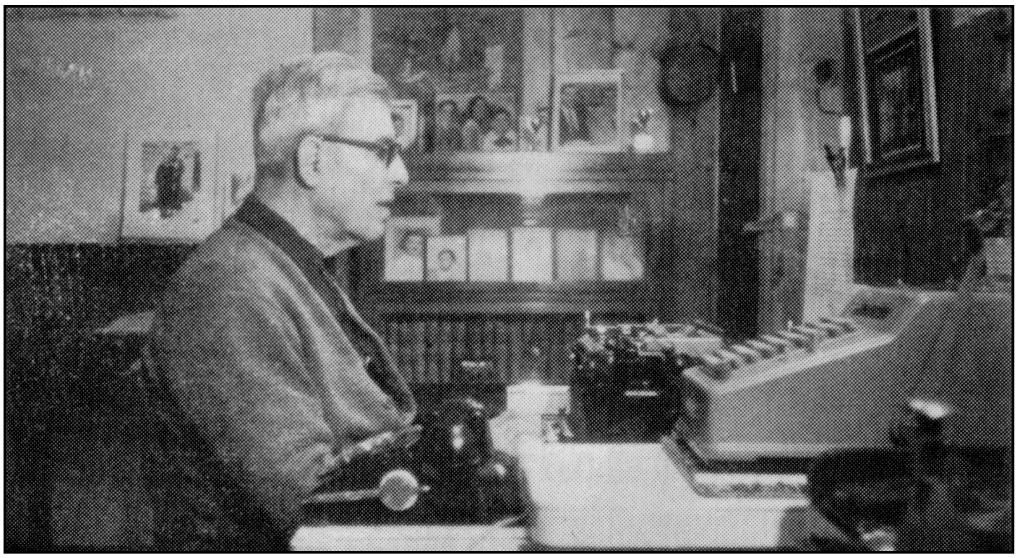
Philip Doumitt

These are recollections of the years 1909 to 1919 when I lived in Stevenson, Washington.



Sawmill at Sepsecan

After the Great Fire in Stevenson in 1914, we saw the handwriting on the wall at our location and moved our business to Winlock, Washington. I helped operate that store with a partner. After eight months we sold the store and I returned to Stevenson.

Meanwhile brother Najib had for some time gone into partnership with Chris Aalvik in a sawmill and logging operation at Sepsecan just two miles west of Cooks, Washington. After Winlock I was called by my brother to do the bookkeeping for the Doumitt-Aalvik Lumber Company for $100.00 per month, plus room and board. Bookkeeping, however, turned out to be only a part of my job: The United States began a hectic preparation for war and there was great shortage of men. I had to pitch in wherever it was necessary and ultimately learned every job in the mill except operating the main saw. Because of conscription all the available workers were Mexicans who had no experience in mill work and it became my job to train then. They were slow to learn but became good workers as they gained experience. A part of my job also was to walk to Cooks and back daily for the Company mail. I learned to walk those railroad ties one-at-a time or two-at-a-time with expertise. I did my bookkeeping after mill hours often until near midnight.

Chris Aalvik on log at Doumitt-Aalvik logging camp.

Once I was called upon to punk whistle at the logging camp because the regular whistle punk was absent. Here my “inventive genius” came to the fore and nearly got me into very serious trouble. I contrived a system of pulling on the whistle wire to make the signals with the least possible effort. The system worked well for a time, but because I had to make a kink in the wire, it broke and found me running after it with utmost speed. The rule, as I remember it, was for the choker setter, whose work was to

attach the logs to the cable, to shout “Hi” for a stop signal, “Hi Hi” to go ahead slow and “Hi-Hi-Hi” for full speed ahead. These signals were to inform the unseen operator of the power donkey below the hill what the choker setter wants him to do. If the log hung up and the pull on the cable is not released by the proper signal the tremendous power generated by the donkey could snap the cable and the rebound could damage the machine and even kill the operator. It was serious business and I knew it!

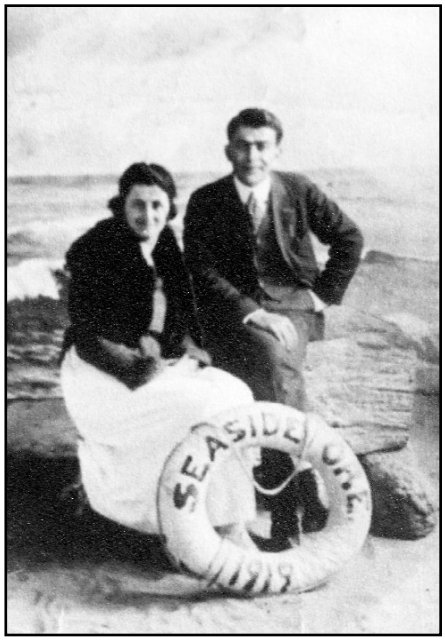
The choker setter at this time shouted “Hi!” which meant to stop the donkey’s pull on the cable, but there was no response from me. I was still dashing down the hill to recover the broken whistle wire. Again I heard the call “Hi!” and still there was no response from the frantic whistle punk. Finally in great anger I heard the choker setter shout, “Hi!” godammit “Hi!”---! By this time I had reached the broken wire but because there was considerable slack on it when I pulled on the wire in haste, it gave the false double-signal to “go ahead slow”. “Oh, my God!” I exclaimed. At last as I tightened on the wire and gave it another jerk, it gave the proper signal to STOPS!

Top of hill where logs were sent down to Doumitt-Aalvik Mill at Sepsican.

All was quiet for a moment when I heard from the choker setter this time at close range. He was as mad as a hornet as he shouted, “What the hell happened to you?” and all I could stutter was “the wire broke!” After that, I used the standard method of pulling on the wire and all went well for the rest of the day. But the experience taught me one thing: “Don’t try to improve on a system that had been used successfully for a hundred years”, and needed no change, especially when people’s lives were at stake. I was thankful the work day was over. I was not proud of my performance as a whistle punk and felt as if someone had given me a good beating. No one knew what really happened and I reveal it here for the first time. (The Statute of Limitation has run out and I think that after exactly 60 years (1917-1977) it is safe to confess).

Najib Doumitt - Draft Board

The years 1917 and 1918 were trying times in the sawmill and logging business because the experienced workers were either drafted or had volunteered for military service. To make matters worse for the Doumitt-Aalvik Lumber Company, one of its partners, Najib Doumitt, had to report to the Draft Board for possible conscription. But because the company was manufacturing mostly square cuts for the Government, Najib was given special consideration by the Draft Board. I don't recall how it was arranged but he was taken by George Christensen to Olympia and a personal plea was made to the Governor on behalf of the Draft Board in accordance with a new directive issued by the U. S. Government: persons who were more important to the war effort than being a soldier were granted an exemption from the Service.



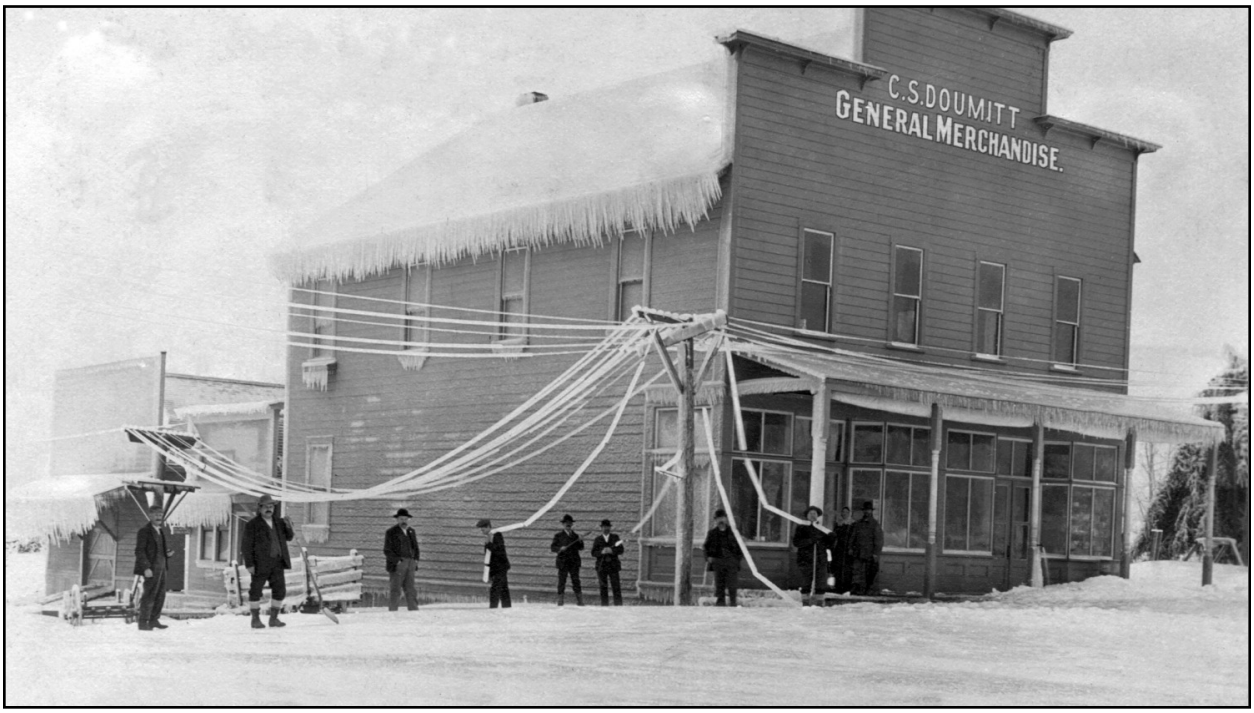
Najib Doumitt and Adell Schwary at Seaside, 1919.

The Governor of Washington merely made it official and Najib was returned to operate the sawmill. Chris Aalvik, who was in charge of the logging operation, was past the draft age and was not called. The timber that was logged for the sawmill was cut into logs, attached to a cable line and powered by a donkey, was dragged down a steep hill. Occasionally one of these logs would break loose and come tumbling down the hill at great speed. Once a huge log broke away and stopped just 20 feet short of crashing into the sawmill and the workers.

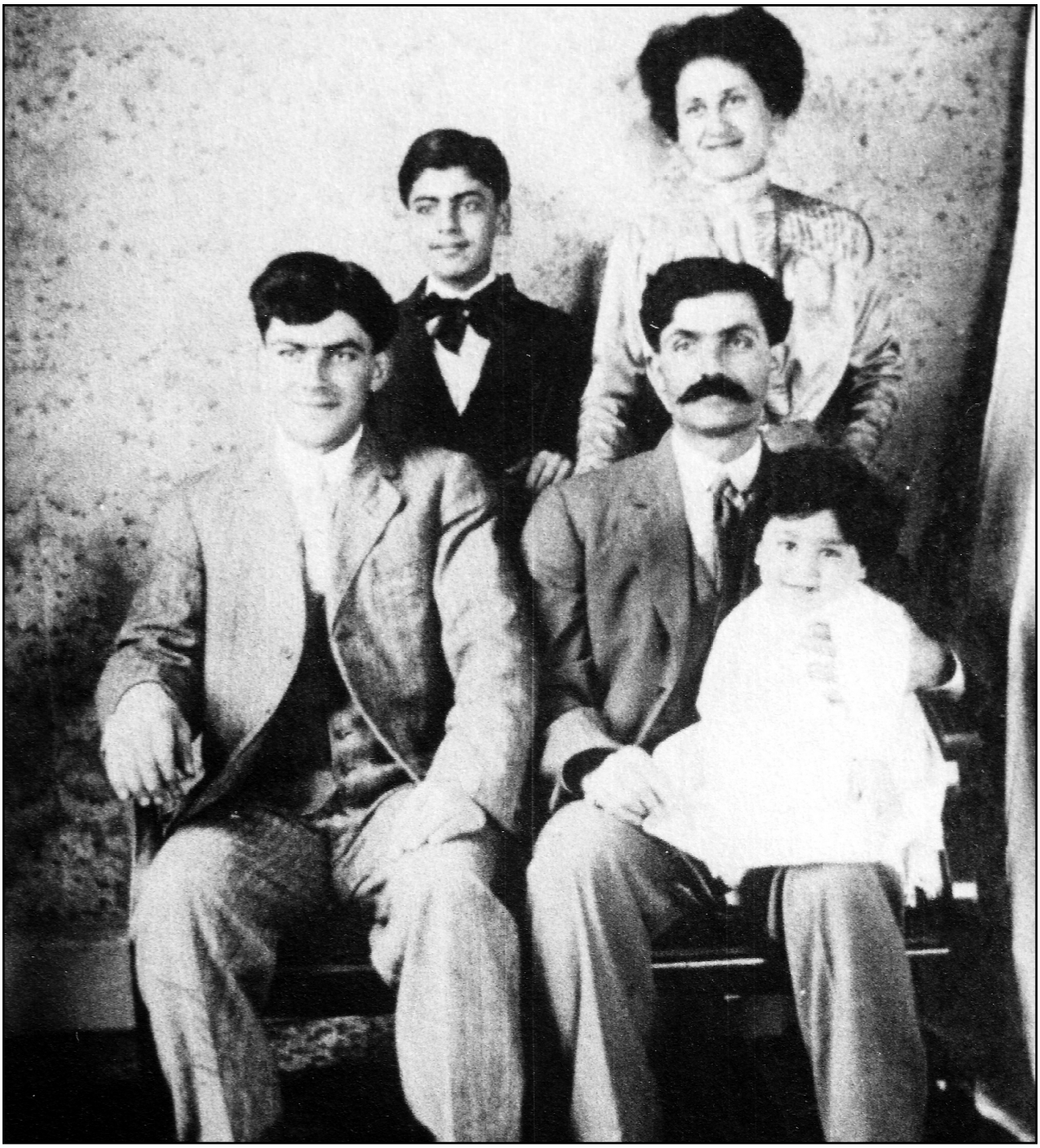
On another occasion a log came down with such force it jumped end for end and broke the power line that served Portland with electricity. The Northwestern Electric Company repaired the damage and sent us a bill for $300.00 demanding immediate payment. Brother Najib took the letter and the claim to Mr. Jerry Wright, an attorney, in Stevenson, who asked some questions, made some observations of his own, then wrote the electric company a letter informing them that their power poles were placed on Doumitt-Aalvik property and he found no legal record of an easement for their use. Mr. Wright's ten dollar fee was a good investment because we heard no more from the electric company.

Najib Doumitt, 1910. He was part-owner of a store on Whiskey Flat row in Stevenson.

Najib Doumitt was a part owner of store on Whiskey Flats in Stevenson.



Ice storm during the winter of 1907 caused massive havoc in Stevenson and the county. Here wires are down next to the C. S. Doumitt General Merchandise Store on Front Ave. Present location is the start of the ramp going down the Stevenson Dock.



Doumitt family, c. 1912. Front row: Najib, father Charlie and son Sammy. Back row: Philip and mother Jalilia.

The Episode of Mrs. Monzingo

It was about July 1918 that the mysterious episode of Mrs. Ed Monzingo occurred at Sepsecan. It deserves to be told because it was perhaps the most amazing experience of my life. I would not have believed myself had I not seen it happen with my own eyes. The crew of the sawmill was idle that day because of a breakdown. Our sawyer, Ed Monzingo and his wife lived in the vicinity of the cookhouse. Ed was an excellent sawyer but he always carried a sad, worried appearance. No one knew why. Mrs. Monzingo was an extremely beautiful woman of about 26 and it always appeared to me that she had an "eye" for good looking men. But in respect to Ed no one paid any attention to her. Why Ed was always in a melancholy, depressed mood came to light on what would have otherwise been an uneventful day.

Ed Monzingo was a sawyer for the Doumitt-Aalvik lumber mill at Sepsican.

Suddenly everyone in camp was aroused by terrific screaming that come from the direction of Ed's cabin. It was a woman's voice and it sounded like someone was about to harm her. We all rushed to see what was happening and the closer we came to the cabin the louder the screams. Several of us including brother Najib arrived at about the same time. We found Mrs. Monzingo lying on a table while Ed was applying cold packs to her forehead and eyes and massaging her neck. Everyone was stunned and offered help but, sadly Ed would say, "There is nothing you can do — there is nothing anyone can do — this has happened many time before." The screaming continued on and on, louder and louder. We all stood back in terrified silence as the woman continued to scream. Ed continued applying cold packs. Her forehead and eyes were completely covered by a thick, wet towel.

Finally brother Najib approached the screaming woman and took one of her hands. To everyone's amazement the screaming suddenly stopped! It was incredible.

When Najib removed his hand the screaming would start again as loud as before. This was repeated several times and each time it was the same. Ed told us that his wife was in complete coma, neither seeing nor hearing. Several doctors, he said, were baffled by this mysterious affliction and were powerless to do anything about it. Now comes the most amazing surprise to us all. Brother Najib kept holding Mrs. Monzingo's hand to keep her from screaming. Then he decided to lift his hand upward for a moment and Mrs. Monzingo's hand would follow in any direction that he raised his hand. When Najib lifted his hand upward beyond the woman's reach, her hand would drop to her body as if dead! Then the screaming would resume. It was incredible beyond belief but I saw all that transpired!

Several of us tried touching Mrs. Monzingo's hand but none had any effect on her behavior. One of the men, Joe Robinson, who was a self-proclaimed homeopathic practioner of a sort, suggested that hot packs be placed on the woman's feet to stimulate the circulation. It was tried but to no avail. The whole episode was like a dream to all of us, mysterious and unbelievable. The lady continued in this sort of a stigmata for about two hours. When she finally awoke she said that she was completely exhausted but oblivious of what had happened to her. "It's always been this way" Ed Monzingo said sadly. "I've taken her to several specialists but none could help her." During the remainder of my stay at the sawmill, Mrs. Monzingo did not have a recurrence of this astonishing malady.

Finger Injury - Dr. Avary - Angeline

One of the jobs I was called upon to learn at the sawmill was the operation of the carriage that held the logs tightly to it for cutting by the main saw. The log was held by an arm called a "niggerhead", which bore its prongs into the log and was tightened by the carriage operator. While manipulating one of these arms, the prongs accidentally hit one of my fingers and cut the flesh to the bone.

I went to Dr. Thomas Avary in Stevenson for treatment. On seeing me sitting in the waiting room the doctor invited me into his office. "Come in, Philip. Sit on my chair and I'll be back shortly." So I sat in the doctor's swivel chair with a feeling of importance and nothing to do. I swivelled to my left and saw a shelf full of medical books. I. picked up one at random, opened it and began to look at the illustrations. The book turned out to be a study in obstetrics which showed a picture of a baby being born. The doctor walked in unnoticed and saw the picture I was viewing.

Dr. Avary had come from the State of Georgia and still had a southern accent. "Well, Philip", he said in his Southern drawl. "If you can take one out as easy as you can put one in, you'd be a good doctah!" A moment later Angeline Martell, one of the student nurses at Dr. Avary's hospital, came in to aid the physician in the treatment of my finger. Dr. Avary opened the angry looking wound, saturated a piece of cotton with iodine and bathed my finger with a generous application of the medicine. The pain was so severe I nearly jumped out of the chair.

But for the pretty nurse, I think I would have fainted. Angeline was a lovely, sweet young lady and we became friends. Even after I left Stevenson we corresponded with each other and I still have all her letters preserved in a metal box.

Angeline Martell and Marjorie Peggy Flynn, student nurses at Dr. Thomas Avary's office.

While living in Birkenfeld, Oregon I bought a sports car and I would travel all the way to Stevenson to visit Angeline and take her for rides to wherever the roads in Skamania County would take us. One of these rides took us to the St. Martin's Hot Springs in Carson where I again met Davitt St. Martin who was a fellow patient while we were in the dispensary at Pullman, Washington recovering from the flu. There

was a cable bridge across the Wind River from the side of St. Martin's Hot Springs but it is not there now. I took a picture of Angeline standing on that bridge. Another student nurse in Dr. Avary's Hospital was a young lady by the name of Peggy Flynn. Both Peggy and Angeline died of tuberculosis while very young. The two girls roomed together and it was alleged that Angeline contacted the disease from Peggy. Angeline died in a Salem, Oregon, Sanitarium about 1922.

Posing with large 10-foot wheeled log rigger are: top: Pete Aalvik, Roy Aalvik; sitting Anna Weinberg, unknown, John Kannikeberg. Front fow: Espen (Ed) Hove, Mrs. Chris Aalvik, Mrs. Kannikeberg Sr., Mrs. Louis Aalvik. ***(another photo identfied Mrs. Leana Aalvik)***

My Dog Fido

My experiences at the sawmill and logging camp at Sepsecan would not be completely told unless I write about my dog, Fido. Someone had given me that pup, and as he got older he lived up to his name; he would pick a fight with any dog twice or three times his size and come out least even. Every one of the crew liked and petted Fido. He was a friend to all except to brother Najib who did not like dogs.

