

Lesser Known But Not Forgotten

Everyone has a history. But not everyone's history is recorded. Eugene, like any town its size, has a long list of names to its heritage. The ones on the streets and buildings are well-known. Others might be vaguely familiar. Still others we may not recognize at all. But behind every name, known or unknown, there is a person. And they all make a contribution.

John Addison

A Civil War veteran from Illinois, John Addison (1844-1928) came to Oregon in 1884. He bought a lumber mill in Creswell, which he disassembled and rebuilt in Lorane. The roads were so bad that the mill could operate only three or four months of the year, so Addison built miles of wooden "plank roads" — complete with high wooden trestles — to roll or drag logs from the wilderness to the mill ponds. Addison and his wife, **Nancy Seward Addison**, had twelve children, and the family business stayed in the Lorane area until 1945.



Left: John Addison.
Right: Lark Bilyeu.

John C. Anderson

The year was 1869, and John C. Anderson (1835-1905) was in his thirties when he married sixteen-year-old **Eliza Campbell**, daughter of pioneer **Robert E. Campbell**. The couple had ten children, including **Glen G. Anderson**, who as a young man logged with oxen on the McKenzie River and later was mayor of Coburg. The family ran a successful hop yard for many years, which provided area residents with work, even during the Great Depression. Part of the original donation claim is still in the family, on Anderson Lane in Springfield.

George Belshaw

George Belshaw Jr. (1816-1893) captained a wagon train over the Oregon Trail in 1853, keeping a diary of

mileage, weather, geography, and people encountered along the way — intended as a guide for later travelers. He settled west of Eugene, and later became known for his prize-winning grains, at one time having almost 150 varieties of wheat growing on his farm. He fathered eight children with his wife, **Candace McCarty Belshaw**. One daughter was born on the trail in 1853, while the party camped along the Columbia River. She was named Gertrude Columbia, and lived but two weeks.

Lark Bilyeu

Lark Bilyeu (1852-1924) came over the Oregon Trail in 1862, when he was ten years old. After studies at Pacific University, he began practicing law in Eugene in 1882. Respected as an authority in legal matters, he was a leader of the Democratic party in Oregon and elected to the state legislature three times. He was also a very high degree Mason. He and his wife, **Margaret Irvine Bilyeu**, are entombed in the Hope Abbey Mausoleum.



Prior F. Blair

"Another of the men who came to Oregon and withstood the hardships of the early settlement of the state has passed to the great beyond," said the front page of the Eugene *Daily*

Guard on June 23, 1893. "We refer to that true and well-known gentleman, Prior F. Blair" (1818-1893). He came to Oregon in 1847, settling in Pleasant Hill. He later took up a claim just west of Eugene Skinner's. Today, the area is known as the Blair Boulevard Historic District in west Eugene.

Russell Dean Calkins

Russell Dean Calkins (1829-1917) and **Sarah Whipple Calkins** (1836-1927) were the parents of three prominent figures in Eugene law and business: Judge F.M. Calkins; W.W. Calkins, a president of the First National Bank of Eugene; and city attorney S.M. Calkins. Both are entombed in the Hope Abbey Mausoleum.

Philip Castleman

Philip Castleman (1828-1913) was almost certainly Eugene's first photographer. He started out cutting wood for Eugene builders in 1851. Two years later he went back east and purchased a daguerreotype outfit, which he brought back to Eugene. Castleman's photos were probably used to create the earliest lithographs of what was called Eugene City in 1859. The following year he took on a young house painter, J.A. Winter, as a partner, and they advertised "photographic and painting business in all its various branches." They guaranteed satisfaction, "with all the latest improvements," and said they would "take all kinds of produce in exchange for our work." Castleman's wife, **Iantha**, and daughter, **Mary**, are also buried in the Masonic Cemetery.

Robert Carlton Clark

Robert Carlton Clark (1877-1939) came to Eugene in 1907, to chair the history department at the University of Oregon. Highly respected in both academia and the community at large, he specialized in Oregon history. In 1927, he authored *History of the Willamette Valley, Oregon*, an extensive three-volume set of historical and biographical information.

Robert Bevins Cochran

Robert Bevins Cochran (1820-1894) was known as a “Jackson type” politician: a democrat, “straightforward and outspoken to a remarkable degree,” said his obituary. He came to Eugene over the Oregon Trail in 1851, with his parents, wife and son (who

was born en route). He entered politics in 1856 and spent the next twenty years being elected, defeated, and elected again to various positions in the Oregon Legislature. While he was president of the Senate in the 1870s, one of his children died. He resigned his position and returned home.

