with that same coin or buy entry to the stage or a trip to Paris. Having chosen the easier road, they soon become habituated to it. Until recently, women had almost no incentive or opportunity to attempt achievement in male fields. Why should she when for every woman there was a purchaser; for some, many bidders.

(By George A. Dorsey.)



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