It was not long when I learned that Fido enjoyed chasing birds on the ground, and I began to wonder if he had bird-dog blood in him. This was to be determined on a Sunday when most of the crew were in Stevenson. Brother Najib took his shot gun under his arm and went hunting for pheasants up in the logging camp area. He had been told by the loggers that there were plently of birds where they worked. As Najib made his way up that hill he heard some noise behind him and when looked back there was Fido following him. Thinking that the dog would disturb his hunting the hunter threw some rocks at Fido and the dog retreated. A few minutes later Fido reappeared and again rocks were thrown, and again the dog ran down the hill. Again and again and Fido would not give up. Finally my brother decided it was useless and called Fido to come along.

The dog jumped ahead and excitedly ran from one side of the trail to the other as if trying to flush birds. Dog and hunter kept walking until they reached a lake. Here Fido flushed a flock of pheasants which flew over the lake. Najib let go of several shots and three pheasants fell into the lake which was too deep for the hunter to recover. He looked at Fido anxiously. “Go Fido go. Go get the birds!” — “Good boy, Fido — Go! Go!” It took much more coaxing before Fido began to understand. He jumped into the water to the birds, sniffed at one of them and swam back empty-mouthed. More coaxing, more begging from the hunter, and again the dog jumped into the lake and this time he brought back one bird. “Good boy, Fido — Go! Go!” By this time Fido understood what was expected of him and made two more trips to fetch the other two pheasants. From that day onward Fido became a good pal to my brother and he would be frequently seen petting him. Fido remained at the mill while I went to the army and Najib took good care of him and they went hunting several times together. When the war was over in 1918 I returned to the sawmill and my bookkeeping until the timber was completely logged off. Najib, Chris Aalvik and I looked over other timber tracts near Carson but a good “show” could not be found for a small operation and the partnership was dissolved.

This could have been “it”!

The following incident also occurred while I worked at the Doumitt-Aalvik sawmill at Sepsican and I would not be writing any of it had my “Guardian Angel” not been watching over me. As previously stated I pitched in wherever there was a vacancy and on this occasion the difference in time between my living and sudden death was only a fraction of second.

This time I was the fireman for the mill. I would shovel sawdust into the furnace that furnished steam power for the mill’s machinery. It was also my duty as a fireman to keep the machines well lubricated to prevent the bearings from “freezing” and cause a hot box and a fire. I had shoveled extra sawdust into the furnace to give me enough time to fill the oil drip-cups at the lower level of the mill and return quickly before the fuel in the furnace burned out. (Drip-cups on the mill engines were used before oil pumps were invented). When I arrived at the lower level and found the oil can I began filling the drip cups with oil. It should be explained that in all steam operated engines there is what is known as a flywheel. In the mill the flywheel was very large, approximately eight feet in diameter, and nearly half of it was built in a ground pit somewhat wider than the wheel’s rim. In order to fill the drip-cups for the flywheel’s bearings, the worker had to stand on a 2x12 plank placed parallel to the flywheel.

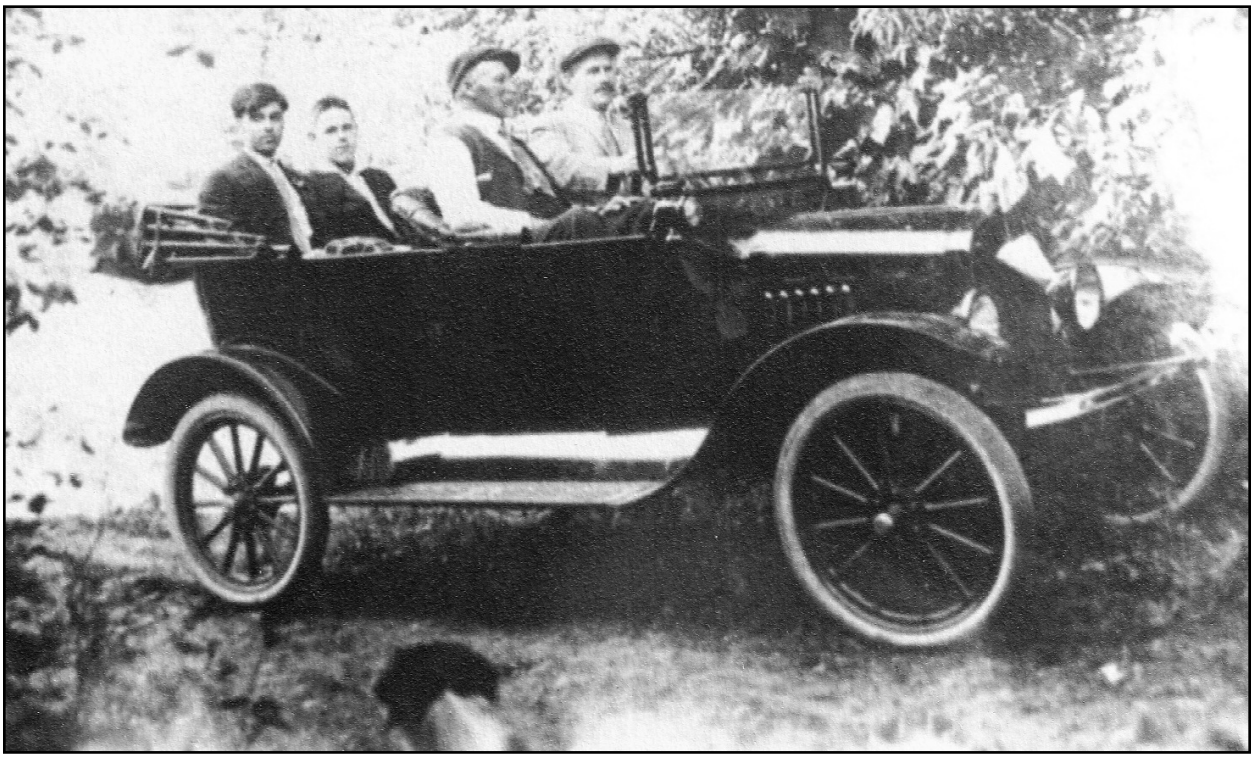
As I stood on the plank and was in the process of reaching over to f ill the oil cup, the plank, being loose, tipped alarmingly under my feet toward the flywheel. Instinctively I threw my head and body backward to counterbalance the tipping plank and barely avoided falling onto the fly wheel and into the pit. The flywheel just brushed my chest! Terrified by this experience, I forgot all about being a fireman and lay on a nearby sawdust mound to gain my composure. Had I fallen into the pit I would have been ground to bits by its spokes. I don’t know how long I lay on that sawdust mound but soon the power for the mill began to diminish and everyone, including brother Najib wondered why. My brother knew I was the fireman for the day. When he did not find me at that station he began to look for me at the lower deck where he knew I would be oiling the machines. When he found me I was still in a daze. He looked at me and exclaimed, “Philip, you’re as grey as a ghost, what’s happened to you?” When I showed him the loose plank he became frightened also. He detailed someone to secure the plank from tipping and all went well for the rest of the day.

But it was an experience I shall never forget and even now — 60 years later — I cringe when I think of it. You may be sure I said a prayer that night thanking God for sparing me from a horrible death.

Fido - Little Niece Violet

When the Doumitt-Aalvik Lumber Company partnership was dissolved and brother Najib and I returned to Stevenson we lived over the store building as usual, Sister Faye kept house for us. We had another sister, Lena, of Rainier, Oregon, who came to visit us, and brought her daughter Violet with her. My little niece became attached to Fido and soon claimed him as her own. When it was time for our visitors to leave, Violet insisted on taking the dog with her.

But I just couldn't part with that mutt. Finally, trying to justify the ownership of the dog, Violet exclaimed: "Fido is mine because my mamma born him!" "But Violet," I said, "You're not a sister to a dog, are you?" "Well, she retorted, "my mamma can do anything. She's bigger than the whole world!" During her stay here my niece had seen Mrs. Dave Wessels, a dwarf no more than three feet tall. So I said, "Violet, there are a lot of mammas bigger than yours." To which Violet exclaimed with a tone of certainty, "Well, she's bigger than Mrs. Wessels!"



Out for a nice ride are Philip Doumitt, left, Conrad Swanson, Espen C. Hove, Pete Swanson, who is driving. c. 1918.

Sister Faye

When my sister Fahima came to America she stayed with us in Stevenson most of the time and she would often be seen, book in hand studying the new language. Our neighbor Katherine Knox, wife of Sheriff Knox would come frequently to the store to visit with my sister. One day they were at the front of the store chatting and laughing together when all of a sudden I saw Mrs. Knox walk out of the store in an apparent huff, slamming the door behind her. I looked at my sister who seemed serious and sullen.

I went to her and asked, "Is Mrs. Knox angry with you, sis?" She answered me with a question."Philip, what mean when I say 'I no b'lieve your?" I translated the sentence to her. "Oh God!" she exclaimed. "Now I know. I mean to say to Mrs. Knox, 'I no blame you'."

Then she hurried to Mrs. Knox's house and apologized to her for the use of the wrong word. Mrs. Knox understood and the two remained friends.

Philip Doumitt's sister Faye Doumitt and Katherine Knox, wife of Skamania County Sheriff Ben Knox

Kenneth Zevelly - Rejection from the Navy

It was about the middle of July, 1917 that Kenneth Zevelly and I ferried to Cascade Locks in his Ford car and drove to Portland for the sole purpose of joining the Navy. On arrival in Portland we went directly to the Navy recruiting office and were ushered to the medical doctor for physical examinations. Kenneth was rejected because of a heart condition. I passed my physical in good shape but flunked on further questioning because I was not a citizen of the United States, but a subject of the Ottoman Empire (Turkey) who ruled Syria and Lebanon at that time.

Turkey was fighting on the side of Germany, in World War I. The recruiting officer told me that the Navy was not taking aliens but that the Army would accept me.

I was so disappointed I decided to go back to the sawmill and wait, in the hope that the law might change and I could still enter the Navy. The law did not change. Time was drawing near when I must choose between conscription or voluntary enlistment into the army. One day while in Stevenson I was contacted by my friend, Sheriff S. L. Knox, who was also a member of the Draft Board. He said to me, "Philip, we have been talking about you at the Draft Board and we have come up with a solution to save you from the battlefield. We need a typist in the Courthouse and if you will work for us we might see our way clear to exempt you from the Service."

Now, I had known that a group of boys from the High School were talking about going to Pullman, Washington to enter the Student's Army Training Corp. (SATC) and I told Mr. Knox that I would be with them. Apparently Mr. Knox did not take me seriously and said, "Think it over, Philip, and I'll see you tomorrow." The next day we met again and Knox repeated the offer he made to me the day before. My answer was, "Mr. Knox, I thank you for the offer, but I have decided that a country which is good enough to live in is worth fighting for. I still have nearly three months before I must report to the Draft Board but I will not be a slacker. I will join the boys who are going to Pullman soon." (The work 'slacker' meant being cowardly in those war days and people looked down on them).

Two weeks later we students arrived at Pullman and immediately went to the recruiting office at the college and offered ourselves to the army's SATC. However, I was surprised to learn that in my case (presumably because I was an alien) I was five weeks too early. I signed some papers and was told that I would be called on a minute's

notice when my contingent arrived. I did not return to Stevenson but applied for work at the Economy Grocery and Market in Pullman. Having had grocery experience I was hired and put to work that same day. In about a week I was offered the managership of the store because the owner had another store to attend to. I told the owner that I signed up for the army and would soon be called and could not accept his offer.

Letter from Sheriff Knox

After I had been in the army about two weeks I received a letter from Mr. S. L. Knox, the Sheriff of Skamania County and member of the Draft Board, which said in part, "Philip I am proud of you. The Draft Board is proud of you and the people of Stevenson know of what you did and we are all proud of you."

The letter put me on "cloud 9" and felt that I could capture Berlin without help. So that when the war was over, and I returned to Stevenson from Pullman, I was greeted by many friends who treated me as if I had subdued the Kaiser all by myself. I was especially welcomed by Mr. Knox, who then confessed to me that the Draft Board's offer to give me a typing job at the courthouse in order to avoid the draft was only a hoax to test my loyalty to the United States.

Sometime later I moved to Rainier, Oregon, and I received my citizenship papers at St. Helens (County seat for Columbia County) without a question asked. T. W. Hunt the County Clerk was going to ask me if I could read and write but when he saw me sign my name, "I won't ask that," he said. I was glad to become a citizen of the United States.

Army Induction - Company C - Influenza

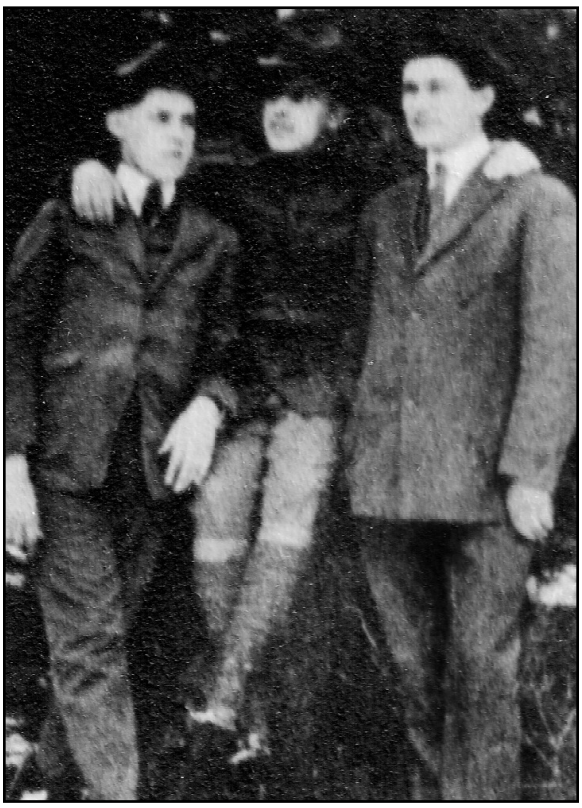
Knowing that I would be in the signal corps which called for knowledge of radio transmitting from the front I purchased a Morse Code set and practiced with it in the evenings at the Fenn family home where I lodged and boarded. When I was finally called for induction into the army I was assigned to Company C. Because I had some knowledge of the Morse Code I was assigned to Class A-1 consisting of only 12 men out of 300. Radio telegraphy was something new in World War I which required some knowledge of electricity and the use and maintenance of the battery.

We were doing pretty well and our teacher was pleased with our progress for three weeks when the influenza struck our camp. Several hundred men contracted the disease. I was one of them. I was taken on a stretcher to the school gymnasium which was turned into an emergency hospital. I found it full to capacity. Doctor White (who incidentally had white hair) soon examined me. He said to his assistant, "This boy won't live 'til morning." The doctor thought that I was unconscious from fever, but I heard him. I said to myself, "Doctor, not only will I live 'til morning, but I am going to outlive you."

I believe that my determination to overcome the flu helped to pull me through. I was in the gym for three days; then I was carried on a stretcher to a truck with others and driven to a Catholic fraternity home operated by nuns. On about the third day I called the nurse in charge and told her that I was feeling very strange. The nurse hurried to me, checked my pulse and rushed to the basement and returned on the run with a nun who carried with her a glass of whiskey and a tiny pill. The nun said, "Take these quickly." I swallowed them followed by some water. The nun took a chair and sat by me for more than an hour, frequently taking my pulse and checking my heartbeat with her ear to my chest. (She had no stethoscope). Soon I felt normal again but the nun returned about every half hour or so to check me again until she was satisfied that I was O. K. There were 18 or 20 men lying on cots in that large room. I learned that two had died. (Several years later I related this experience with the flu to Dr. P. C. Page, M. D. of Birkenfeld, Oregon, who had been an army surgeon. He explained to me that the pill I had taken with the whiskey was a dose of strychnine which stimulated my heart and pulled me through the crisis).

Several days later I was taken to a large building on the campus for convalescence

where I met Davitt St. Martin of Carson, Washington. We roomed together for ten days or more. It was here that I began to experience shooting pain in my eyes accompanied by severe headache. I did not report this to the doctor who came daily to check our throats for fear he would keep me in convalescence for a longer period than otherwise. I was anxious to return to my radio telegraphy class. My failure to report my eye condition to the doctor for the record proved to be a serious mistake which will be discussed later.



Philip Doumitt, center, visits with school buddies Conrad Swanson, left, and Max Chesser, 1918.

When I returned to the barracks I saw that many men were either gargling or spraying their throats with a medication to 'ward off the flu'. By this time I learned that beside the gymnasium all the available space such as hospitals, lodge halls, church basements, etc., were full of sick men. Before the epidemic was brought under control I heard that 46 men had died. One was a young Italian who kept us entertained in the barracks with his opera singing. This boy had had such a great voice, I thought he would be another Caruso.

Room 13 - Headquarters

On the third or fourth day after I had returned to the barracks and my radio telegraphy class, I was handed a note by the sergeant of Company C. which read: "Report to Headquarters - room 13 at eight o'clock the following morning." I asked the Sergeant what this was about and he answered, "I don't know". I suspected that he did know but would not tell me. I did not sleep well that night because I was ill-at-ease about what might be in store for me the following day at Headquarters. I could not think of any misconduct that could result in my having to report to that office. I decided that if I was going to be punished with K. P. (kitchen police) or the like, I could learn to peel potatoes as well as anybody.

So I resigned myself to that fate. The next morning on my way to headquarters I was so deep in worry I failed to salute an officer coming in my direction. When I passed him I heard a loud, gruff "Stop! You did not salute a superior officer!" I apologized, saluted and, after a short lecture about army discipline, he let me go. As I approached the Headquarter's building I looked at my order again. It said room 13. I walked down the hallway and found room 13. Now, should I knock of just walk in?

I decided it was safer to knock. I heard a loud voice boom: "Come in!" As I walked in, a lieutenant jumped from his chair, ran to me with outstretched hand, shook mine and said: "Doumitt, Doumitt (using the French-like pronunciation to my name, Doumitt) I am glad that you could come:" Then added, "Men this is private Doumitt who came to us from Company C to help us with our typing." The men, eight of them, were sitting at a long table with a lot of paper in front of them. The lieutenant named them all. By this time you could have knocked me down with a soft feather. Then he said, "This is your desk, Doumitt, and your typewriter. Get used to it and I'll be back shortly." With that he darted out of the room. I was simply aghast at finding a reception so different from what I had expected. It was like a story with a happy ending.

I sat at that typewriter and began to think. Where had I seen this man before? Where? Where? Then it came to me suddenly: I recognized him as the officer who asked me so many questions such as the date of my entry to the United State, my school studies, etc., as I was being mustered into the army a couple of months before. At the end of the questioning, which lasted about 30 minutes, he opened the bottom drawer of his desk, removed a sheet of paper full of print, handed it to me to sign my name at the bottom of the page. I took the paper and began to read. "Sign right here:" he repeated gruffly.

I answered, "Please, lieutenant, I am trained to read what I sign." "Oh, never

mind," he said, and took the paper from my hands and threw it back into his desk drawer. (This was a part of an I. Q. test which I was not aware of at the time). After that he walked over to the far corner of the large room and talked to what must have been a Colonel, occasionally looking in my direction. Finally the lieutenant returned to me and said: "Alright, alright, Doumitt you will hear from me."

I had no idea what he meant but all this was going through my mind as I practiced on that typewriter. So that's what he had in store for me, Headquarters Company. Then after about 20 minutes, the officer returned to our room, in a hurry — he was always in a hurry — and handed me a hand-written sheet of paper and said, "Doumitt, type this in triplicate and rush it. The Colonel wants it in the early mail to Washington." I took out three sheets, applied two carbon papers and began to type. When I finished I proof-read the typed letter and it came out perfect until I removed carbon paper and lo I had placed the carbon papers backward on the two extra sheets. I was frantic.

My first assignment and I blew it! Hurriedly I repeated the typing of the letter, making certain that the carbon paper was applied properly. I had just completed the proof-reading when the lieutenant rushed back in. "Doumitt, Doumitt is the letter ready?" "Oh, yes," I fibbed, "it's been ready for ten minutes!" "Good, good", he said and rushed back with the letter. After I had been at Headquarters for two weeks or so, I asked my officer how much longer he needed me. "For the duration of the war," he said. "I will put in a formal transfer for you." It turned out to my benefit that an official transfer to Headquarters Company had not yet been made because with close work, the pain in my eyes and head continued with greater severity each day.

I am now reminded of the recruit who had said that the war would not last more three months because "he never held a job any longer than that in his life." How true was his prophesy because that's when the bells of the city of Pullman began a happy toll and the whistles began to blow and there was shouting among the men when it was announced that the Armistice had been signed and the war was over! I then asked my lieutenant to return me to Company C and my request was granted on learning that I was suffering with headache and pain in my eyes. At Company C I found that studies in radio telegraphy had ceased and they were preparing us to go home. But I did not expect what followed: Our Sergeant handed all the men each a sheet of paper asking us to write our name and address on it "in your best handwriting." The next day I was informed that I was selected, with two others to fill out the discharge papers for the entire Company! Although I was in pain, the three of us completed the task in three days.