Janet McCornack Collier

Janet McCornack Collier (1857-1938) was the first woman elected to the Eugene School Board, even though she couldn't vote in elections herself. She visited all the classes, evaluated the teachers, and lobbied for funds to build a new high school — while raising six children. “I don't know if she was especially interested in women's suffrage,” said a granddaughter in 1976. “But she lived it.” Her surveyor

husband was often away, so Mrs. Collier was household carpenter, craftsperson and nurse all rolled into one. She built shelves, made the children a baseball out of an old shoe, and saw them through typhoid and scarlet fever epidemics. She also found the time for church and neighborhood activities. “It wasn't just her own family that she worked for,” said daughter Dorothy in 1976. Son Alfred added, “She wasn't afraid of man or the devil.”

John Conger

John Conger (1855-1921) was five years old when his father was killed. His mother never remarried, so he lived and worked on the family farm until he was almost thirty. In 1882, he bought 340 acres west of Eugene, in the vicinity of Conger Street today. He soon married, and with his wife, **Sarah E. Conger**, set about the business of farming and raising a family. When Conger died, his son, Chester, stayed on with his own mother, as his father had before him. Both John and Sarah Conger are entombed in the Hope Abbey Mausoleum.

Catherine S. Davis

“Mrs. Catherine S. Davis (1811-1898) died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. **S.A. Huddleston** in this city, aged 87 years and 4 days,” said a Eugene obituary of January 29, 1898. “Thus another of Oregon's noble pioneer women goes to her reward.” She came to Oregon with her husband and family in 1847. He died in 1858, leaving her with five children, whom she

raised by herself. She had also studied medicine when she was younger, and for some years functioned as a doctor to early Lane County settlers. “Many a time she mounted her fine riding horse during the dark hours of night and started out on a mission of mercy for a hard ride of from 15 to 25 miles,” said the 1898 newspaper story. “And that, too, without compensation.”

Luther M. Dillard

Luther M. Dillard (1846-1889) came to Oregon as a boy in 1853, and grew up to amass substantial acreage southeast of Eugene, where Dillard Road is today. “He was essentially a member of the class of doers, gifted with initiative and quick resolve,” said the *History of Oregon* in 1903, “and he never under stress of action faltered, hesitated nor reconsidered.” He married **Samantha Emmons**, a descendent of Daniel Boone, in 1875. Their children included **Walter Dillard**, who became a Eugene attorney and school superintendent, and **John L. Dillard**, who became a civil engineer.

F.B. Dunn

“F.B. Dunn is dead!” exclaimed the Eugene *Daily Guard* the afternoon of July 20, 1892. The prominent merchant (1833-1892) had died suddenly that morning, collapsing on his front porch due to a “rupture



Left: Picnic entertainment, ca. 1915.
Right: F.B. Dunn.

of the heart.” He had arrived in Oregon in 1853 without a dollar to his name. Within two years he was running his own mercantile business, and at the time of his death owned over 4,000 acres of land. A school director and former mayor, he was active in nearly every element of civic life. Public offices and private businesses in Eugene closed for his funeral, said the *Guard*. “The procession was the largest one that ever wended its way to a cemetery from this city.”

Robert Emmet Eastland

Another Civil War veteran was Robert Emmet Eastland (1844-1926), who brought his family to eastern Oregon in 1876, where he captained an Oregon State Militia group called the “Wild Horse Rangers.” He later moved the family to Eugene, so that his children could attend the University of Oregon. Eastland then took work as a night policeman, and later was Lane County treasurer. One son, **Herbert C. Eastland**, graduated from the UO.

Edward R. Geary

Rev. Edward R. Geary (1811-1886), brother of the first mayor of San Francisco, turned down an appeal from the Republican party in Oregon to run for the U.S. Congress. “He could have had high political honors, but preferred to continue to preach the gospel,” said his obituary. Highly respected as both pastor and citizen, he was a long-time regent for the University of Oregon. The Geary School, which operated at 4th and



Madison from 1890 to the 1930s, was named for him. His funeral was preached by Thomas Condon, UO science professor and a minister himself.

Joseph G. Gray

Mining, surveying, politics, milling, and fruit-growing were all part of Joseph G. Gray’s life (1824-1899). He came across the plains in 1853, settling in Eugene four years later. During the course of his business endeavors, he served as county treasurer for ten years, from 1874-84, and again in 1894-96. He was also the first president of the Eugene City Council.