Comany Headquarters

As each Company was being discharged they held banquets for us which were attended by the big brass and college officials. In honor of the occasion I was asked to play a flute solo with a recruit pianist from Spokane whose name was Ronald (?). I have his picture. The musical we decided on called for a trill and in practice it seemed impossible for me to execute it properly. But in the actual playing of the selection at the banquet I was so nervous my finger moved up and down that key with perfection. Ronald, the pianist, looked up at me in utter surprise. Then come the speeches. One of the speakers made this statement which I remember almost verbatim; "To you, men," he said, "who were in the radio telegraphy! You should thank your lucky stars that the war is over because the German sharpshooters always selected you out. The average life of a radio man in the trenches was three days!" Every member of Company C must have breathed a sigh of relief. I know I did.

The Army Band

I had a flute with me at Pullman and I used to occasionally practice with it at the barracks. Learning of this, the captain of the band asked me to play with them in a special parade. I reported but when I looked at the music, said, "Captain, my name just happens to be Philip but I am not a 'John Philip' (Sousa). This music is too fast for me. I'm not that good." The captain would not be dissuaded and said, "That's O.K. we need you for effect." Then he put a band cap on my head, three sizes too large, and said, "Now you can march!" I marched all right but I faked my way with every step.

On Leaving Stevenson

I left Stevenson in 1919 and tried to complete my high school education in Rainier, Oregon. But my eye and headache problems continued with increasing severity until one morning I woke up to find that one of my eyes was completely blind! A Dr. Welch, M.D., of Rainier recommended that I see an eye specialist immediately for my condition. My uncle John of Cathlamet suggested his eye doctors, Drs. Connell and Karkeet of Portland. Dr. Karkeet was first to examine me. When I told him I was a high school student he said, "I'm afraid that your educational studies are over with — you will never again be able to use your eyes for close work." Dr. Connell concurred and this was the end of my education.

After blood tests were taken — they were negative — the two doctors recommended that I do outdoor work "to toughen my body" so I went to work in the lumber yard of the Menneffee Lumber Co., of Rainier come rain or sunshine. From there I returned to Stevenson and worked for the Lindis sawmill for thirty days, then returned to Rainier. Meanwhile, I kept going from one eye specialist to another hoping that one of them was better trained than the other to give me relief. I visited seven specialists in all but to no avail.

By this time there came an opportunity for me to go into business with a brother-in-law at Birkenfeld, Oregon. I had spent all my savings treating my eyes but was able to borrow $5000.00 from the Bank of Clatskanie for the business venture. All the physicians I had seen blamed the influenza for my condition and I have always suspected that one of them reported me to the American Red Cross for investigation and my medical record in the army.

Later in Birkenfeld a lady who represented the American Red Cross came to me and suggested that I file a claim to the Veteran's Administration for disability. At first I refused to sign the claim, saying that I could have had the flu as a civilian and did not want to bother the government with my health problems. The lady argued with me until she convinced me to sign the claim. Shortly thereafter, I received a letter from the Veterans Administration ordering me to report to a physician at St. Helens, Oregon, who was to diagnose my case and report his findings to them. I answered their letter saying that I had been treated by seven of the best known specialists in Portland who

could do nothing for me.

"What then," I asked, "can an ordinary doctor who practices in a small town do for me?" They came back with a reply, that "the size of a town in which a physician practices is not an indication of his ability, etc. etc." Finally I visited the doctor at St. Helens and after about a month I received another letter from the Veterans Administration admitting that my army record showed a severe case of influenza but I still had to prove that this disease actually caused my eye condition.

Finally in 1926, my brother Najib and I entered the mercantile business in Clatskanie, Oregon, and I transferred my American Legion membership from Rainier to the Louis Larson Post in Clatskanie. The Clatskanie Post Commander, in 1928, learned of my health problem and took up the matter with the American Legion service officer in Portland. The Legion officer arranged an examination for me with the Veterans eye specialist, who by this time was situated at Marquam Hill. Here I was given the most thorough examination I had yet had. This doctor advised me to procure statements from all the eye specialists who had treated me and submit them to the Veterans Administration.

Then he looked at me sternly and said, "Young man, don't spend another penny on your eyes. Only an act of God can help you." Then he asked me if there were any foot trails in the forests around Clatskanie. I told him I did not know of any. "Find them," he said, "and walk as many miles as you can every day. This is the only treatment I can give you." I followed his advice; often my friends would walk with me. I began to feel better physically but my eye condition showed no sign of improvement.

Periodic Visits to My Home Town

I continued my frequent visits to my home town, Stevenson and I am still doing it to the present time. There are some changes, of course, from the old days but I never fail to drive along "Whisky Row"and reminisce the days of my youth. There I imagine seeing the Iman saloon to which I entered only once to shout FIRE! and the men that were there jumped in unison asking, "WHERE?" It was the Dave Wessels home chimney on fire. Two men ran there, threw salt in the stove and put the fire out. I could "see" Mr. Iman "escorting" men out of his saloon when they've had enough.

Philip Doumitt's sister Viiolet Ellis.

I don't recall the names of the owners of the other establishments but I do remember Ed Canoose's Barber Shop where fat, robust Ed would always mix a good joke with a good haircut. It was a shave and a haircut for "six-bits" in those days. After the great fire Ed Canoose moved his barber shop uptown. Over an embankment and just across the railroad track lived the lovable Dave Wessels, his midget wife, and their adopted son Roy, who has provided many pictures of the old days to this museum.

Uptown there was the old and respected E. P. Ash and his general merchandise store, later operated by his son Preston who could not compose a good sentence without interjecting a harmless swear word. I visited Preston at his home after he retired from business. We had a long visit and talked of "those days." The last time I saw Preston was at the Stevenson High School Alumni reunion a couple of years before he passed on.

Pioneer Years - Continued

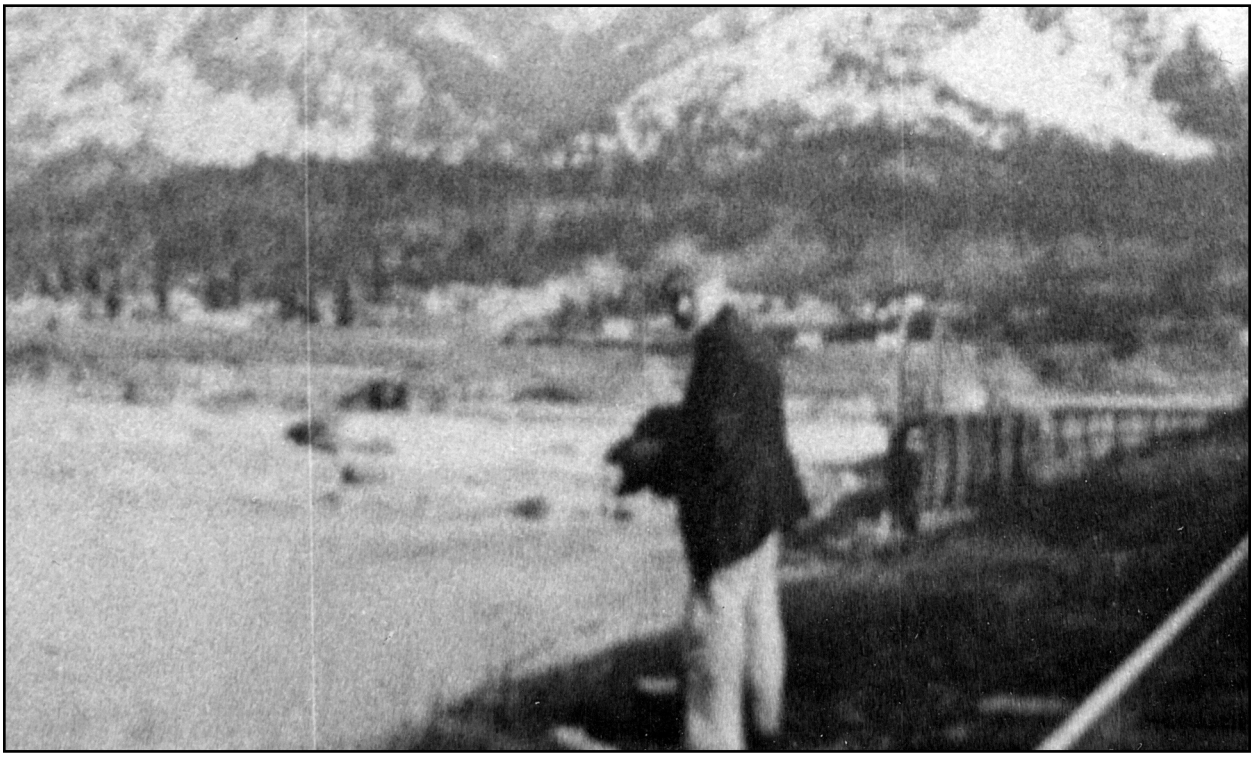
There are other great pioneers not heretofore mentioned: There was A. C. Sly and Raymond Sly and Mr. Swisher. These men seemed to be always coming out of the courthouse. Who could forget the physically powerful John Sweeney, or the ever accommodating John Allinger, who taught me how to chop wood instead of my fingers. Or the easy going Chris Aalvik; or the good and venerable Mr. Christensen whose son, George, became the first president of the Bank of Stevenson; or the congenial Joe Martin (but sometimes not so congenial) when we boys became a little too boisterous at his pool hall; or Mickey (Rudolph) McCafferty, who taught me the fundamentals of pool playing; or the Hazards; the Wrights; the Cosners; the Gillettes; the Attwells; the Swansons or the Lindsays — all respected families of that period.

Then there was the dramatic Mr. Richmond, who founded, for a short time, the newspaper he named The Independent. I worked for Mr. Richmond for about a month. I was just getting interested in newspaper work when my brother recalled me to the store. I remember Mr. John Ginder, who founded The Skamania County Pioneer and continues to this day, and Arthur Ginder, his son, who played the trombone so well in the Stevenson High School orchestra and later became famous in a band of his own in the Los Angeles area; and the beautiful Irene Lindsay, who was my favorite dancing partner on Saturday nights. I lost track of Irene after the family left Stevenson but met her again 45 years later at a lunch counter in Portland where we had a good visit.

Espen C. Hove and "Us Boys"

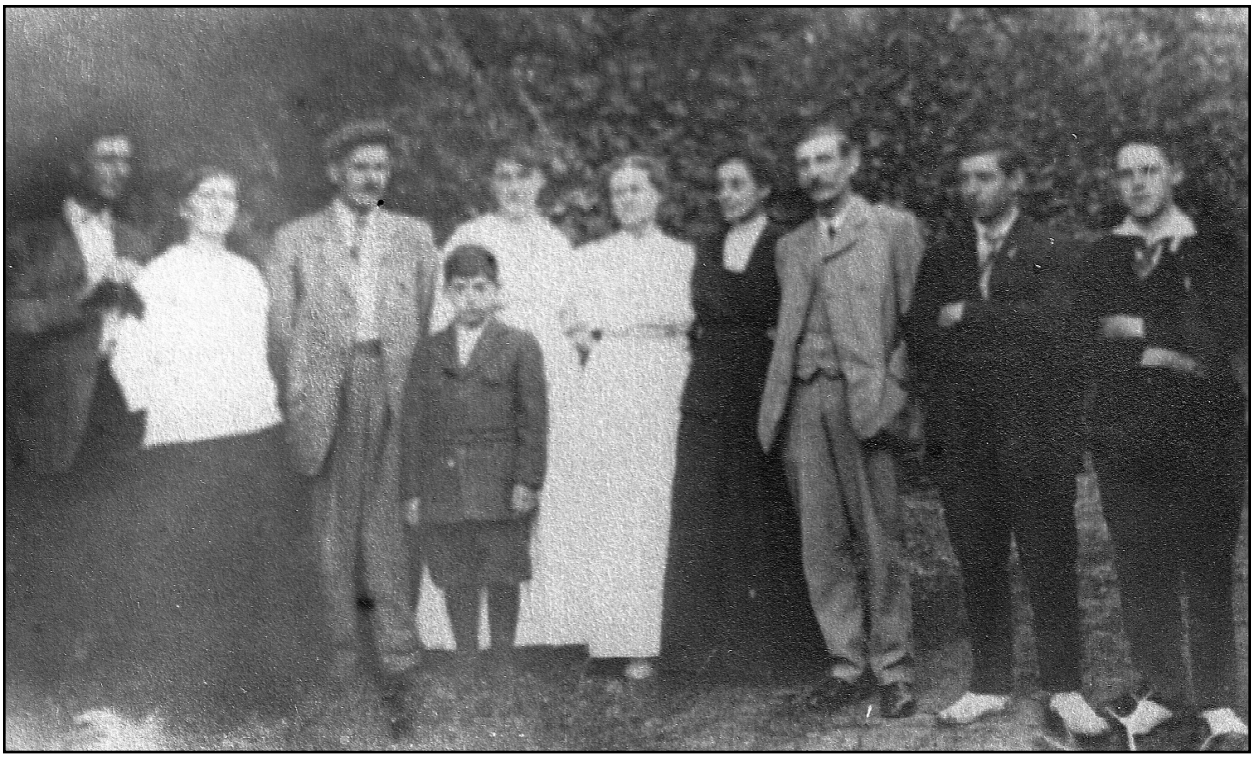
Who could forget the unforgettable Espen C. Hove, my old fellow photographer, who liked boys of good character and I was glad he considered me one of them. Mr. Hove and I used to walk the countryside together and take pictures. (Most of the pictures I have given were taken by either Mr. Hove or me.) However, Espen had an aversion to having a picture taken of him but I would occasionally sneak and take his picture. He would complain when I showed it to him later.

Mr. Hove's most favorite young friends were Harry Harding, Conrad Swanson, Max Chesser and me; and when we paid him a visit he would always treat us to bananas and cream. (He had a cow). Once we boys decided to surprise with a treat of our own, so we rode to his home in our store dray drawn by our horse Prince. We loaded the wagon with a huge watermelon and on arriving quietly at Mr. Hove's home, Harry Harding chose to carry the watermelon into Mr. Hove's home. But Harry forgot there were five steps porch instead of four. He stumbled on the fifth step and down came Harry and the watermelon crashing to the floor! He came up in one piece but the



Epsen (Ed) Hove caught in the act of snapping picture of the esrtwhile rapids formed by the fallen "Bridge of the Gods", according to Indian legend.

watermelon broke into a hundred pieces, (more or less). Mr. Hove heard the commotion on his porch, came out and was surprised at what he saw. We picked the larger pieces and there was enough melon for all of us. We boys used to tease Mr. Hove at his being a millionaire and would often ask him how many banks he was president of? Or that he came to Stevenson "just to hide from his money." He would just grin and say nothing.



From left: Mr. and Mrs. Chesser, Pete Swanson, George Harding, Mrs. Pete Sampson, Mrs. Sampson, Mrs. Harding, Rev. Harding, Harry Harding and Conrad Swanson, c. 1910.

Joe Robinson Vs. Dr. Thomas Carr Avary, M.D.

Then there was the likable Joe Robinson who was the handy man around our store when the work required strong arms. He also worked in our sawmill at Sepsican. In his later years Joe developed a case of dropsy and and complained to me about Dr. Thomas Avary's bad medical practice when the doctor would not prescribe wine for his condition. "If I could have some wine," he said. "I know I would get well." I surmised that Dr. Avary knew better and Joe did not get his wine. He died a few weeks later. Prior to his death Joe told me a story about one of his friends who had an injury on his leg which would not heal with the prescription prescribed by Dr. Avary. Joe suggested a homeopathic remedy for his friend and "the leg healed in no time," according to Joe. Dr. Avary learned about this and one day when he met Joe on the street, said to him: "Joe, why don't you hang up your shingles?"

This is not meant to underrate Dr. Avary's medical reputation because he was a successful and respected man in his profession. After I left Stevenson Dr. Avary moved to Portland where he became the city's Health Physician for a number of years. Some time later Dr. Julius Rehal opened his medical practice in Stevenson. (There were two doctors in Stevenson between Dr. Avary and Rehal.) In earlier days I went to see Dr. Avary about a condition which I was unable to describe so I said, "My heart is always pumping, pumping." "Of course, it has to pump" said Dr. Avary, "or you wouldn't be alive." He diagnosed my condition as plain indigestion. "Stop eating what doesn't agree with you and you'll be all right," he said. He offered no prescription.

Theodore Lindis

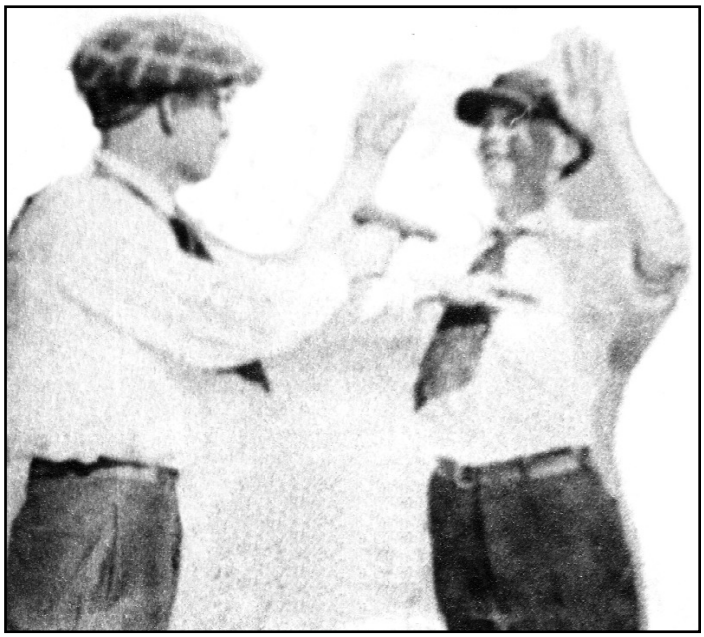
Then there was the respectable and unforgettable Theodore Lindis who, in his early years, operated a small sawmill a short distance northwest of Stevenson and later a much larger one west of the town. Mr. Lindis sold this mill operation and retired in Long Beach, California, where he invested in a section of land in the vicinity of Long Beach on which oil was discovered in great quantity. The royalties made Mr. and Mrs. Lindis very wealthy people. When Mrs. Lindis came to visit me at our Portland shoe store, she confided in me about their daily income from the oil field. I have kept it to myself to this day. It was a fabulous amount. In the original small sawmill that Mr. Lindis began his lumber business in Stevenson, he would hold his cut of lumber until the market price was favorable before he sold it. He bought all of his provisions for the cookhouse and home from our store and we would carry his account for as long six months at a time. Then, when he sold his lumber he would pay us in a lump sum.

Mr. Lindis must have remembered our favor to him when, while he was visiting in Stevenson in late 1949, he read in the Oregonian that the shoe store I had bought and paid for the day before had burned down that night, a total loss. Somehow Mr. Lindis learned that the fire insurance on the stock had not yet been transferred to my name. He came to Portland, looked me up and offered to loan me all the money I wanted to reopen the store with “no strings attached.” I thanked Mr. Lindis for his generous offer but told him that the Oregon Insurance Company of McMinnville had recognized the seller’s insurance coverage and would pay me in full. I never saw Mr. Lindis again but he was a true friend who remembered.

S. L. (Ben) Knox

My friend and neighbor, S. L. Knox, the Sheriff or Assessor of Skamania County during all the years that I lived in Stevenson, deserves additional mention. He never missed stopping at our store every morning on his way to the courthouse, to tell me a story or a light joke. I well remember one: "Philip," he asked one morning. "Do you know how to kill a flea?" I thought that perhaps science had learned how to eliminate fleas by some new chemical spray or the like and I mentioned this possibility. "No," he said. "The best way to kill a flea is to catch it, open its mouth and pour carbolic acid down its throat." "But Mr. Knox," I answered, "you could smash it between your fingers easier than that!" "That's a good way, too," he said and walked away chuckling.

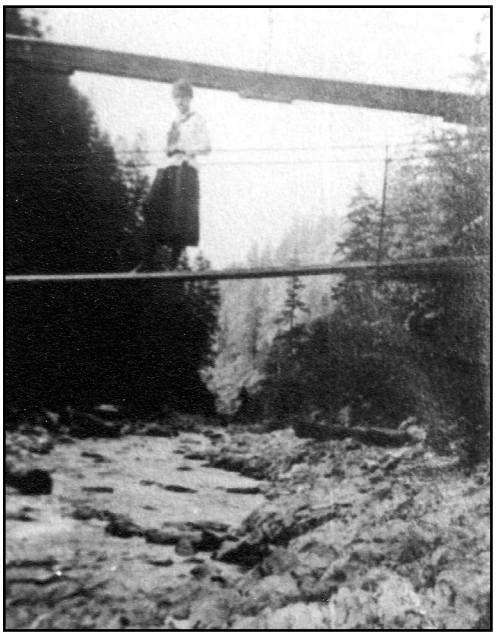
When Mr. Knox became too old for political office, he and Mrs. Knox moved to Portland, leased an apartment house with six or seven units, and rented them for profit. Later I heard that Mr. Knox was stricken with a condition diagnosed as deterioration of the brain. When I heard of this I paid him a visit. His mind was still fairly good and he told me that, as Sheriff of Skamania County, he never once had to pull a gun on anyone during all those years. "I broke a few knuckles on some ruffians", he said, "but that was all." Mrs. Knox lived to a ripe old age and I visited with her twice in Portland when her son Happy was taking care of her. Her apartment was kept so warm I could stand it only a short time. "That's the way mother wants it," Happy said.



"At gunpoint" Alfred Sly, right, gives up his money to Philip Doumitt. "That's how I got my start," Phil says.

On Entertainment

My brother Najib S. Doumitt and I lived very close to each other during the ten years we lived in Stevenson. We would go to dances or frequent a pool hall together but never a saloon. However, we were poor dancers so we took dance lessons given by a short, fat little lady, Miss Willoughby (?) who came to Stevenson from Portland and organized a dancing class. She was a good instructor and the music was furnished (as well as the dances on Saturday nights) by a Mr. Jacobson, consisting of his violin, a pianist and a drummer. Mr. Jacobson, however, was more of a classical musician than a popular one and some dancers complained that he didn't have enough "punch" to his music. Because we were constantly busy at the store, my brother and I had little time dating girls, but it is interesting to note that Najib dated only three girls in his life, all of whom had practically the same first name. There was a Dejma (?), Adlie Attwell, whom he dated briefly, and finally Adell Schwary whom he married on July 4, 1920 in Portland. "N.S" as we lovingly called him, always boasted that the entire United States celebrated his wedding anniversary and declared a holiday "in our honor." He died in 1962. All of his five children were married and at one time lived within "a stone's throw" of his Alameda, California home. His widow still lives in Alameda.



Angeline Martell standing on the cable bridge across Wind River just below at St. Martin's Hot Springs, c 1918.

On their second trip to the top of Beacon Rock Angeline Martell, Paul Nord, Anna Fosse pose for photographer Philip Doumitt. c, 1918.

Lee Fleisch - A Mystery Man

Stevenson was not without its mystery man. Such a man was Lee Fleisch who came from "nowhere" and settled in Stevenson for a few months at a time, then disappeared for parts and reasons unknown. He was about 41 years of age and we surmised that he came here to get away and rest from the humdrum of some large city for a change. He was secretive about himself but he always hung around our store and did any work we asked of him. Lee was always well dressed, clean shaven, polite, friendly and likable. He was a highly educated man and there wasn't a subject that he could not talk about intelligently. He would help me with my school studies, write business letters for us in excellent language and penmanship, wait on customers and would refuse any kind of pay from us. Lee lodged in an uptown hotel and he would never accept an invitation to meals with anyone. Furthermore he was exceptionally honest and we liked him for it. He an excellent window trimmer and we became dependent on him for this work, especially during the Christmas season. At other times when our sales volume decreased on account of the Great Fire that wiped out Whiskey Row, we resorted to making "sales" and advertised lower prices in the Skamania County Pioneer newspaper. To attract greater attention to these ads, Lee carved out the word SALE in large letters on a flat piece of wood which was successfully used by the newspaper and showed up well. It increased our volume. Lee especially liked old lady Iman who made several trips to our store daily to buy groceries. Once he asked Mrs. Imam if he could prepare a meal at her home and she gratefully accepted. Lee bought several young chickens and all the necessary ingredients and cooked what he called an Irish Mulligan in a huge pot and asked Mrs. Iman to invite whomever she wanted. I was present at that meal and it was simply delicious. The thought came to me: "Is there anything that Lee Fleisch can't do?" He seemed to be a master at everything. One time Lee was helping me with a very difficult 8th grade problem in arithmetic that I just could not understand. Finally in exasperation of my dumbness he exclaimed: "Come on, Philip. Wake up and die right. I won't solve it for you!" I was quite irked by this remark but one could not get really angry with Lee Fleisch. He was that kind of guy. I studied on the problem for more than an hour before I came up with the answer. When I showed Lee the formula I used to

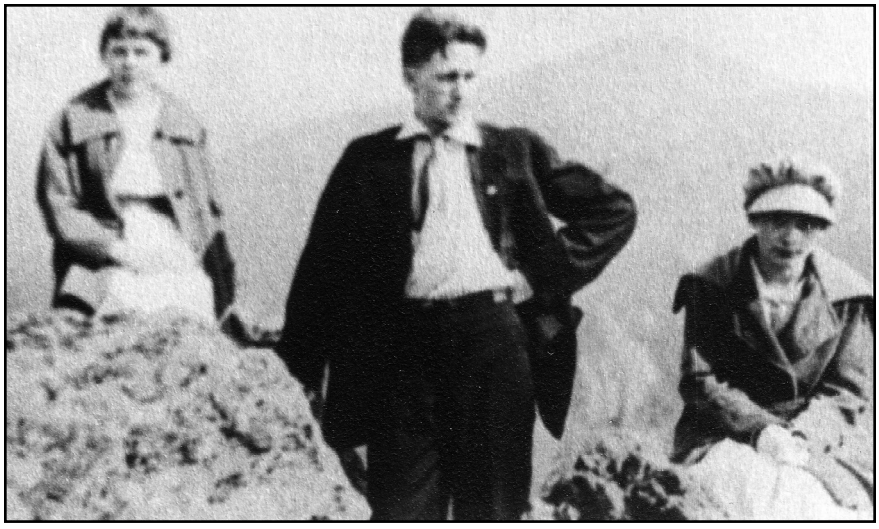
solve the problem he said, “I knew you could do it if you just used your head!”

Lee Fleisch would mysteriously disappear from Stevenson without telling anyone and would just as mysteriously reappear again after a few months, always finding his way back to the our store. He continued doing this for several years until we moved our business to Winlock, Washington. We never saw him again.

“US BOYS!” Boyhood friends pose for this photo. From left: Roy Aalvik, Max Chesser, Paul Nord, Philip Doumitt, Conrad Swanson is sitting. c. 1918.

Trips to Beacon Rock

If my memory is correct, my friend Kenneth Zevelly was the first to own a four-passenger Ford automobile in Stevenson. Then, by Peter Swanson, who was later appointed the Ford agent for Skamania County. I believe it was in 1910 that I saw the first automobile in Stevenson. It was a Reo. However, Mr. R. C. Sly contends that a Buick was the was first car to be brought here. He may well be right since Mr. Sly was an earlier pioneer than I, but I don't recall seeing it. The Reo was often parked in front of our store building and its owner was constantly tinkering with its carburetor. It was out of order most of the time.

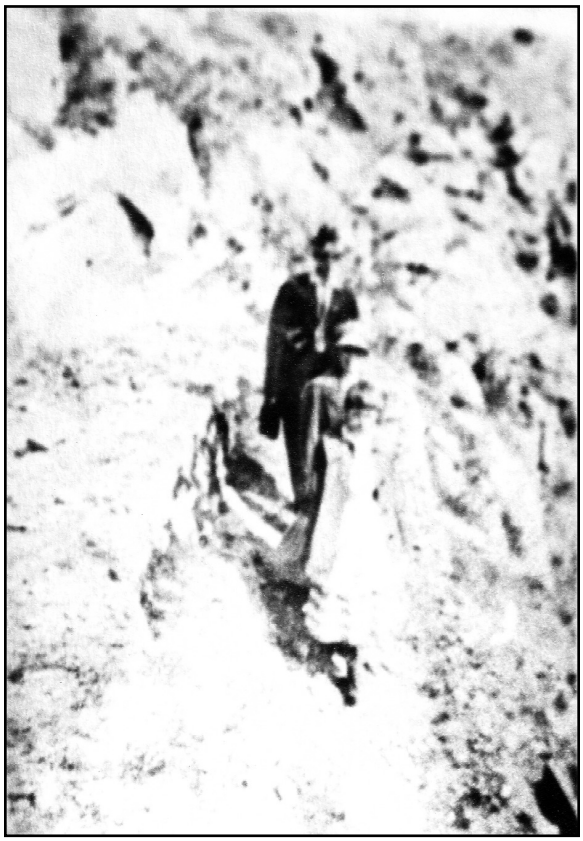


Lillian Olson, Kenneth Zevelly, Monroe girl on Beacon Rock, c. 1918

It was in Kenneth Zevelly's Ford that I made my first trip to Biddle Rock — Beacon Rock's name at that time, about the middle of 1917. Kenneth took his girl friend (I think she was one of the Monroe girls) while I had cute little Lillian Olson as my date. I am also of the opinion that our party was among the first group to climb the rock at a time when the trail was in its early stages of construction near the summit. At a steep walking grade, though not dangerous, we had to pull ourselves on a rope, secured to stanchions. (I took a picture on our return trip which shows the rough, rocky, unfinished trail). The picture I took at the summit seems to be missing from my collection.

The second climb of Biddle Rock this time was with Angeline Martell and Paul Nord, whose companion was Anna Fosse. At the summit there is a boulder on which I etched my initials and date but when I climbed the rock the third time, these were obliterated by someone who engraved his own initials larger and deeper over mine.

During subsequent climbs six or seven in number the trail became longer and steeper. At this writing I am nearing my 80th birthday and the climb I made in 1973 is probably my last. Time has taken its toll of my leg muscles and "like the old grey mare, they ain't what they used to be." It is interesting to note that the rock had several name changes before historians finally settled on "Beacon Rock". Originally when it was first seen by white man it was named "Beacon Rock". Lewis and Clark camped at its base in 1805 and again in *(Ed.: not true)* 1806. They gave it the name "Checheoptin" *(Ed.: not true)* in their journal.



Kenenth Zevelly, Monroe girl, and Lillian Olson, c. 1918

In 1811 a member of the Astpr party renamed it "Insooch Castle" and forever a hundred years it was known as "Castle Rock". In 1915 the property was purchased by Henry J. Biddle and he renamed it "Biddle Rock". For a short time later, however, for a reason I am unable to determine, the name reverted again to "Castle Rock" but because there is a town in the State of Washington by the same name it confused many people and the original name "Beacon Rock" was restored. *(But believe it or not, in 1931 Beacon Rock almost became an Oregon State Park. See Skamania County Heritage article written by Sam H. Boardman, Volume 5, No. 1, June 1976 for a complete account of this story).* It is now a Washington State Park. In my research I find that the 840 foot high monolith is the second largest in the world, exceeded in size only by the Rock of Gibraltar* -- in the British Crown colony situated on the south tip of Spain. It is 1306 feet high, 2 3/4 miles long and 3/4 mile wide.

**Gibraltar — named after the conqueror of Spain, an Arab Moor, Gabal Tariq, or mount of Tariq, about the year 720. The Moors were driven out of Spain after 700 years of occupation.It is hoped that Beacon Rock will remain American forever!*

Indian Legend - The Bridge of the Gods

The Bridge of the Gods, just west of Stevenson, according to Indian Legend "was an earthen bridge which crossed the Columbia River" at a point near where the man-made Bridge of the Gods now stands. Indian Legend further has it that "the mountains quarreled, throwing stone, ashes and fire, demolishing the bridge — its rocks forming the rapids" of the Columbia now covered by Lake Bonneville. Indian Legends are interesting: that there was a natural bridge at that point is quite likely in view of the known rapids but a more likely opinion is that some earthquake brought it down.

Closeup picture of the Cascade Rapids where the "Bridge of the Gods fell," according to Indian legend. Rapids are now covered by the Bonneville dam lake.

America — A New Way of Life

During my early months in America I missed my parents a great deal and, when I dreamed about them in my sleep, I would wake up weeping of loneliness for my mother. From the way she treated me, and her special kindness to me, it appeared that I was her favorite child and I often wondered why she let me leave her. But as time wore on I became used to my new environment though it differed from the free, all play, no responsibility life I led in Lebanon. Often as I became older, I yearned to see my parents again but something always stood in my way and prevented from visiting them. When my parents passed on, the desire to go to Lebanon for a visit left me.

My "new" family here was good to me but occasionally my sister-in-law, Jalilia, would become displeased with something I did and threatened to report me to my brother Charlie. But these turned out to be mere threats and she never once reported me. However, there were times when I wished there was someone to whom I could report her when she made me baby-sit for my nephew, Sammy, when she had a meeting to attend or to visit a friend. Of all days her absence had to be on a Sunday when I was always scheduled to pitch a baseball game with the teen team. To add insult to injury once she washed a lot of dishes and ordered me to dry and put them away. I put them away all right but because I was so angry, I did not dry them! When my sister-in-law returned she learned quickly that the dishes had not been dried. "Your brother will hear of this," she said, but I heard no more about it.

Sometime later (1912) brother Charlie left for a visit to Lebanon, taking his family with him. I loved little Sammy and it was like tearing my heart out to see him leave. I was in Cathlamet when Sammy was born and I composed a short poem in Arabic naming the baby after my father. It was accepted. Charlie and his family were held up in Lebanon during the First World War and he died there. His wife and family returned to the United States in 1926, but Sammy was left behind. He came here several years later.

After Fifty Years

When World War I ended my friend Harry Harding had returned to Stevenson from Pullman and completed his high school education, he was appointed to the Military Academy at West Point in 1918 and, over the years was promoted to the rank of a colonel. During the Second World War, Harry was sent to Greece and aided in the military campaign against the Communists in that country. In 1934 we sold out our mercantile business in Clatskanie and my brother and I moved to Portland where we established an orthopedic type shoe business. I had lost complete track of Harry but, during one of my periodic trips to Stevenson, I learned from Edith McCafferty that the Stevenson High School had, for some time, organized the Alumni Association (which was news to me) and that Harry Harding would attend the 50th anniversary of the Class of 1918.

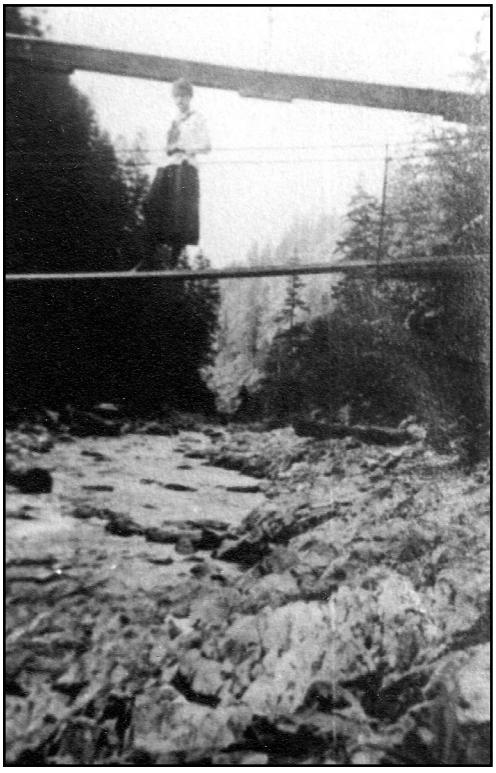
Of course, I had often spoken of Harry to my wife Sarah and I was most desirous of seeing him again. I got Harry's address, also Conrad Swanson's, and I wrote to both of them. When it came to writing to Harry I was not certain that he would remember me after fifty years of separation or what sort of a letter I should write to a Colonel. I sought the advice of my wife. She said to me: "If you and Harry were such good friends in school he would never forget and would answer you by return mail." Sure enough I received Harry's friendly answer immediately advising me that he would be coming to Stevenson and that if I am not at the Alumni banquet he would look me up in Portland. (I learned later that Harry's deceased brother, George, lived in Monmouth, Oregon, and that his brother's widow, Wilma, still lived there.)

On the day of the Alumni banquet, Roy Aalvik, my wife Sarah and I waited at the far corner of the school auditorium for Harry to arrive from the Jack Wright's home. When I saw him coming I was somewhat doubtful as to how I should approach him since he was Colonel and those guys can get very "high browed" at times. As Harry came close I reached out to shake hands with him. Instead he came to me with outstretched arms and we embraced each other like long separated brothers! My wife had a camera in hand and she was supposed to take a picture of us during our meeting but she was so overcome with emotion she forgot about the camera and began to bawl.

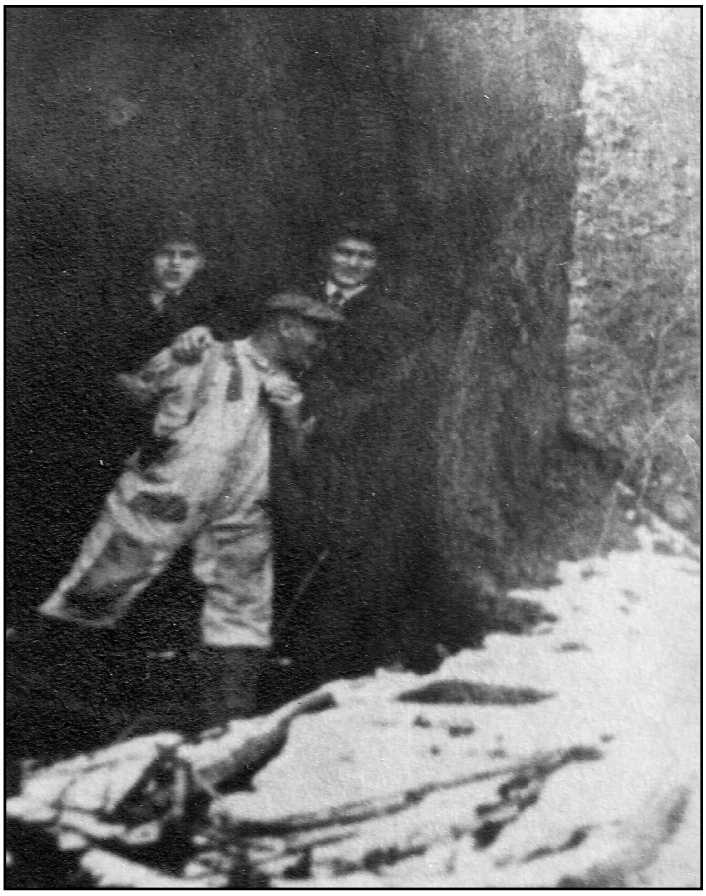
On seeing this Harry went to my wife and said: "Now, now, this is a happy

occasion and not a time to cry." "See," my wife said afterward, "Good friends never forget."

Harry had driven all the way from Atlanta, Georgia, and made an excellent speech at the reunion on behalf of the class of 1918. In that speech Harry mentioned my name and said, "Although Philip did not graduate with us, we have unanimously voted him as an 'honorary member' of the class of '18. This came as a complete surprise to me and I was thrilled by it. I learned that there were only eight members still living from a class of 27 graduates. Six attended the reunion. Among them was Roy Aalvik, whom also I had not seen for fifty years. Roy was with the Oregon State Highway Engineers and is now retired at Salem. Conrad Swanson (the third member of the "Terrible Three") could not attend.



Angeline Martell standing on the cable bridge across Wind River just below the St. Martin's Hot Springs, c 1918.



E. C. Hove, center, is trying to "escape" from friends Conrad Swanson and Max Chesser. 1919.

Fishing Trip At Rock Creek

Just before brother Charlie left for Lebanon he made his last fishing trip from Stevenson. A group of friends, including Joe Robinson, Rudolph (Mickey) McCafferty and I, loaded two horses with provisions and walked several miles up Rock Creek to a cabin where the fishing was supposed to be very *(Ed.: Pete's Cabin?)* good. I thought the journey would never end when finally we reached the cabin. Joe Robinson was chosen to do the cooking. It was agreed that whoever complained on the grub would have to take over the kitchen. Mickey and I had to do the dishes for the privilege of having been taken in the party. At one of the meals one of the men inadvertently complained that the mashed potatoes were too salty but quickly added, "But I like 'em!" Fishing was not as good as expected and the men were very disappointed. Mickey and I gave up on fishing and one day we decided to stay at the cabin. I was reading a book which I wanted to get back to and Mickey laying on a cot looking up at the ceiling. "Gee" he said, "I wished we had a girl with us." "What do we want with girl here?" I asked, to which he answered, "Oh, we could make love to her and she can do the dishes." (Those were not really the words Mickey used but for the sake of propriety they'll have to do). In the evening the men spent most of their time telling stories, mostly fish stories. I remember only one which Joe Robinson told about a friend which he swore was true. It seems that this friend went fishing and had an extremely lucky day. He said that he caught 200 fish that averaged four pounds each. "It was all that I could carry, too," boasted Joe's friend. We all had a good chuckle at this man's great strength and his bad arithmetic! We were a whole week on this trip and we had no more than a bare taste of mountain trout. We packed our horses and returned home — very disappointed fishermen.