Wiley Griffon

Wiley Griffon (1867-1913) was a black man in a white town. He came to

Eugene around 1890, and was the driver of the town’s first streetcar service — a single mule-powered car that ran on narrow-gauge tracks from the Southern Pacific railway station to the university. “In fact, he was driver, conductor, dispatcher, and largely the motive power by persistently shoving along the ambling mule,” said the *Eugene Morning Register*. The streetcar line’s first owner sold out after two years, and the new owner was absent from Eugene for months at a time — leaving Griffon completely in charge of operations. After the line shut down, Griffon took on various jobs. “He was for a time janitor at the University dormitory, was employed by Grandma Munro at her famous eating house on the O.R. & N. line at Meacham, was later waiter on a dining car on the railroad, and afterward worked at many odd jobs in Eugene and at other points in the valley,” said the *Eugene Daily Guard*. “For some time previous to his death he was porter at the Elks’ club. The Elks gave him a decent burial.” (See sidebar of funeral costs, page 27.)

Mahlon H. Harlow

Mahlon H. Harlow (1811-1896) bought 320 acres for five dollars and an old pistol. It was 1851, and he settled with his family in the fertile land between the Mc-



Kenzie and Willamette rivers. There on his farm he built a school, and in 1852 his home was the site of Eugene’s first church: the Willamette Forks Baptist Church of Jesus Christ. When services were moved into town five years later, they met at Harlow’s “Red Top Tavern” before a proper church was built. Harlow was also a successful farmer, was elected the first county clerk, and with his wife, **Frances Tandy Harlow**, raised eight children. Harlow Road is today a main traffic artery in the busy Gateway region of north Eugene and Springfield.

John W. Hollis

John W. Hollis (1827-1907) and **Barbara Shafer Hollis** (1833-1920) came to Oregon in 1873 by train. They brought their children with them from Missouri — five of whom died of diphtheria in 1877. Their fifteenth and final child, **Moody Marcellus Hollis**, was born in 1878 and grew up to have a forty-year career as an agent for the Southern Pacific Railroad. Moody’s first wife, **Amelia Benner Mar Hollis**,

Top left: Wiley Griffon, ca. 1893.

Bottom left: Joseph G. Gray.

Top right: Mahlon and Frances Tandy Harlow with their son, Andrew Jackson Harlow.

and his daughter, **Barbara Hollis McMillan**, along with an infant son, are also buried in the Masonic Cemetery. His son, Orlando John, is the former long-time dean of the University of Oregon law school.

William Nelson Luckey

There are more Luckeys buried in the Masonic Cemetery than any other family. William Nelson Luckey (1808-1892) and his wife, **Elizabeth Leasure Luckey** (d. 1886), came over the Oregon Trail in 1850. Among their eight children were **Nancy (Smith)**, **Mary Ann**, and **Warren**. William's brother, **Jeremiah**, arrived in 1863 and two years later sent for his wife and two daughters — but they were lost when their ship, the *Brother Jonathan*, sank off the coast of northern California. Jerry lost another daughter, **Minnie**, when she drowned in a sail-



Left: Mrs. Prudence Sanderson.
Top right: Seavy hop yards, ca. 1900.
Bottom right: Hart Manville.

boat accident on the Siuslaw River near Florence in 1889.

Present-day Eugeneans may recognize the family name in Luckey's Tavern, a downtown bastion of old-style pool and card tables, founded by Tad Luckey in 1911 (now long out of the family). They may also know of the clock. In the early days of Eugene, **Josiah "Uncle Joe" Luckey** (son of William and Elizabeth) ran a jewelry shop on Willamette Street, where he kept a big, black clock out front. It remained there long after Uncle Joe passed away, and was somehow saved when urban renewal changed the face of downtown Eugene in the 1970s. It stands today on the Broadway mall, just west of Oak Street.

George Dean Luckey

Sketchy records indicate that George Dean Luckey was actually a Chinese man named **Gee Deen**, with his name anglicized. A number of Chinese people are buried in the Luckey plot, according to recollections of Bernice Callison, Josiah Luckey's niece. A group of Chinese people worked and lived at a laundry located where the Eugene Hotel is today, she said. When a member of their group died, they would come in the night to Joe Luckey's house, speak with him and then bury their loved one before daybreak. It seems that Joe Luckey owned two or three plots set aside specifically for use by the Chinese, and perhaps other people of color. Records indicate another Chinese man, **Ye Toy**, who worked as a cook at the Sigma Nu fraternity house near the UO campus, is also buried in a Luckey plot.



Hart Manville

Hart Marion Manville's (1858-1913) story is on the surface unremarkable — yet perhaps representative of many Eugene citizens. Born in Pennsylvania, he was educated in public schools. Between sessions, he worked with his father as a cabinet maker. He later attended the State Normal School in Kansas, taught for a year, then clerked in a Nebraska store. He came to Eugene in 1896 and opened a new and used furniture dealership with his father-in-law, Nathan Winters, which they operated together until Winters' death. Manville then became sole proprietor, and con-



tinued to enjoy his reputation as a solid and reliable merchant. He married **Mary Zelpha Winters** in 1887. They raised four children: Ira, Floyd, Leona, and Clayton. A fifth child, Amelia, died shortly after birth.

Ed McClanahan

They called him "Lord Chesterfield," due to his dapper dress and long, white beard. His name was Ed McClanahan (1844-1928), and for many years he drove sections of the main stagecoach line from Sacramento to Portland. Stage drivers were important people in the 1860s, and McClanahan counted among his passengers Horace Greeley, Ben Holladay, and Mark Twain. "Them was good old days," he remarked in later years. In Eugene, he dealt in real estate, construction, sawmilling, and farm produce. In the early 1900s he

developed a chicken incubator that brought him a national reputation. He lived for sixty years on the millrace in Eugene, where he rented boats, largely to UO students, when canoeing on the waterway became popular around the turn of the century. He was one of Eugene's more picturesque characters, said the Wilkins sisters in their 1949 book, *The Story of Eugene*, and "resembled Santa Claus more than anyone but himself." (See photo, page 6.)

Fielding McMurry

No history of the Masonic Cemetery could go without mention of Fielding McMurry (1815-1860). In 1859, he sold ten acres from his donation land claim to Eugene Lodge #11 for the cemetery site, on partial credit, and with the stipulation that he be given a family plot. His land was also the site of the first school in Eugene — the "Point of the Hills" school, run by Sarah Ann Moore in the early 1850s. McMurry died two years before the cemetery land note was paid in full to his estate.

George Midgley

George Midgley (1861-1919) came to Eugene in 1875 and immediately went into the planing mill business. He set up on the millrace, close to the present-day 5th and High streets, and ran the mill by water power. In 1910, Midgley and Frank Chambers bought rights to the entire millrace, which they planned to clear of stumps and vegetation and turn into a self-supporting power source. But property owners along the canal

felt otherwise, and workers sent to clear the way found themselves facing angry words and shotguns. The matter was sent to the courts, but Midgley and Chambers sold their rights before any legal decision was made. No further development was attempted by the new owners.

Henry C. Owen

Henry C. Owen (1823-1900) came to Lane County in 1851 and was soon active in Oregon politics, being present at every legislative session from the 1860s to 1880s. He was jokingly known as "Saint Owen the Swamp Angel" because he at one time owned every bit of swamp land in the state. "It was said when in the rush of applicants for this land, he won by a few minutes," said the Eugene *Daily Guard* in his obituary. He shrewdly filed a claim covering all swamp areas



from California to the Columbia River, and from Idaho to the Pacific Ocean, then later sold these lands to a California millionaire, the newspaper added. "Thereafter he lived quietly in Eugene until death overtook him."

Eugene C. Sanderson

The University of Oregon wasn't the only institution of higher learning founded in Eugene. In 1895, Eugene C. Sanderson (1859-1940) opened the Eugene Divinity School in a ten-room house he rented for seven dollars a month, adjacent to the UO. "For the first three years I was president, faculty and janitor," Sanderson told the *Oregon Journal* in 1924. He believed that for a Bible school to survive, it must be located near a larger university — and it appears he was right. Today the full-fledged institution of 500 students, across Kincaid Street from the UO, is known as Northwest Christian College.

Although a stern and serious man, Sanderson was not unable to appreciate humor — especially if it came from his wife, **Prudence**. In a typewritten remembrance, family friend Dr. C.H. Phillips tells how the college president was at times so often away on fundraising business that his wife rarely saw him. So she phoned his secretary one day, posing as a donor, and made an appointment. When she came to the office, Sanderson asked what she was doing there. She produced a dollar as her donation and replied that this was the only way she could get to see him, Phillips wrote. "As usual, he was amused because 'Prudy' had done it."