Seining Ground - A Swimming Lesson

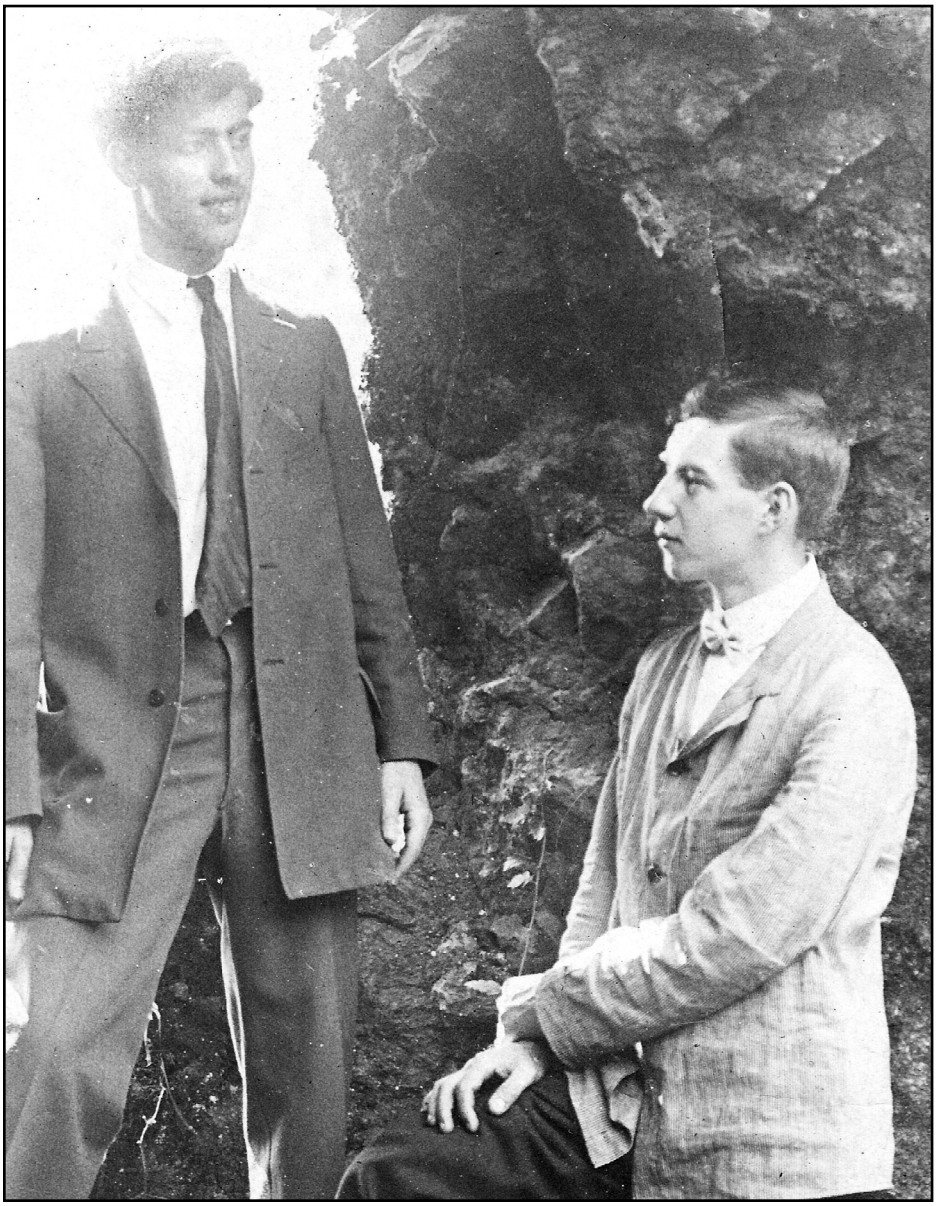
Here I have a fish-related but true story to tell which could have been a disaster for me. The night following the boarding of the ship at Beirut, Lebanon, there was a great storm at sea that nearly sank our ship. I was terribly frightened as the great waves mercilessly tossed our ship in all directions. But I was not nearly as frightened as during the incident that happened to me just across the river from Stevenson. At about that time, (1912) there was a sand island between Oregon and Washington where commercial fishermen caught salmon by the tons each day. Someone had taken me there and I watched with absorbing interest how the fishermen worked their nets and caught fish. Two boats would go far into the river, set their nets in the water in a semi-circle, then return with their catch. Horses were used to pull the nets to shore and there would be from 100 to 200 large salmon in the catch. The fish were gaffed in the head and thrown into a larger boat.

During one of these trips to the river, the ever-mischievous Bill Bevans asked me to ride with him in the boat. I gladly accepted. But after we had gone out about 50 feet into the river Bill asked me, "Philip, can you swim?" I gave him an emphatic "No!" "Well", he said, "You're going to learn now!" Thereupon he grabbed me by the seat of the pants and thrust me headlong into the water! I was frightened to near death and how I managed to get out of that river is still a mystery to me. On getting to shore exhausted, I could hear roars of laughter from both shore and boats.

I learned later that this mischief on me was pre-planned and that two men were ready to jump into the river after in case I wasn't "making it". Bill knew I couldn't swim and wanted to teach me the fast way, but the experience had the opposite effect. I could never learn to swim after that even though I took many lessons to learn. The fear of deep water never left me.

The 50th Anniversary of Radio Broadcasting of Baseball

The 50th anniversary of broadcasting of baseball games was celebrated in 1974. I wanted to visit the Berg boys at Birkenfeld, Oregon and celebrate the occasion with them. I did not go when I learned that the boys had all passed on. All three boys were on the Birkenfeld baseball team where I was their pitcher. A member of this team, it is interesting to note, was still playing baseball past his 60th birthday in one of the Oregon coast towns. His name is Philip Popham!



Lifelong friends Philip Doumitt and Harry Harding in "A Dramatic Pose. c. 1917.

Communication - Then and Now

In this modern age we take the speed of communication, radio, television and the telephone for granted. For comparison, it was in 1924 at the Berg's home at Birkenfeld, Oregon we listened — by means of earphones — to the first radio broadcast of the baseball World Series between the Washington Senators and their opponent. We would applaud when the great Walter Johnson struck out the side or the mighty Goose Goslin hit a home run for the Senators. (Both of these athletes are listed in the Baseball Hall of Fame and are still big names in baseball circles today.)

While this does not apply to my Stevenson story, a related one does: It was in 1915 that a crowd of perhaps thirty persons gathered at the Stevenson railway depot to listen in on an important sports event, the prize fight between the world champion, Jack Johnson, and challenger, Jess Willard.

The telegraph operator just "stole" the communication that was going over the wire to the Portland newspapers and he would read the results round by round between rounds to the excitement of all present. Thus we learned the outcome of this event even before the Portland newspapers printed it. Willard won.

And what about the telephone? From 1909 to 1919 and later it used to take ten to twenty minutes for the "Central" to complete a telephone connection between Stevenson and Cathlamet, Washington a distance of about 110 miles. The reception was so poor both parties had to shout to hear one another. Compare this with the telephone of today: Some time ago I dialed and in about 10 seconds I was talking to Harry Harding in Columbus, Georgia. I wanted him to confirm some of the things I have written in these memoirs and of which he has knowledge. I also asked him for additional pictures for the museum. I aroused Harry from his sleep but he said he enjoyed my call. As between the "good old days" and the new, I think I'll settle for the new!

The Great Fire

Probably the most stirring day of my life at that time was the Great Fire in Stevenson. It was during the year 1914. As previously mentioned, there was a row of business establishments consisting of five saloons, a pool hall, a barber shop, a restaurant, a hotel and other business concessions, all connected frame structures along First Street. The only exception was the Iman saloon which was separated from the others by an empty lot. Our store building was just across Russell street from the Iman saloon. The Stevenson Hotel was about a block away from this row of buildings. During the early morning hours (about 3 A.M.) we heard the frantic ringing of the town fire bell and most of the populace was awakened and came to see that the fire had a good start in the middle of the business section.

There was great excitement and a terrific effort was made to put out the fire in its early stages but no avail. There was good water pressure but the fire was too much for the few untrained fire-fighting volunteers with only one or two hoses to work with. There was talk of dynamiting but I don't recall if it was used or whether there was any available dynamite to use. In an hour or so the entire business section of Whiskey Row, with the exception of the Iman saloon and our store building, were either in embers or in ashes. This being the first fire I had ever seen I was so terrified I shook all over. (No fires in Lebanon — all structures are built of stone or brick).

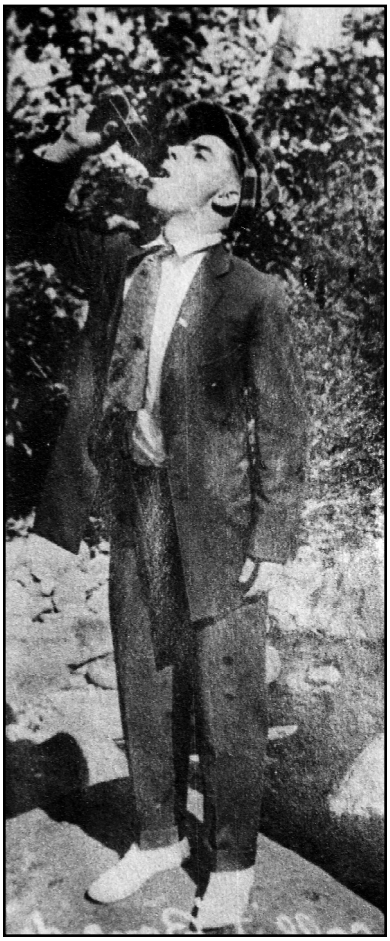
Mr. Iman continued operating his saloon after the fire and most people apparently lost their appetite for liquor and few came to drink. It was now late 1916; the war in Europe had been raging for two years and President Woodrow Wilson was re-elected "because he kept us out of war". His peace efforts failed and the United States declared war on Germany on April 6, 1917, "to save the world for democracy." I don't recall if prohibition followed or it was already in effect in the State of Washington, but the fire doomed Whiskey Row and it became a ghost street. One die-hard saloon keeper rebuilt and tried to revive his business with near-beer but he failed miserably.

(The Stevenson Hotel on the east side of the street had in the meantime burned down, also.) Stevenson for a while was without a pool hall as well as saloons but a recreational establishment (pool hall) was started by Bill Nissen in a frame building

on the east side of Russell street nearest the river, but this was also closed down until Joe Martin opened one on the southeast corner of Russell street and the present highway. It was still going when I left Stevenson in 1919. I don't recall the names of the persons who were on Whiskey Row except Mr. Iman, who operated his saloon, and Ed Canoose, who moved his barber shop uptown after the fire. I knew Ed well because he would always mix a good joke with a good haircut. It was a shave and a haircut for "six-bits" in those days.

"The Boys" Had a Great Sense of Humor

"The Saturday Evening Post", Philip Doumitt finds he needs help after drinking his soda.



Philp Doumitt, a heavy drinker with a lemon soda.

"The Saturday Evening Post.' Alfred Sly shows that he can take it but needed support also.

Gus Melonas - The S.P.&S. Railway

It was the year 1906 that Gus Melonas, a sturdy young man fresh from Greece, came to work on the grading and construction of the S.P.&S. Railroad. He went to Alaska for a brief period in 1907 but returned during the same year to settle in Stevenson and resume work on the completion of the railroad and aid in laying the final rail. It is not known who drove the Golden Spike in ceremonies at Sheridan Point, about three miles west of Stevenson at 11:30 A.M. on March 11, 1908. A ten car excursion train, with C. O. Frykholm at the throttle of engine 494, left Vancouver at 9:00 that morning with almost 500 residents of Vancouver and Portland. Gaily decorated and carrying a banner "Hurrah for the North Bank", the special train proceeded eastward with the Third Cavalry Band from Vancouver providing a concert at each stop. Roadmaster M. F. Kinkaid recorded the historic event with a closing note that "the prominent citizens drew the Golden Spike after the ceremony and took it with them."**

Gus Melonas worked on S.P.&S, railroad construction. Gus first started in 1906. Gus' grandson, Gust Melonas, is now in charge of the S.P.&S. railroad headquartered in Vancouver.

After the ceremony of the Golden Spike, the next stop was Stevenson where Charles S. Doumitt presented the "Empire Builder," James Jerome Hill (better known as Jim Hill), with a large wooden key to the city of Stevenson. In his brief speech, Charlie Doumitt thanked Mr. Hill for being instrumental in the building of the railroad. Mr. Hill followed with a speech saying, "While this piece of wood in itself does not mean much, the sentiment behind it means a great deal to me!" He thanked the people of Stevenson for being so interested in so important a project "for our mutual benefit."

By 1911 the Section House crew in Stevenson was a permanent establishment with about 16 or 18 men, to maintain the road, and Gus Melonas was appointed their new foreman. He bought all of their provisions from our store and I learned to know Gus very well. He was strong of constitution but weak in letter writing and he selected

me to aid him in his correspondence with his superintendent in Vancouver. I was not very learned in letter writing myself at that time but was able to compose sentences that were fairly well understood. Once Gus received a letter from his boss praising him on the excellent way he was maintaining that part of the road allotted to him. Gus was very pleased.

Most of the men in the Section House crew were Greeks and I would visit them occasionally. One of them had a clarinet and he was forever playing it, but the music was all "Greek" to me. However, the musician knew one American selection which he played for me time and time again because I liked it. It was called, "Over the Waves."

Gus Melonas continued working for the railroad on a contractual basis during the Second World War. Years later he was stricken with an incurable malady which affected his ability to walk. When I came from Portland to see him he wept when he saw me. Gus died about three months later. His funeral service at the Greek Orthodox Church in Portland was crowded to capacity. There must have been 500 at that service. I was among those who came from all over the Northwest to pay their respects. That's how much Gus Melonas was endeared by the people who knew him. His widow at this writing still resides in Stevenson.

***At the present rate of $144.00 per ounce they did pretty well if they held the Golden Spike to the present time.*

Old photo of Stevenson showing S.P.&S. Railroad station, and a building identified as a hotel. c. 1915.

Athletics

In athletics at that time, especially in basketball, Stevenson was at its best. We won the championship of the Mid-Columbia River League in the year 1915 and the pennant is still displayed in the Stevenson High School. However, the team that gave us the most competition in those days had always been Goldendale. We were late in organizing baseball and football. It was Goldendale who beat us in football in our first game by an agonizing score of 64 to 0!. I turned out for football, but in a practice game, a good tackle nearly broke my nose, (I saw stars) and I quickly decided this game was not for me. This was before nose guards or head gear was used.

In earlier days Stevenson was not without its teen-age baseball team consisting of Alfred Sly, Max Chesser, Roy Aalvik, Arthur Foster, Shock Hughy and Fred Pugh Clay Hazard (there were others) and myself. I was the only pitcher. We would play the Carson team or the Cascade Indians or a team made up of other members of the school. We always walked to Carson or Cascades. In one game with the Indians at Cascades we started playing on a warm April day and finished it in a snow flurry. On our way back we were picked up by the railroad section gang and we helped them pump their railroad pump cars to Stevenson. This was as much fun as beating the Indians.

On another occasion we walked to Carson and played a double header. I pitched both games. During the second game the score was tied and a tense moment prevailed. Not a sound was heard from the crowd of about 150 people. At my next pitch, first baseman Arthur Foster shouted to the top of his voice, “Jayzuz Christ, look at that ball drop!” which brought a roar of laughter from the spectators. The people of Carson treated us to lunch between games.

After pitching two games and walking home that Sunday I arrived home very hungry. I opened the store and went to the shelf for a box of Pondora Creams and ate, all 15 cents worth of it. (I became sick that night with a “tummy ache”). Alfred Sly was the self-appointed captain of our team and we gladly let him have it because he knew the game better than any of us. He also taught us the players the trick of the hidden ball (not seen these days) and occasionally the runner would be tagged as he led off base.

Stevenson Baseball Club Carries On

Even with the absence of its organizer, the Stevenson Baseball Club carried on. A baseball game in those days was the main attraction to the townspeople, and there was always great excitement and rooting for the home team to win. Mr. A. C. Sly was nearly always the umpire at home games. He stood behind the pitcher to call balls and strikes. I can still hear him addressing the fans and naming the player at bat and the one on deck. Mr. Sly was a respected umpire and there was little or no complaint about his calls. He made the decisions on all bases, but occasionally there would be disputes about the rules of the game and the rule book would be consulted. I don't recall if there was an admission charge at the gate (there was no gate), but I remember that they passed the hat around for the expenses of the team. The generous ones gave as much as 50 cents, others as little as a dime. I was one of the two-bits contributors.

Alfred Sly, smile after easy baseball win for Stevenson. Baseball field was was next to what is now the Stevenson Boat Dock.

At one time, perhaps during 1915 or '16 the team chartered the steamer Tahoma for a game at The Dalles. I was among the fans who numbered about a hundred; most of them, including the members of the team, were drinking hard liquor. I knew the Captain of the Tahoma very well because we did much of the shipping for our store on his boat. He spotted me in the crowd and beckoned me to his cabin. When I entered I saw a half-filled bottle of whiskey on a table near him which suggested that the captain had had a few nips. After a short visit with him he asked me to do him a favor. He said, "See that point up river? Take this wheel and steer the boat in that general direction. I want to see some of the boys on the lower deck and I'll be back shortly. The

Alfred Sly, jokingly, saying "Goodby Cruel World," committing suicide in the Columbia after the loss of a baseball game.

captain's request frightened me and I did some quick thinking. There was a hundred people on board! I knew the captain had been drinking. What if he forgets to come back? What can I do if I saw a large log floating toward the boat or approach a sand bar? I had heard of such accidents that nearly wrecked boats on the upper Columbia.

All this went through my mind in a flash then I said suddenly, "No! No! captain, I can't do that," and I just walked away. The captain came to our store a couple of weeks later and we talked about the incident and he said: "You did the right thing, Philip. I could have lost my navigation license had you consented to take the wheel." Anyway, the captain docked the Tahoma at The Dalles in good shape, but our team lost the game by a lop-sided score. Our boys couldn't see the ball let alone hit it. The only members of the team that I still recall by name are Cecil Sly, Percy Attwell, John and Frank Wachter.

"Bazukos"

After we arrived in Stevenson and had a good, long visit, talking about our relatives in Lebanon, brother Charlie took us downstairs to his store. As it happened Charlie had sponsored a wrestling match which took place the night before our arrival. One of the participant's name was "Bazukos," so that when we appeared in the store the following day someone dubbed the name of Bazukos on us. Brother Najib became "big Bazukos" and I, "little Bazukos." The name carried with me into school in Stevenson and it was some years before I could shake it off. So that when the athletic coach started calling me "Bazook" it was too much and I told him off. After the coach began calling me by my real name, others followed and "Bazukos" was no more.

Conrad Swanson, Max Chesser, Philip Doumitt, c. 1918

Freshman Class and Red Bluff (Red Cliff)

Oscar M. Serely, our Freshman class teacher in High School, taught us, among other subjects, a study known as Physiography — a name the author had given his text book for Physical Geography, which included a study in geology that deals with the history of the earth and the changes it has undergone. It is one thing to read about these actual changes from books but Mr. Serely thought it was more educational to see these actual changes on formation that took place during the billions of years since the earth was formed.

West of Stevenson there is a very high hill known as Red Bluff, also known as Red Cliff, and its varied-colored formation can be seen from miles around. Mr. Serely decided that we can learn much by taking the class there and studying it first-hand. We took the day off from classes and walked several miles to Red Bluff. Arriving at the bottom of the hill we still had to climb a soft, sandy hillside which contained loose rock. We all started up that hillside at about the same time but some were faster climbers than others and they caused some loose rocks to fall on the slower climbers below. One class member, Esther Sholine, was hit by one of the falling rocks and became hysterical with fear. She retreated hurriedly to the bottom shouting, "I won't go. I won't go up there!" Seeing this Mr. Serely ordered Clay Hazard to stay with her but quickly decided there should be a chaperone and asked me to stay with the two of them. The rest of the class was on that hill for more than two hours.

Returning to the school we were excused for the day to write an essay on what we have seen and studied and our teacher promised to read the best article to the class. Two days later Mr. Serely began reading this essay and I was almost stunned when I recognized my own story. Although I had not seen the actual geology at Red Bluff I merely used my imagination together with what I learned from the text book for the writing of the essay. I received an "A" grade on the subject although I felt a little guilty — that I had somehow cheated the class. This is the last time I had surpassed the brilliant Harry Harding during all the years we were classmates.

High School

In High School I first chose a general course of education which required the study of one foreign language. I entered the German class for two days and decided that German was not for me. Then I signed up for the Latin class which I liked much better "because it was the basic language for English," and it would help me when and if I should go to the medical school. I did very well in Latin and my grades were so good I was not required to take the mid-term examination. The other subjects were English, Physical Geography and Algebra. At mid-terms there was still a question in my mind about Latin and Algebra so I had a long talk with superintendent Detwiller and asked his permission to drop Algebra and take the Commercial course. He agreed that in my case it was the proper thing to do.

The Commercial course consisted of Bookkeeping, Gregg Shorthand, typing etc. There were other students who wanted this course which began under Oscar M. Serely at mid-term with 12 students. Apparently, the course suited me well. I was the first student in the class to win the Remington Award given by the Remington Typewriter Company for attaining certain speed and accuracy in a given period of study. In bookkeeping I surprised even myself when I came up with the only perfect Trial Balance on our first examination. My fondness for typing in school prompted me to practice at home so I persuaded brother Najib to trade in our old Oliver typewriter (which had different keyboard) for a Remington. I sat at that typewriter during every spare moment in the store and at one time I was clocked at 142 words per minute with the sentence "Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their party." Typing the same sentence over and over again for the entire minute.