Alexander Seavy

Born in the port town of Rockland, Maine, Alexander Seavy (1824-1908) came to Lane County via the West Indies, Brazil, Cape Horn, the California gold mines, and southern Oregon. He took up a 160-acre claim in 1855, placed 350 cows and calves on it and started into the stock-raising business. In 1858 he married **Sarah Ann Blachly**, daughter of **Ebenezer** and **Susan Blachly**, and they raised eight children. They also bought a farm of over a thousand acres, devoting part of it to growing hops. These crops were successful and the business grew — until the "Seavy hop yards" became known throughout the region as a place where work could be found in even the most dire economic times.

Mary Cook Skinner

Not everyone knows that it was Mary Cook Skinner (1816-1881), not Eugene, who named the town Eugene City in 1853. After her first husband's death, she remarried to **Captain N.L. Packard**, and is buried under that name.



John M. Thompson

In poor health nearly all his adult life, John M. Thompson (1838-1882) still managed to be a lawyer, judge, state representative, and regent of the

Left: E.C. Sanderson and family, ca. 1909.

Right: Mary Cook Skinner.

University of Oregon. When elected Speaker of the House in 1878, he set about investigating fraud in the state administration. It was not pleasant work, said the *Oregon State Journal*, but “he performed faithfully” and “as well and as vigorously as his feeble health enabled him to do.” He died at age 43. A “Resolution of Respect” from the Masonic Lodge, printed in the *Journal*, described him as “a man who was ever ready for duty, though that duty was death.”

J. Benson Underwood

J. Benson Underwood (1838-1882) was regarded as a brilliant man with all the attributes necessary for success. He arrived in Lane County in 1860, and became a prominent lawyer, legislator, and property owner, with a family of four children. But he had lost it all before his death at age 44. “His greatest fault, which was perhaps the principal cause of his financial reverses and death, was the too-free use of strong drink,” said the *Oregon State Journal*. “The bereaved family have the sincere sympathy of the entire community.”



Left: William and Mary Shields Walker.
Right: Vitus family.

Augustus J.F. Vitus

There are ten members of the Augustus J.F. Vitus (1828-1913) clan entombed in the Hope Abbey Mausoleum — the largest family group there. The original family arrived in Albany, Oregon in 1878 with thirty-two dollars to their name. They bought a cook stove and borrowed a sack of flour, then set to working for area farmers. They came to Lane County the following spring, rented a farm near Junction City, and worked through bad crops and heavy debt. The family, including sons **Augustus Jr.**, **Bruno**, **Louis**, and **Robert**, and daughter **Mary (Andrews)**, stayed together until the farm became successful — so successful that the senior Vitus left in 1894 to start a new farm near Springfield. The original land remained in the family until the 1930s, and is today known as Thistledown Farm.

William Walker

William Walker (1800-1881) and **Mary Shields Walker** set out from Missouri with their family on the Oregon Trail in 1852. But hearing that cholera was bad that year, they turned back at the Kaw River, and started again in 1853. They arrived in Lane County and settled near Camas Swale, south of Spencer Butte. They built a log house and lived off the land, having brought three cows to furnish their dairy needs, and made flour by grinding it in a coffee mill that Mrs. Walker had carried with them across the plains. Four years later, they sold the property and moved to Eugene, where they opened Walker’s Drug Store on



9th Street (now Broadway). In 1861, Walker sold the store and spent the rest of his life ranching in the Springfield and Pleasant Hill areas. He died four years before their son, Albert Shields Walker, was elected the first mayor of Springfield. Two other sons, **Hugh Marion** and **Matthew Eagleton Walker**, are buried in the Masonic Cemetery.

Jerome Wilson

Jerome Wilson (1855-1903) died of typhoid fever, two days before Christmas. He had been a laborer and logger, with little material wealth, and was buried in a donated plot at the Masonic Cemetery. “Mr. Wilson leaves a widow and six children perfectly destitute,” said the *Eugene Register*. “These people would be good objects for Eugene’s charity.”

Silas M. Yoran

When Silas M. Yoran (1835-1922) came to Eugene in 1883, there were already two successful newspapers — the republican *Oregon State Journal* and the democratic *Guard*. But Yoran decided the town could use another republican voice, so he launched the *Register*, which began as a weekly in 1884 (and eventually merged with the democratic paper to become the *Register-Guard*). Yoran later went into the retail shoe business with his son, Darwin, until he retired in 1904. He was active in politics and “identified with practically every move for civic improvement in Eugene,” said the *Morning Register* in his obituary. His wife, **Maria Markell Yoran** and daughter, **Elizabeth**, are also entombed in the Hope Abbey Mausoleum.