I won't swear to it but I think that the world's record at that time was 146 words per minute for unfamiliar copy. Having a typewriter at home helped me win the Remington Award mentioned above. Within three months we were doing so well in the Commercial course, Mr. Serely was pleased with our progress. Mr. Serely was an excellent teacher in all the subjects he taught.

In English, however he stumbled badly on the meaning of certain words used in the Chaucer and Shakespearian classics and it was always Harry Harding who came to his aid. We all marveled at Harry's knowledge of old English and we suspected that either his father helped him or that these words were still in use in England from

whence Harry came. Harry also had a certain knack for composing simple poetry and I once asked him to write a poem about Hubert Chesser — an upper class student who was sweet on our classmate, Faye. Without hesitation Harry looked up at the ceiling and said slowly:

"Hubert and Faye, were walking one day
Along the tree-line Way.
Said she to he, do you love me, dear?
Said he, like a bottle of beer!"

Angeline Martell, Mrs. Thomas Avary, Marjorie (Peggy) Flynn. Angeline and Marjorie worked at Dr. Thomas Avary's Hospital in Stevenson. Tragically, the two girls contracted tuberculosis and died at an early age.

The Quest of Knowledge - More About "Yours Truly"

In Lebanon we had to learn our lessons by sheer memory. In Stevenson, however, school studies were much less difficult because we did little or no word-for-word memorizing. I can truthfully say that I never had a teacher that I didn't like and I worked hard to please them with good grades. (I think that my father gave me this incentive with praises he gave me while in Lebanon). I loved to study and to learn and when I wasn't working in our Stevenson store I would be found at home reading a book with a dictionary by my side (pool and billiard playing excepted, of course. I would look up every word that I didn't understand. I wanted to master the English language but fell far short of my goal because my eyes failed me as will hereinafter be related. In Lebanon, besides studying Arabic I had four years of French, the last two years of which were under the Jesuits Priests in a boarding school of considerable renown at that time. In this school I was awarded four prizes for excellence, two prizes for each year. Time marches on and for lack of practice I have mostly forgotten these languages and though I still can read them I understand little of what I read. In Lebanon we also studied the reading of Syriac — a form of Aramaic — the language that Christ spoke, but I have completely forgotten this language.

Here in Stevenson, while still in the sixth grade, I read my first love story. It was entitled "Beverly of Graustark," by George Barr McCutheon, and with the use of the dictionary I understood ALL of what was said. Words of love were interesting even in that early age, 13-14. Thereafter, I read many other stories which helped me to build up a vocabulary.

When I wasn't learning something from books I kept myself busy trying to create something in the way of invention. (I have four patents registered in my name at the U. S. Patent Office). My first serious effort at invention came to me when we bought our new Remington Typewriter for the store in Stevenson. I had a habit of hitting two keys with one finger when I tried faster than my normal speed and the two keys would jam. I built an attachment to the typewriter that prevented such mistakes. It was about 80% successful, the problem being that it slowed the typing. I could not find just the right material for my need at the time and I abandoned the invention.

My Friend Conrad

In 1970, I visited with some of my relations in Granada Hills, California, and from there I phoned my friend Conrad Swanson, who lived at Burbank. He invited me to his home for dinner where I met his good wife Ellen. We had an interesting visit and reminisced about our years in Stevenson. On writing about Conrad I am reminded of his father, Peter Swanson, who either owned or operated the Direct Current electric plant that furnished Stevenson with electricity. The plant was situated on the west side of Stevenson near Rock Creek. Water was flumed down to furnish the power that ran the generators of the plant. Conrad was still a lad of grammar school age. He was trained by his father to attend to the electric plant while Mr. Swanson was absent.

I used to visit "Connie" frequently and for entertainment we played a two-player baseball game called "One-Old-Cat." However, the game occasionally would be interrupted when the electric plant machinery slowed down and made an unusual sound that called for Conrad's attention. He would rush inside and make some adjustment and the machines would soon sound normal again. The game would then be resumed. There was a home plate and first base. If the batter hit the ball he would have to run to first base and back to home plate. If the pitcher fielded the ball and threw it ahead of the runner to home plate, the runner was out. The two players would then change places.

On one occasion I was the pitcher and there was argument between Conrad and I whether the pitch I had made was a "ball" or a "strike". I claimed it was a strike. He claimed it was a ball. At this point I boasted that I could always pin-point my pitches and knew for certain when the pitch was a ball or a strike. While the argument was going on, a squirrel came from somewhere, climbed up a stump about 40 feet away, settled on top and started chewing on something. Conrad shouted at me, "If you're so accurate with your pitches see if you can hit that squirrel," pointing to the stump. I hauled off and threw the ball and hit the squirrel squarely. We both rushed to the aid of the little creature, only to watch it die! Our remorse ended the game of "one-old-cat" for that day. To the present time when I see a squirrel I never fail to think of that incident that happened so very long ago, 1912!

Church Services in Stevenson

Although I was not of their religious faiths, I frequently attended the Congregational and Methodist Services on Sundays at the invitation of my friends, Harry Harding and Conrad Swanson. Reverend Harding, Harry's father, was a good Methodist preacher and I used to enjoy his sermons. Here I learned to sing their church songs, among them "Onward Christian Soldiers." I especially remember the solo sung at the Methodist Church by the pretty Eva Sawyer, the daughter of the Hardware Store proprietor.

Roy Wessels submitted his mother's historic collections of pictures to the Steenson museum.

Harry Harding, the brilliant student of the Stevenson schools (1909 through 1919), who later became a U. S. Army Colonel during the Second World War.

On Leaving Lebanon: Arrival in Stevenson

I immigrated to the United States from the Republic of Lebanon, (then a part of Syria and the land of Kahlil Bibran, famous poet and artist, 1883-1932. *The Prophet* [1923] is among his literary works which is translated into many languages.) at a period (1909) when was there no quota restrictions from the country and immigrants were welcomed to the United States. I was nearly twelve-years of age. Brother Najib (pronounced Najeeb), five years my senior, cousin Winnie, about my age, and I took thirty days to complete the journey from Beirut to Stevenson. On our way we stopped at Marsailles and Paris, France, where we did considerable shopping so that when we arrived at New York's Ellis Island for clearance we were informed that we were short of money for our final destination. The authorities at Ellis Island threatened to send us back to Lebanon if we did not reveal to them the truth of our destination. We had maintained that we were going to New York and we thought that Stevenson was just a suburb of that city.

Finally, the Lebanese interpreter asked us if we had any relatives in America. Brother Najib broke down and told him that we had a brother Charlie Doumitt in Stevenson, Washington; a brother-in-law, Mike Ellis, in Rainier, Oregon; and uncles in Cathlamet and Kelso, Washington. For unknown reasons the travel agent in Beirut had instructed us to state that our destination was New York and not to mention Stevenson. We were supposed to inquire at New York where Stevenson was and just take a street car or a taxi to that suburb. The Lebanese interpreter, learning that we were bound for the state of Washington, explained that we still had 3,000 miles to go and not enough money to take us there. He was relieved when we gave him the names of our relatives.

The authorities at Ellis Island chose to telegraph our brother in-law, Mike Ellis, at Rainier, Oregon, who learning of our plight immediately telegraphed a reply: "Draw a sight draft on me for all the money you need with no limit." The interpreter read and translated the meaning of the telegraph to us, saying, "You have relatives on the West Coast with excellent commercial rating. You will have the cost of your tickets plus expense money to Stevenson, Washington." The next day we ferried across the bay to New York City where an official from Ellis Island bought our tickets, gave brother Najib

additional papers and sent us on the train westward. It took us four days and four nights to reach Spokane, Washington where we mere met by a friend, Louie McKiel, who was expecting his brother, Saad, to be with us, but he was routed through Canada and we arrived in Spokane ahead of him. Our friend, Louie, insisted that we stay with him for a day, so he arranged a stopover with railroad officials. We stayed in great style at the Davenport hotel, a welcomed rest from the long, shaky ride of the train.

When we arrived at the hotel, Louie, who knew brother Charlie well, asked if we would like to talk to him? We were told that we still had 400 miles to travel and we thought he was just kidding us, not knowing what a telephone was. Our friend placed the call and soon we were talking to our brother Charlie Doumitt in Stevenson. Even after the telephone conversation and a few emotional tears, we were still suspicious that our brother was somewhere in that hotel and talked to us through a tube or some form of trickery.

We left Spokane in the evening of the following day and arrived in Stevenson at about 7 A. M. the following morning. It was unbelievable, as we passed so many miles of flat land and mountains, that we could have sent our voices so far, but sure enough our brother was there to meet us at the depot. His voice was the same voice that talked to us on the telephone. It was a short walk, across the railroad track, to Charlie's home and up a long stairway where we met our sister-in-law, Jalilia, and a breakfast of bacon, eggs and canned pineapple awaited us. It was our first taste of bacon and pineapple because neither of these were known to us in Lebanon.

Why Was I Sent to America?

Why was I sent to America at such an early age? It seems that my father had a far reaching plan for me which I heard discussed by my parents before leaving Lebanon. They sent me here for an American education, to study medicine and to return to Beirut and set us a medical practice in that city. It appears that there was an American physician in Beirut, a Doctor Abraham, who was highly regarded by my father and he thought that, if America produced such learned men as Doctor Abraham, that's where he wanted his son to be educated. My father's vision for me did not materialize, however, because after I had attended only 2½ years at the Stevenson High School my education came to an unexpected end and the reason for it will be discussed later. After World War I ended, and the overseas mail was restored, the first letter that came from my father inquired whether or not I was carrying on his educational wishes for me. My reply was a great disappointment to him.

From left: Angeline Martell, Mrs. Thomas Avary and Marjorie (Peggy) Lynn.

Train Ride Experience From New York

Now permit me to digress and tell of our interesting experiences on the train from New York. When the tickets were purchased for us by the Ellis Island official he gave brother Najib other "papers". Najib put these papers in the outer pocket of his suit coat, easily visible to the other passengers of the train as they walked by. We slept on the train seats overnight while these "papers" were thus exposed. Thinking they were a part of our tickets, we gave them no special attention. The next day a man who sat across the aisle from us kept looking at inquiringly, and we noticed it. He saw what was in my brother's pocket and he knew from our conversation that we were foreigners. Finally the man came to my brother and tried to talk to him in English. The reply was, "English no. Arabic, French yes." Then the man explained in gestures that the "papers" my brother was carrying and visible in his out-suit pocket were valuable. "This" he said, pointing to the same kind of paper in his own wallet, "is money, and it should be hidden from sight," pointing to his own back pants pocket. Then he made a motion with his forefinger across his neck to demonstrate that one might cut your throat to rob you of it. We caught on. We tried to thank him but did not know how to say it, so brother Najib spoke it in French, "Merci beaucoup!" The man understood and taught us how to say "thank you" in English. Our benefactor kept looking at us and smiled and we smiled back — a universal language that needed no translation. A little while later the train concessionaire came by and we bought sandwiches, oranges, apples and bananas from him.

We were pleased with the sandwiches but were disappointed with the taste of the fruit which did not compare with the fragrance and flavor of the fruit we knew in Lebanon. (It is said that the climate and the soil of that country made the difference.) Brother Najib paid for our purchase by giving the salesman one of the "papers" he took from his pocket. We thought this was the end of the transaction when the salesman muttered a few words which we did not understand and left. In about thirty minutes the salesman returned and handed my brother two or three other papers, a gold piece and some silver. We were astounded at the value of these bills and brother Najib remarked "Those Americans are honest people!" I should explain that in Lebanon there was no paper money in those days. It was always gold or silver used as exchange for goods bought and sold.

Training In Store Work

At the store my brothers unanimously appointed me the store's janitor, also doing simple work such as straightening the merchandise on the display counters and filling the grocery shelves. There certain delicate foods that I especially liked and ate in Lebanon and I wondered if some of those packages contained that food. I think I opened every package that looked promising but to my disappointment they were not. The cereal Grape Nuts, I thought, was sure to be one of them as I shook the package but again I was disappointed so I gave up. When I learned a little of language I began to wait on customers and I found that I was more interested in selling men's footwear than any other item. We had a line of shoes made by the W. L. Douglas Company and the prices were deeply stamped on the soles. They sold for $2.00, $2.50 and $3.00 per pair. I became most successful in selling the higher price line and brother Charlie complimented me on it because "there was a dollar's profit on each sale."

This had an encouraging effect on me. But there were discouraging aspects too, because it took me a little while to learn to give the proper change to a customer. I had a habit of giving change from the cash register for a twenty-dollar gold piece as if it was valued at $25.00. My customers were honest and always corrected my mistakes. But I became careful after several mistakes.

It also became my job to keep the large stove in the store, as well as the kitchen stove upstairs well supplied with wood. The fuel for the kitchen stove had to be carried up thirty or more steps and it became quite a chore. John Allinger was our wood chopper who labored at it three or four hours at a time. When the wood ran out and John wasn't around I did the wood chopping myself which was new to me but John taught me the safe way to chop wood instead of my fingers. Times may have changed but some of those Stevenson winters in those days were extremely cold especially when the east wind blew. Here again it became my duty — I wonder how they had ever got along without me — to start the kitchen stove fire in the morning.

Having lived in temperate Lebanon, I resented getting up from a warm bed to start that fire, so I put my inventive mind to work and did something about it. I devised a system of starting the fire in the kitchen stove automatically with the help of an alarm clock. I removed the back on an Ingersol clock to expose it movement and placed a match in such a way as to strike it a certain set time in the morning. To the match I attached a cotton string previously soaked in kerosene and when the match ignited, the

fire would travel up the string (from the floor) to the previously prepared paper, kindling and wood — a part of which was also soaked with coal oil — and lo! we'd all get up to a warm kitchen.

During the most severe winters it would be so cold, even inside the house, the kitchen sink drain would freeze when we had to run the water all night to keep the outdoor pipes from freezing. When the sink drain froze the running water would overflow the sink and damage the merchandise in the store below. Here again "little Edison" came to the rescue. This time I fastened another Ingersol clock mechanism (they were only a dollar in those days) to a wooden board in the bottom of the sink and when the drain froze, the rising water would float the board and trip the clock alarm and we were awakened to thaw out the frozen drain with a torch. Twice one winter the "system" saved the store from water damage.

Making Friends with American Boys

From the beginning in Cathlamet, Washington (Cathlamet mentioned later) as in Stevenson I made friends easily with American boys. Mixing with them helped me to learn their ways and their language. However, I made a poor start in Stevenson with one neighbor boy. We quarreled over a rope which both of us saw simultaneously on a sidewalk and we both claimed it. I can't recall who won the rope but Arthur Foster and I later became good friends.

A similar incident occurred when Alfred Sly, William Robinau and I were walking together to the baseball park to play catch. All seemed amicable when suddenly one of the boys said to me, "We're going to beat you up!" I asked them the meaning of "beat up" and soon found out when they charged at me with clenched fists. I backed up quickly and exclaimed in broken English: "That no fair, two for one!" and added, "Americans good people, they no fight two for one!" Then I said, "But I "wrassle" one at time!" The boys looked at each other for a moment and decided to call the whole thing off. We then proceeded to the Ball Park, which was just below our store building near the river, and played catch for two hours without further incident.

I never saw much of young Robinau after that but Alfred Sly and I became old friends during all my years in Stevenson. I was living in Clatskanie, Oregon, when I heard of Alfred's untimely death. I wrote a letter of condolence to his father, A. C. Sly. I received a reply by return mail in which Mr. Sly thanked me for remembering Alfred. It was a beautiful letter about friendship which would come only from a man like "A. C." I lost that letter and would give anything to find it.

School - Cathlamet - Stevenson

I look at my school years in Stevenson as the happiest time of my youth. I loved school work. To study and to learn was most fascinating to me and I actually felt a little morbid when vacation time came. During vacation when I wasn't working at the store and wasn't "learning" to play pool or billiards after store hours, I would be at home reading a book with a dictionary by my side looking up every word I did not understand. I remember the first love story I read. It was "*Beverly of Graustark*" by George Barr McCutheon. The reading of books helped me build up a vocabulary.

My first two months of school in the U. S., however, were at Cathlamet, Washington, where I lived with my uncle John Doumit (spelled with a single "t") and his family, during the last two months of 1909. My first grade teacher worked hard to teach the new language. She would take a pencil, for instance, place it on her desk and say, "The pencil is on the table," and other sentences which I would repeat after her. My first Christmas in the United States was spent in Cathlamet where I had my first encounter with Santa Claus, (Santa was not known in Lebanon but we celebrated a similar event on New Year's day).

Also of seeing Halley's Comet. There was much talk and excitement about this heavenly body but I understood very little of it until I read all about it in an Arabic Newspaper - the Alhoda - that came to my uncle weekly from New York. It related, as so many Americans believed, that Halley's Comet could destroy the earth if it came in contact with it. It was an interesting, awesome sight but the comet finally disappeared and left us all unharmed. It was said that Halley's Comet would appear again in 1985 and I wondered then as I wonder now if I shall ever see it again. I am presently nearing my 80th year and with a little added "luck" I could make it. (**The latest press report says that Halley's Comet will reappear in 1986. Oh, well, what's another year?)*

At the end of the school term in Cathlamet I pleaded with my uncle to send me back to Stevenson where I could be with my brothers. My uncle finally consented and I began my education here in January of 1910.I had had three years of French in Lebanon and this also helped me to learn the language more quickly. The teachers here advanced me quite fast and I soon found myself in the sixth grade. I can't recall for certain whether it was Mrs. Lindsay or Mrs. Bevans was our teacher in this grade. The class consisted of twenty or more pupils and among those I learned to know best was Harry Harding, also an immigrant (from England), Conrad Swanson, Max Chesser, Roy

Aalvik, Irene Bevans and Bessie Ash.

As a student Harry Harding (his real name was Henry but we did not know it) always excelled in class studies, followed by either Conrad Swanson or myself. For this reason we nick-named ourselves "the terrible three," but I had to study hard to keep up with them. During near the end of the term I became ill with ptomaine poisoning from eating canned crab. Dr. Avary kept me out school for a whole month. When I returned to school it was time for the sixth grade final examinations. I passed all the subjects but flunked in history with a grade of only 40. My teacher realized my problem but gave me a passing grade on condition that I would study my history during vacation. I kept my promise.

The seventh grade was uneventful, except that the class complained to the school superintendent that our teacher was not learned enough in the subjects we were studying. She was soon replaced by one more competent. In the eighth grade, which was moved to the then new high school building, I was thrilled when I passed the state examination in all the subjects at mid-term. No other student in a class of 26 pupils tried it because they considered the tests too difficult. To date, I think that this was the only time I ever got the best of Harry Harding.

A Miss Billsby was our 8th grade teacher for about three months. We never knew why she was replaced because we all liked her and did well under her instruction. Miss Billsby was at her best at teaching us from a text book, I think, entitled "Health and Hygiene" — a very low key medical study touching on the physiology and the anatomy of our body. One day Miss Billsby brought a piece of raw meat to the class and poured some pepsin on the meat and we watched with amazement how the acid "digested" it. We learned that pepsin is one of the acids that was secreted by the stomach which digested certain foods we ate. We weren't quite ready to join the A. M. A. but we learned a lot about the important organs of our body and their function.

After Miss Billsby left — and this was a big surprise to us — Mr. A. C. Sly took over on a temporary basis until a permanent teacher could be secured. Mr. Sly turned out to be an excellent teacher and we enjoyed the way he used to dramatize the reading of certain poems he liked. He had memorized the poems entitled *"The Psalm of Life." "God Give Us Men A Time Like This Demands."* Another poem contained these words: "Don't be like dumb driven cattle; Be a hero in the strife." I could still quote every word of these poems until a few years ago.

Then came professor Wm. H. Alwin to complete the eighth grade year. We liked

him as much as we did Mr. Sly. Mr. Alwin would always start the morning class with a twenty minute singing period from books borrowed from the High School library. He had a wonderful voice with great volume. At my request he read us my favorite book, "The Prizoner of Zenda," by Anthony Hope in place of the singing periods. Occasionally we would detect a slight blush on Mr. Alwin's face when read a love scene. At other times we would discuss special topics such as the possibility of war with Japan. I remember well the remark he made after this discussion: "Don't worry about a war with Japan. The Portland Police Department would take care of them." Some thirty years later, as you know, it took a little more "doing" to defeat the Japanese war machine in World War II.

I had another thrill in grade school when I was rewarded the second prize in penmanship in the Skamania County Fair held at Stevenson. Margaret (Peggy) Flynn won the first prize "because she used the Palmer Method taught in school." I used the fancy type of penmanship. In the spelling contest at the Fair I was among the last four to go down from about thirty contestants.

My First Picture

After I had been in Stevenson only a couple of months a professional photographer came from Portland and set up a tent on the street near our store building for people who came to have their pictures taken. I was attracted to the tent to see what was going on. Two men I knew real well, Bill Nissen and Bill Christenson, entered the tent and I followed — just being nosey. Upon seeing me at the entrance the men beckoned me in but I hesitated. One of them pulled me in, then both grabbed me by the legs and lifted me above their heads for the picture. The photographer covered his head and all but the front of the camera with a black cloth and caused a flash to be made on a rod he held over his head. It was the first picture that was ever taken of me. Thus I have been between two "Bills" ever since.

Later the photographer was asked to came to our house where my second and third pictures were taken: one with the family consisting of brother Charlie, my sister-in-law Jalilia and brother Najib. Another with brother Najib and myself. (Copies of these pictures are submitted to the Museum). Note the fancy watch chain I am wearing in the old-fashioned way. It attaches to a gold watch which uncle John gave me at Cathlamet. I still have that watch but not the original chain.

A Bicycle and a Chew of Tobacco

My first sight of a bicycle was when I saw a man riding one in a little village in Lebanon where I had lived and I was extremely fascinated by its uniqueness. There was a rubber tire on one of wheels, but on the other the man had wound two strands of heavy rope around the rim which made riding bumpy. But it was surprising to me, as a very young boy, how the rider was able to balance himself without falling to one side or the other. So when I came to the United States and saw several boys riding bicycles in Stevenson, I wanted one. My first experience of learning to ride a bicycle, however, was Clatskanie, Oregon where I was visiting friends, the McKiels. The main street of Clatskanie on that hot summer day, was covered with fine, light brown dust one to two inches deep. I was dressed in my best clothes when I spied Betty McKiel's girl's bicycle and I started off with it. It was quite a struggle but I was determined to learn. On one occasion I fell down in that deep dust and was covered with it from head to feet. When Betty saw me she was horrified at the sight of my clothing. With a brush she worked on me for at least a half hour until I looked respectable again. In a couple of days I was able to ride from one end of the street to the other without falling.

When I returned to Stevenson the idea of owning a bicycle was uppermost in my mind and I talked to brother Najib about it. The conversation took place before a Cascade Indian customer who happened to be in the store. "I have a bicycle for sale," he said, "and you can have it for $3.00." We thought the price was fair enough and we told him we'd take it. In a few days the Indian brought the bicycle to the store. This, of course, was a boy's bicycle and I had to learn riding it all over again. But I had no idea that this bicycle was built before brakes were invented and I had to use the reverse pressure of my legs to stop it.

Once or twice while riding down the Russell Street hill I had to ditch when I heard the train's whistle not far off. It took me some time to save $10.00 to buy another used bicycle equipped with coaster brakes but had well worn tires. I sent to Portland for two new tires and I was very pleased with my bicycle. One day I parked it on the sidewalk in front of the post office and after I returned with my stamps purchase one of the tires was slashed with a knife. I accused the one and only boy in Stevenson who did not like me but said nothing to him. I thought to myself that someday I will know for sure and I will confront him. About a week later it came about in this way: I was on the sidewalk and this boy came toward me pushing a wheel-barrow and which ever

way I tried to avoid him he turned the wheel-barrow until he hit me with it. Then we tangled. Over and over we turned each other on that sidewalk until we had an audience of some 12 or 15 persons.

Finally I pinned him down under me and could have choked him if I wanted to. Several persons shouted at me: "Hit him, Philip. Hit him!" but I just couldn't do it. But while I had him down I asked him: "You slashed my bicycle tire, didn't you?" He would not answer. After that incident Scott Hazard began to respect me and we became good friends. I am certain that this was the only fight I ever had during the ten years I lived in Stevenson.

The best bicycle riding area in Stevenson at that time was along the railroad track where the ground was built from fine cinders which made riding smooth. Most of the bicycle riders congregated here and we would ride back and forth along the track and around the depot. Young as he was (it was either Victor or Harold Aalvik) — one of the riders, used to chew plug tobacco and offered me a "chaw." I refused. "Come on Philip, take a little. It will put hair on your chest." I told him I wasn't interested in having hair on my chest, but he kept insisting until I consented and took a small bite of the tobacco. It wasn't long until I had a funny feeling in my stomach and the ground under me began to sway in all directions. I headed for home on the bicycle (I felt as if I was riding a camel) and went straight to bed. My brother Najib saw me ride in but when I did not report to the store as usual he wondered why. When he found me in bed he said, "What's the matter, Philip, you look sick." I told him I was all right. "You've been smoking, haven't you? What was it, cigarettes or a cigar?" I replied in the negative to both questions. "Chewing tobacco, then?" I refused to answer. In about an hour I felt nearly normal again and went to the store. I might say that this was the first and last "chaw" of tobacco I ever had.

It cured me forever! The other bicycle riders never knew why I had left them so suddenly and I never told them.

A Baseball Game Between The Old Timers

The only time (1910) I saw brother Charlie Doumitt in a baseball game was when the old timers chose two teams from among themselves to play each other. To make himself more amusing to the spectators Charlie had rolled up one of his trousers to his knee when he came to bat. The fans roared with laughter when the pitcher threw a very high ball, and Charlie jumped for it and let it touch his hand as it whizzed by. He claimed he was hit by the pitcher. The umpire agreed and Charlie walked to first base.

The Episode of the Drawer

This is another amusing story told about Charlie Doumitt. He was busy with a customer in the store when a lady went to him and whispered, “Charlie, I am in a hurry and I want to look at some drawers for my husband.” The men’s undergarments were placed on a high shelf but Charlie could not leave his customer to wait on the lady so he called to his clerk, Bill. “Hey Bill,” he shouted. “Take your drawers down and show the lady what you’ve got.” Everyone in the store snickered. (This happened before I came to Stevenson but I was told about it by an “eyewitness” and that in a few days it was the “talk” of the town).

Fourth of July Celebrations

Russell Street was great for sleigh riding during snowy winters — and they were usually snowy. We would start at the top of the hill just below the old grade school and slide down across the railroad track and beyond, as far as we could go toward the river, being always careful not to run into a freight or passenger train.

But the big events were always held on "Whiskey Row" because that's where the 4th of July celebrations took place. Big crowds and the band, always congregated on front of our store building. I can still "see" a float decked with red, white and blue bunting, and American flags all around it, drawn by horses and moving slowly past the cheering crowd. During one of these celebrations I can "see" the beautiful Merle Lindsay sitting proudly in that float as the Goddess of Liberty, waving to the people, while Mr. S. L. Knox, the Sheriff of Skamania County, rode a sprightly horse ahead of the float, and the band marching behind. It was an exciting display of patriotism the like of which I had never witnessed in Lebanon.

But the horses, though good looking, did not compare to the beauty of the Arabian horses in our country. The men would remove their hats in respect to the flag as the float went by, but I recognize myself in one of those early pictures with a cap remaining on my head. When I left Lebanon (then a part of Syria) it was still under the yoke of the Turkish Empire. We were not too proud of their flag and did not salute it. I was yet to learn that the American flag and the celebration of the Fourth of July were reminders that America is the "land of the free". Patriotism and pride showed on the faces of the people as the procession went by.

Charlie Doumitt - Early Pioneer and Merchant

Charlie Doumitt was among the early Pioneers of Stevenson who came here while the S. P. & S. Railroad was in its early stages of survey and construction. His general merchandise store was located on the west end of First and across Russell Street in a long line of buildings attached to each other, housing five saloons and other related business establishments. First Street in those days was better known as "Whiskey Row". It was the busiest street in the county, patronized mostly by loggers, railroad men, lumbermen, fishermen and townspeople who enjoyed an occasional drink (or two). The saloons were nearly always full of men and brother Charlie made it a habit of entering these saloons almost daily and inviting all the men to have a drink with him.

He was not a drinker himself so he instructed the bartenders to serve him tea from a whiskey bottle and no one was the wiser. If they did know they did not care so long as they got their drink on Charlie. As a result of these visits to all the saloons, Charlie was very popular with the men and won their friendship, as well as their trade — to the consternation of E. P. Ash, who also had a general store uptown but could not break into Charlie's lucrative business.

Charlie Doumitt also loved sports such as hunting, fishing and baseball. Although he knew little about the game he organized the first Baseball Club in Stevenson and contributed heavily to its maintenance. On one occasion the team was short a player and the captain of the team put him at center field. Soon a hard hit fly ball went his way and Charlie reached for it. He missed catching the ball and it hit him squarely on his chest nearly knocking him out. This happened before I came to Stevenson but I was told about it by one of the players. The incident ended Charlie's short baseball career as a player, but he continued giving financial aid to the Club. In 1912 Charlie left for Lebanon for a visit and died there as previously mentioned.

FINIS

"Times change for all of us. The roaring flood of youth goes by, and the stream of life sinks to a quiet flow." -- Anthony Hope.

There are other incidents that may have been told from the ten years I lived in Stevenson but this much should suffice. You might wonder how I can remember all that I have said here since they transpired so long ago. My answer is that I still live these memories and recall them frequently. As this is written, all the familiar faces I had known in Stevenson have left the town or have since passed on. Only Mickey McCafferty and his wife Edith and Mrs. Gus Melonas are the only living persons whom I knew of the old days still reside here. But I still visit my little home town several times a year, just to breathe its air and walk its streets and try to recall of what used to be.

I commend the Skamania County Historical Society for having one of the largest collections of rosaries in the world — 3,566 in all — and for funding and maintaining this museum for posterity.

I sincerely hope that those who read these memoirs will find them accurate in every detail. Should a discrepancy appear I would be glad to hear from any reader who might offer a correction or comment.

My kindest regards to the people of Stevenson and Skamania County and all who visit this museum.

Sincerely,
Philip S. Doumitt,
5710 N. E. Prescott St.
Portland, Oregon. 97218

Philip S. Doumitt
5710 N.E. Prescott Street
Portland, Oregon 97218

Area Code: 503
Telephone: 281-9894

MY MEMOIRS

The staff of the Skamania County Historical Society has asked me to relate some of my experiences and recollections during the ten year period between 1909 and 1919 when I lived in Stevenson. However, some of the stories date back to the year 1905 as told to me by earlier pioneers and form a part of these narratives. Some also came to me from research of history books dealing with that period and earlier.

The reader will please bear in mind that the events reported herein do not necessarily follow each other in time sequence. However, they are factual in every detail to the best that memory serves me.

Philip S. Doumitt

October 25, 1977

Mr. Philip S. Doumitt
5710 NE Prescott Street
Portland, Oregon 97218

Dear Mr. Doumitt,

Your manuscript of recollections of the time you lived in Stevenson has give us all pleasure. We are deeply grateful for the accomplishment. It adds an important facet to the record of Skamania County. The charm of your literary style and the flow of the narrative stand as testament of the excellent scholar who was named one of the TERRIBLE THREE IN THE SIXTH GRADE!

We will print it in our Quarterly with your permission. It will have a delighted reception from our readers, we can assure you. How we wish others would follow your example and write their memories of experience that enrich us all in the reading.

Zeroxed copies will be made of your memoirs this week. We will send you a copy if you like, but we hope you will permit us to keep the original manuscript in our Museum files.

Thank you for your generous contribution to our county's historical record.

Philip S. Doumitt
5710 N.E. Prescott Street
Portland, Oregon 97218

Area Code: 503
Telephone: 281-9894

October 31, 1977

Mrs. Emory Strong
Skamania Route - Box 363
Stevenson, Washington

Dear Mrs. Strong,

Thank you for your complimentary letter of October 25th, referring to my memoirs. I don't really deserve the praise that you gave me, but I'll take it. A little praise doesn't hurt anyone and I am very pleased by what you said.

Not only was I pleased by your letter but I am thrilled and "flabbergasted" that you took time to read my memoirs and have accepted them for publication in the annals of the Skamania County Historical Society's history of people and events. Mrs. Doumitt and I would like to meet you at the earliest possible time. I have other matters I would like to discuss with you: whether or not you propose to publish the memoirs in their entirety simply reprint only certain episodes that you consider having visitor interest at the Museum? Also, I have some pictures of that period that I would like to include within the pages of the memoirs. But the reproduction of these pictures present a problem. I have a Cannon camera that would take close range objects very nicely but I have a limited knowledge in taking pictures with a sophisticated camera, but I have a friend who could help me. Additional copies may be made from the negatives. The reasoning is that I would like to retain the original photos which I often show to friends who visit me.

Of course, you have my permission to keep the original manuscript if you think it is good enough in its present form. I thought it needed some re-editing. You may place my memoirs for sale at the Museum and any profit that may be derived from such sale shall go to the benefit of the Museum and the Historical Society. However, I would like to reserve the right to publish them myself and send copies to relatives and friends who are not likely to visit the Museum. Many of these friends and relatives know that I had been writing the memoirs and are anxiously waiting to read them. (I had been writing the memoirs for about eight months and the word gets around). I sent a copy of the episode relating to Mrs. Monzingo to my sister-in-law in Alameda, California in order to substantiate what I have written in that story. She called me by telephone and rather excitedly told me that it is factual in every respect and it is written exactly as it was told to her by my late brother Najib, who, as you will remember, was at the scene and played an important part in the incident. A copy of the memoirs was sent to my son in Salem (he heads the office of the Inheritance Tax Department of the State of Oregon) and asked him to review it for its interest value. He gave me the courage to submit it to you because I was somewhat hesitant to do so. I was not certain it was the kind of subject matter that would be acceptable to the Society.

I may be considered selfish but I have always held to the hope that my name shall

somehow be recorded long after I have been forgotten. (I have been boastful in this respect because I hold three U. S. patents and two are pending and my name appears in the patent books and these books are found in every large library in the world over where records of patents are maintained.) So you can believe that I was thrilled when you accepted my memoirs for publication.

Yesterday I received the Zeroxed copy that you sent me relating to Khalil Gibran for which I thank you, and I read it very carefully. Some of it I already knew and much that I did not know. It is very interesting and I shall get the complete book from the library. However, here's a note for your amusement: It is stated in that copy that Gibran was a very poor speller. When he came to live in the United States he mis-spelled HIS OWN NAME!!. "Khalil", the "a" before the "h", whereas the standard spelling as translated from the Arabic to the English is "h" before the "a". I also note with interest that the author of The Life of Gibran the name is spelled **both ways.** However, "Khalil" is the generally accepted spelling of that ordinary Lebanese name. (Though Gibran may have been a poor speller, for my part I wished I had a small fraction of his literary mind for composing beautiful language!) My wife visited Gibran's gave in 1956 and 1962 when she journeyed to Lebanon during those years. A comment: It's a crime that Lebanon almost destroyed itself by civil strife and war, and you may be interested to know that it was not a religious war as the press has it. It was actually a rebellion of the common people against the privileged class, similar to the French Revolution which is so aptly told in the story of Scaramouche by Rafael Sabatini. Recent reports state that Lebanon is rising from the ashes and will soon recover to its former self. But I am not of that opinion since direct letters from relatives in Lebanon tell a different story.

The day I left my transcript with Hulda Howell, I discovered the Special Bicentennial-Historical Edition of Skamania County issued by the Pioneer. I was surprised that such an edition existed. I purchased a copy and find it very interesting, though it contained articles about people who lived in Stevenson before my time. The Pioneer did an excellent job of this edition and it's a compliment to that paper. Now, I know it was Mrs. Lindsay who was my sixth grade teacher and not "a Mrs. Bevans" as I guessed in my memoirs. I read that she's still alive in Vancouver, Washington. I might pay her a visit.

I am writing this letter on Halloween eve, and I am reminded of one special Halloween night in Stevenson when a group of men(?) hoisted a dray-wagon and placed it atop the roof of the Fire Department building! It was most amusing to see that wagon there the next morning. I can't recall if any of the rascals ever admitted doing that unusual stunt. It was also a common practice to upset the outhouses in those days to the amusement of only the tricksters. I am glad that Halloween mischief is mostly done away with. The only mischief that was done to us was the smearing of our store windows with candle wax and I had to spend hours to remove it. Tricks or treat by the small fry is a welcome change from the past.

Please excuse the mistakes in this letter. This typewriter doesn't know how to think for me anymore. I guess its getting old, too. I'll be 80 in another 20 days. Please drop me a card telling me when and where I may see you. Again thank you and with kindest regards, I am

Very sincerely
Philip Doumitt

Philip S. Doumitt
5710 N.E. Prescott Street
Portland, Oregon 97218

Area Code: 503
Telephone: 281-9894

November 28, 1977

Dear Mrs. Strong,

Sorry that Mrs. Doumitt and I had to delay a meeting with you as you suggested in your card received November 7th. A number of unexpected happenings held up our visit.

We want to see you at the earliest possible time and will call you before coming. I don't have your telephone number but will get it from the information operator. I will call you from Portland.

Thanks for asking us to your home. We are most anxious to meet you.

Kindest regards,
Philip Doumitt

P.S.: I am doing some experimenting with my camera for pictures I want to submit with my memoirs. I don't know what the results will be but here's hoping.

Philip S. Doumitt
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Dec, 5, 1977

Dear Mrs. Strong,

I wrote you recently about my reasoning for the civil war in Lebanon. Here's an additional story on it by an eyewitness who just returned from that country. I thought that you might find it interesting.

Mrs. Doumitt and I were present at the rededication of the Saint Sharbel Church in Portland Sunday. Mrs. D. is presently on Christmas shopping spree. When that's over I'll call you and try to arrange a visit with you as soon as possible.

Regards,
Philip Doumitt

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January 14, 1978

Dear Mrs. Ruth Strong,
Stevenson, Washington

Dear Mrs. Strong,

By this time you may be wondering why all the silence from me since my last letter to you. First, it was the holidays and the weather. Secondly, and most importantly, it has been the pictures that I would like to include within the pages of the memoirs. There are ten pages of them and the printers want from $8.95 to $20.00 for duplicating each page with the half-tone process. This is, of course, prohibitive. With the help of photographic friends and my camera I made fairly good negatives from which enlargements were made. They are not excellent but are usable. I am assuming the entire cost of these enlargements as a gift to the Society, which is a little over $20.00.

Don't you think the manuscript needs some re-editing? I'll let you be the judge.

I'll telephone you for an appointment as soon as the weather moderates.

Kindest regards.

Sincerely,
Philip Doumitt

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Febr. 24, 1978

Mrs. Ruth Strong,
Stevenson, Wash.

Dear Ruth

I am enclosing the introduction to my memoirs that you requested. The translation was made by a friend who is a professor in Arabic. The writing is my own and I hope that I have set it up properly. If not I could easily do it over to your liking.

I had a Lebanese student visit me recently and I read some of the transcript from the original copy and he liked is so well he asked me if he could translate the entire copy and send it to his sister in Lebanon. The sister, he said, is a news editor for one of the newspapers in Beirut and he thought that the episodes could make good reading in that country. I did not give him a definite answer.

One thing I wanted to ask you while talking to you was: How does one become a member of the Skamania County Historical Society, and what are the regulations? The question slipped my mind, so please inform me.

Mrs. Doumitt and I thoroughly enjoyed our visit with you last Sunday and we thank you for inviting us to your home.

Kindest regards to you and Mr. Strong. Remember us to your brother, also.

Philip S. Doumitt
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First day of Spring, 1978

Dear Mrs. Strong,
Stevenson, Washington

Dear Ruth,

Thank you for your letter of March 15th including the transcript and I am returning it herewith. I trust that the alterations I have made will meet with your approval. I note that you have condensed the original copy quite a bit but for your purpose perhaps it's just as well.

Thanks also for the May 9th, 1910, copy of the Oregon Journal and I read it with a great deal of interest. I was most surprised at the account of Halley's Comet because I did not remember that it was still visible on that date. I saw the comet while I still lived in Cathlamet but I can't recall seeing it when I came to Stevenson in early 1910. But one can't question the printed history, the fine print that it is . . .

. . . And those ads are great history, too. I did not realize that Meier & Frank had already had their 1059th Friday Surprise Sale! Those knickerbocker suits for boys were a bargain at $2.85. I used to wear them but was glad when I grew up to wear trousers that separated me from a youngster to a young man. Just think that had you lived in those days you could have bought a combination bust supporters made of cambric trimmed with lace and embroidery for ONLY $1.40. I supplied the "only" because they had not yet learned the psychological persuasion of that word in advertising.

But, darn it, I find no sale on corsets and I wonder what the special price on those garments was. I sold them in our Stevenson store and I think the price was around $3.00 to $3.50 . . . and I think I used to blush a little when the customer put one around her torso for size, around her clothes, of course.

My wife, Sarah, said that she enjoyed reading that old paper also.

When conditions began to look a little better in Lebanon, its problems suddenly worsened. There will be no peace there until the Palestinians are out of that country. I can't see an early solution unless Israel has a change of heart. **Begin** will have to **begin** doing something about it. I have read somewhere years ago that Armageddon — the final battle between the forces of good and evil — will be fought in the Middle East area. If this happens Lebanon will be in the midst of that battle. God Save Lebanon!

Yes, these sunny spring days are wonderful if there weren't so much work connected with it. We have a 125x260' property and three quarters of it is in lawn and I have to cut down on my bowling from three days a week to one. And that's bad. (By the way: You failed to tell me what are the provisions for becoming a member of The Skamania County Historical Society! If it's a closed "corporation" it is understandable.)

That is all for now.

Sincerely,
Philip Doumitt

Philip S. Doumitt
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April Fool's Day, 1978

Dear Ruth,

Something has been bothering me ever since I returned the first installment of "my story" to you recently. It is the date of the appearance of Halley's Comet. Could I have been wrong in stating that the comet appeared in the sky in 1909? You have redated it as 1910.

Then I decided to look into it in the Funk & Wagnalls New Encyclopedia and on Page 329 of Volume Six it is stated that "the comet appeared last in 1909-1910 and is due to appear about 1985."

Sometime ago there appeared an article in the Ask Andy feature of the Oregonian and it gave the date of the comet's appearance as 1910. That's why I began to wonder about this discrepancy. However, I am positive that I saw the comet when I still lived in Cathlamet in late 1909 and left that town just in time to enter the Stevenson grade school in January of 1910. I am a stickler for accuracy, especially where it relates to history. However, if the story is all ready to print, 1910 is O.K. since it probably won't be contested.

Sincerely,
Philip Doumitt

P.S.: Do you get the Oregonian?

Philip S. Doumitt
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May 3, 1978

Mrs. Ruth Strong
Stevenson, Wash.

Dear Ruth,

I have been asked to represent the class of 1918 at the annual Alumni banquet on June 17th and to speak on their behalf.

I have a sneaking hunch that you had something to do with it and this is quite all right. I am honored to have been selected.

However, I am not at all good at speaking extemporaneously and Esson Smith thought it would be O.K. if I put my talk into writing. The reason for this letter is to tell you that I have prepared a statement regarding the Historical Society and I want to clear it with you before presenting it to the audience.

"Stevenson and Skamania County have an interesting history as evidenced by the excellent Museum that you have established here and are maintaining for posterity. Your Historical Society should be commended. They deserve your support for the work they are doing. Only just recently I became a member. How many of you, for instance, know that the Museum contains probably the largest collection of rosaries in the world. I doubt that the Vatican has such a varied collection. I never fail to visit the Museum when I come to Stevenson. Sometimes my wife and I bring friends and they, too, find it most interesting.

"Recently I completed a story of my experiences and recollections of the happy ten years I lived in Stevenson, 1909 to 1919. It took me eight months to write these memoirs in my available time, then I submitted the manuscript to the Historical Society for review. I was pleased that they have accepted it for publication in the Quarterly. I hope that most of you will avail yourselves of a copy. There is history, humor, pathos and excitement in the reading. It all happened here to a Lebanese immigrant in your city and county. Of course, all proceeds will go to the Society."

For a little humor I told of the episode at Dr. Avary's office. I did not go into other details in the manuscript I sent to you. Make any corrections that you think improper or delete it entirely if you think what I have written is unneccesary. Please advise me.

Our yard is a riot of color this time of the year for at least the next two weeks. Should you be in the area please drop in on us. I think you will like what you see.

Kindest regards.

Sincerely.
Philip Doumitt

Philip S. Doumitt
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May 1978

(Dear Ruth: This is the original speech which would have lasted 15 minutes. Mr. Smith had me reduce it to 10 minutes, plus applause). E*ditor's note: the sections taken out are lined out.*

Mr. Chairman,
Members of the Stevenson HIgh School Alumni Association
Esson Smith, President.
Ladies and Gentlemen:

It's an honor for me to speak for the class of 1918 ~~This is the first time I have stood before a microphone to address such a large and impressive audience. If you find me a little nervous, please bear with me.~~

First I want to tell you how I became a student in the Stevenson schools: I immigrated to the United States in late 1909 from what is now known as the Republic of Lebanon. ~~That's the year that Halley's Comet appeared in the sky in this century.~~ At that time Teddy Roosevelt was still very much in the political news. I entered the Stevenson Grade School in January of 1910. ~~The teacher placed me in the fourth grade but~~ Because of my earlier training in Lebanon I was soon advanced to the 6th grade. ~~Because of~~ Language handicap made it tough going at first and the dictionary was always by my side. Mrs. Lucy Lindsay was our teacher and she gave me special help, but before long I was on my own and able to compete with the two outstanding students, Harry Harding and Conrad Swanson. Because of our better grades in examinations we named ourselves the TERRIBLE THREE! Roy Aalvik's grades were occasionally sandwiched in, but Harry was always at the top! The name TERRIBLE THREE carried with us to high school.

The students that stand out in my memory beside those already mentioned are Irene Bevans, Ruby Harshberger, Bessie Ash, Scott and Clay Hazard, Shock Hughes and Max Chesser. Willamina and

Eugene Shields came from Cape Horn to join us in high school. In Lebanon we were required to recite our lessons by sheer memory — word for word reciting. ~~But here there was little memory work.~~ I liked the American system much better.

We had a general merchandise store just below the railroad track in the Doumitt building. In the mornings, I was required to be in the store until my brothers had their breakfast together, but when the school bell began to ring ~~for classes~~ they knew that I was off and running up that hill at full speed. Old Dave Wessels would ring that bell for five minutes and I would enter the classroom all out of breath, just in time to save me from being tardy. ~~Good old Dave, I often wondered if he kept pulling on that rope for my benefit. I never did find out.~~

~~Our 6th grade class must have been rough on teachers prior to my entry because I soon learned that~~ Mrs. Lindsay was our 6th grade teacher ~~replaced another teacher.~~ She was kind but firm with us. ~~and soon had the class under control. Mrs. Lindsay instilled in us the importance of doing our home work and we did well by her tutelage, and she chided the student who didn't have the home assignment well prepared.~~ The seventh grade is remembered only because our new teacher ~~though a good looking young lady~~ didn't have the qualifications to teach this grade. ~~We were always correcting her mistakes.~~ We complained to the superintendent about it and soon had a teacher that was more experienced.

In the 8th grade we had three ~~changes of~~ teachers during the school year. A. C. Sly replaced Miss Billsby on a temporary basis until a permanent instructor could be found. Then came professor William Alwin to complete the school year. Like Mr. Sly, Mr. Alwin was an excellent teacher. ~~We had a student that was most quite mischievous member of the class.~~ He was always shooting pitballs at us with the aid of a rubber band ~~or doing other mischief.~~ Occasionally one of those missiles would hit someone on the cheek and the loud cry of "ouch" would be heard. Mr. Alwin was patient and warned the student many times until the professor could stand it no longer. One day he came prepared with a switch and when that student misbehaved he was given a good thrashing before the

class. The young man was a good boy after that and this had a sobering effect on the rest of us.

Mr. Alwin always started the day with a 20-minute singing period or a review of current events. On morning he said, “Class, it’s going to be different today. Any one of you can take a couple of minutes to tell a joke, recite a poem, sing a song, or tell an interesting experience.” Several students raised their hands and told their bit. Finally, I got up enough courage to raise my hand. “All right, Philip,” he said. “What do you have for us?” I said, “I have a short poem that I learned from Mr. Knox, our sheriff, but I’m not sure it’s appropriate for the class to hear.” A smile from Mr. Alwin seemed to say, “Go ahead.” The I said, “This poem pertains to the drinking habit of nations and it goes like this:”

> “The Frenchman drinks his native wine,
> The German drinks his beer;
> The Englishman drinks his ‘alf and ‘alf
> Because it gives good cheer.
>
> The Scotsman drinks his whiskey straight,
> Because it gives him dizziness.
> The American has no choice at all,’
> So he drinks the whole damn business.”

In high school we ~~were more matured and~~ gave no trouble to our teachers, Oscar M. Serely and others. Our freshman class chose black and orange for class colors and I helped make that choice. It was permanent. But each year we had to elect new class officers. In one of those elections Harry Harding and I were nominated for president. I ~~was hesitant about wanting~~ didn’t want the office so I voted for Harry. He won by one vote! I learned later that Harry voted for me! But for secretary, I was given a good majority and I accepted the office.

In sports, our athletes were at their best in basketball. I saw the exciting game that won for us the championship of the league and the pennant in 1915. Lester Nellor was the sharpshooter for our

team and he won many games for us by his high scores. In football we were late in organizing a team but we were neither sure-footed nor experienced and we lost our first game with Goldendale by 64 to 0. I can't recall much about baseball in high school — only that Archie Shields was the pitcher.

The class of 1918, I am told, graduated with 13 members but I was **not** one of them. I left school to enlist in the United States military service in World War I. Previously I had tried to enter the Navy but was rejected because I was still an alien. (I became a citizen in 1920.) ~~(When I returned from the Army at the end of World War I, I found that my family was preparing to move to Rainier, Oregon. I tried to complete my high school education in Rainier, but a severe eye affliction developed and this was the end of my studies.)~~ Although I made several moves in my lifetime, I have always considered Stevenson as my home town. I still make several trips a year to see how my home town is doing and to reminisce in my mind the years of my youth.

Ten years ago I attended the Alumni banquet on the 50th anniversary of the class of '18. Harry Harding, whom I have not seen for 50 years, drove all the way from Atlanta, Georgia to deliver the class address and to announce from this rostrum, to my surprise, that I had been voted an honorary member by the graduates then attending. I am thrilled and honored to be talking to you now in their behalf.

Out of 13 graduates, there are still eight living members — a good score in longevity. They are as follows: Harry Harding, Conrad Swanson, Roy Aalvik, Ruby Harshberger, Anna Fosse, Willamina Shields, Dorothy Milner, Eunice Parker, and yours truly.

You have an enterprising Alumni Association here. Very few communities of this size can boast an annual banquet that attracts such a large gathering. It shows that you have respect for your school and for each other. ~~As time marches on, fewer and fewer of the old members will be able to attend. But the younger graduates, I am confident, will carry on.~~ CONGRATULATIONS.

Stevenson and Skamania County have an interesting history as evidenced by the excellent museum that you have established and

are maintaining for posterity. Your Historical Society deserves your support for the work they are doing. Only just recently I became a member. How many of you, for instance, know that the museum contains probably the largest collection of rosaries in the world. I doubt that the Vatican has such a varied collection. ~~I never fail to visit the museum when I come to Stevenson. Sometimes my wife and I bring friends and they, too, find it most interesting.)~~

Recently I completed a story of my experiences and recollections of the happy ten years I lived in Stevenson, 1909-1919. Then I submitted the manuscript to the Historical Society for review. I was pleased that it was accepted for publication in their Quarterly. I hope that most of you will avail yourselves of a copy. It all happened here to a Lebanese immigrant, in your city and county. ALL PROCEEDS GO TO THE SOCIETY.

This is one of the many events that I related in my memoirs. I injured a finger badly while working for the Doumitt-Aalvik Lumber Company at Sepsecan. I came to Dr. Avary for treatment and when the doctor saw me in his waiting room, said, "Come in Philip and sit in my chair. I will be back shortly." So I sat in the doctor's swivel chair and spotted a shelf full of medical books. I picked up a book at random, and it turned out to be a picture-study on obstetrics. The doctor came back suddenly and saw me transfixed by a picture of a baby being born. Dr. Avary had come from the state of Georgia, and said in his Southern drawl: "Well, Philip, if you can take one out as easy as you can put one in, you'd be a good doctah!"

Since no shoes have been thrown at me, I'll close with these words for the students of the Stevenson schools: "Pursue your studies seriously and vigorously. Make good use of your time and relish the opportunities that are given you here. Good grades will be your immediate reward, and the good habits that you form now will most likely assure your success in life.

Thank you all.

(This speech was delivered to the Stevenson High School Alumni Association by Philip S. Doumitt on June 17, 1978 at the Alumni's annual banquet. It was the occasion of the class' 60th anniversary of their graduation.)

Philip S. Doumitt
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Jan 3, 1979

Mrs. Ruth Strong,
Stevenson, Wash.

Dear Ruth,

On your card to me of July 7th, 1978, you say: "If you have time to write more do send us what occurs to you!"

I do have time and the following did occur to me:

The present weather reminds me of some of those severe winters of years ago. I recall one winter when strong Gorge winds wreaked havoc to our little town of Stevenson and surrounding area. The wind caused high drifts of snow to form in certain spots. Earlier we built a small building next to our store which was used as a butcher shop, which also drew business to our store. The butcher shop was operated by an old German that brought his beef from Underwood and did brisk business because the quality of the meat was very good. (I say "an old German" though he was only about 50 years of age but in comparison to my own age at the time he was "old".) The wind current around the little building was ideal to form a "mountain" of snow and when the storm subsided the butcher came again only to find that a huge drift of snow had built up higher than the little building. I helped him shovel the snow which had covered the shop's door and as high as the roof of the little building.

In summer the smell of meat attracted flies which often lit on a portion of meat. Instead of shooing the fly away the butcher would try to smack it with the palm of his hand but he always missed. I suggested that he use Tanglefoot Fly Paper to catch the flies (we used it in our store), but he would pay no attention to me. How times have changed in the merchandising of meat!

There was another butcher shop uptown which was exclusive to meat and meat products, but the people of Stevenson seemed to like the old German's offering better. I look back to those days and wonder if **we** were pioneers in incorporating a butcher shop in connection with a grocery business. It seems to me that it was many years before this became a practice. Perhaps not, but anyway, it's a thought.

Going back to the weather I don't recall that a severe winter began so early in the year. It seems to me that it was always in the middle of January and most of February that a severe winter such as this began. Perhaps you have records to the contrary. At any rate it's still cold as I write this letter, but the weather man promises a warming trend. I hope he's right. At my present age (81) it's probably **colder** than it really is.

I hope this finds you and Mr. Strong in the pink of health and keeping warm.

Kindest regards to the both of you and a Happy New Year from Sarah and me.

Sincerely, Philip Doumitt

Portland, Oregon.
March 26, 1979

Mrs. Ruth Strong,
Stevenson, Wash.

Dear Ruth,

When I had given on my memoirs being printed in the Quarterly, I received two copies some time ago for which I thank you. I would have written you sooner but I had been under the weather for three weeks with some kind of a virus and did nothing but take it easy.

The printing and the re-editing of my story is generally very good. However, there is an error in the copy on page 15. The heading of "HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL" and the following should have read "Among those who played baseball at Grade School were Alfred Sly, etc." To those who read the copy and know better would think ill of me for claiming to be the pitcher for the High School Team. They know that the High School team was organized much later and that Archie Shields was the High School pitcher. I think that a correction to this effect should be made in a subsequent installment, because it will save me a little embarassment. I would appreciate it very much if you allow me to check the following installments before the final printing.

I, too, have made a mistake in my original copy which please note: For the sake of accuracy on the page I have entitled **"Trips to Beacon Rock"** and the pictures relating to it I have listed the name Anna Fosse wrongly. This name should be Lillian Olson. Make this correction, please, and thank you. The pictures show up real well.

Thanks for you letter of March 9th and enclosing pictures of my cousin Mitchel Doumitt of Cathlamet and the story about him and others with him. I might say that Mitchel is a prominent figure on being an attorney and tax consultant in his county. He was also an important athlete in his earlier years having pitched a no-run, no-hit game in baseball. I am very proud of all my relatives in Cathlamet with all their very successful accomplishments.

Just at this time I have a nephew, accompanied by his wife, who are visiting us from Lebanon. We are taking them on a sightseeing trip of the Columbia River east and if we are not pressed for time I want to take them to visit my old home town Stevenson on Tuesday, March 27th (tomorrow). I am sure he will be interested in seeing the little town I grew up in.

This is all for now and thanks again for the trouble I have caused you. Our regards to you and Mr. Strong.

Sincerely
Philip Doumitt

Philip S. Doumitt
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April 10, 1979

Dear Mrs. Strong,
Stevenson, Washington

Dear Ruth,

As I write this letter I am also listening to the Portland Beaver baseball game and if I get mixed up between balls and strikes it would be the reason.

Referring to my Stevenson story again I sent my own complete copy to Harry Harding in Columbus, Georgia and asked him to read it carefully and send me correction to any errror or mis-statement that I may have made. Harry was completely surprised at my memory but the names came to him after reading my story. The only real comment he made referred to the "The Story of the Lake" in which he mentioned Mr. W. S. C Wills the owner of the Stevenson water works.

This is what Harry said:

"Omit 'his long white beard with him'. This sounds as though you hated or despised Mr. Wills and are making a sort of a joke of his death. People who read this, even though they never knew him, are likely to take it that way. If you want to mention the beard, you could say in an earlier sentence something like this: 'Likewise old P. S. C. Wills, the owner of the Stevenson Water district and possessor of a long, white beard that was practically a community landmark'." (Ruth you have treated this well in the second copy that you sent me.)

Harry's English diplomacy comes to the fore here and I heartily agree with him. However, my thought was carried away by what most people thought of M. Wills during the years I lived in Stevenson. At any rate this is as I remembered him, but, as Harry thinks, I must have been a little too harsh on the old man with my reference to his long whiskers.

The last visit I made to the Museum I purchased 20 copies of The Skamania County HERITAGE and I have mailed them to relatives and friends. They have been very well accepted. I may have to buy more as more requests for copies come to me. I made the corrections on the copies I bought.

I close this letter in the seventh inning of the Portland-Tacoma baseball game. At this moment the game is favoring Portland. Hope it ends in a win for the Beavers. I hope I have not made a mess of what I have written above. But I hope you won't mind the errors.

Kindest regards to you and Mr. Strong.

Sincerely,
Philip Doumitt

P.S. I sent a copy to my nephew in Lebanon. He wants to publish it in an Arabic newspaper after translation. (If and when Lebanon gets back to normalcy.) The only thing I would want him to delete is my reference to the Turkish flag which the Lebanese people did not like and would not salute. (During the time Lebanon was ruled by Turkey.) You would be surprised how statements of the sort are picked up by governments that pertain to them. If I should ever find myself in Turkey I could be arrested and I wouldn't know why. But the statement written about me in the Lebanese Press could be the reason.

PD

Philip S. Doumitt
5710 N.E. Prescott Street
Portland, Oregon 97218

Area Code: 503
Telephone: 281-9894

July 14, 1978

Mrs. Ruth Strong,
Box 363, Skamania Landing
Stevenson, Wash. 98648

Dear Ruth,

Thank you for sending me the original manuscript of "my story", but I did not intend that you mail it. Neither did I want you to spend $2.79 for postage so I am enclosing my check for this amount made in favor of the Society. I could have picked them up at the Museum on my next visit.

I went over the reading of the manuscript and found many errors in it such as misspelled words, omissions and the like. I also noted the penciled corrections you have made which were proper. However, the notation you have written "not true" regarding the history of Beacon Rock. I stated that "Lewis and Clark **camped** at its base, etc." whereas your notation at the bottom of the page stated **"passed,** not camped". My reference was copied from a book I found in the history section of The Burlington Northern in Portland which, as I understand it, now owns the S.P.&S. route. All that I can say about this discrepancy in the history of the Rock depends on who wrote the history, and who was best informed. One of these historians must have used his imagination in the use of words.

Now referring to my story about Gus Melonas — The S.P&S. Railway. On the fifth line and after "laying of the final rail" I have added to my manuscript which I overlooked before and could be interesting to the reader: "The highest recorded water line on the Columbia was in 1894, and the road was laid seven feet above that water line." It might be too late to add this to your copy since it's in the printer's hands.

I am enclosing a copy of my speech delivered to the Stevenson High School Alumni Association which, to my surprise, prompted considerable applause. I had a long speech prepared by Mr. Smith held me down to shorter time. I looked for you at the banquet but could not find you. I don't think you will find in the speech anything that is not in the "memoirs."

My relatives and friends are hounding me. They want to read my story of my youth in Stevenson. What I wanted to do is buy copies from the Historical Society and give it to them and I will wait a while longer.

This is all for now.

Kindest regards,
Philip Doumitt

Philip S. Doumitt
5710 N.E. Prescott Street
Portland, Oregon 97218

Area Code: 503
Telephone: 281-9894

July 17, 1979

Dear Ruth,

Thanks for sending me a copy of my Stevenson Recollections which you say will be published in the October issue of Heritage.

I was disappointed in not including my experience in the Army nor the episode of Mrs. Monzingo at Sepsecan. I had considered these among the highlights of my story. I assure you that these experiences, though they sound fictional, are true to the letter!

I received a letter from my friend Conrad Swanson, the third member of the "Terrible Three" who lives in Burbank, California and this is what he says in part:

"I was happy to read your Recollections published in the Heritage. It brought back many memories that I had almost forgotten. The details are complete and most interesting. You have the honor of being the elder statesman. Harry and I are of the same age, 78, and were both born in the month of April."

I have made some corrections in the copy which I am enclosing. A member of our class of '18, Ruby Harshberger, who saw the pictures, was a good friend of Lillian Olson, told me she is not Anna Fosse as I had stated. I made the correction in the copy. I had dated both girls and had them mixed up in my mind. I thought I had a good memory for names and events of long ago but I found a sharper memory than mine in Ruby. She is several years younger than I am and this accounts for it.

I hope you're enjoying the hot weather we're having. I spent most of my yesterday at the bowling alley where it was nice and cool. I bowl twice to three times a week.

This is all for now. Kindest regards to you and Mr. Strong.

Sincerely,
Philip Doumitt

P.S.: I received a circular letter from Cliff Crawford inviting me to join the S.C. Historical Society. Somewhere his records are mixed up because I already "belong." I left a check for the '79 dues with Mrs. Howell at the Museum when I visited there over a month ago but have not received the membership card as yet for the year '79-'80. I still hold the '78-'79 card.

Philip