

about Frank Davis were perfect candidates for our “Memories” section.

Apparently, when the Frank Davis family lived on what is now Old Lorane Road next to the Lorane Elementary School, their outhouse sat right out in the open and was a perfect invitation for the neighborhood boys to get into some mischief. Mr. Davis had the reputation of spending a good deal of time in the little house with the crescent moon on the door. (He probably enjoyed reading the Montgomery Ward catalog.) He made it a practice to sit there every Halloween night with a loaded shotgun in hand to ward off the practical jokers. When anyone came near, he would shoot the gun into the air to help change their plans.

The local boys patiently waited until the time was right, however, and one night, cautiously approached the privy from behind. With a mighty shove, they tipped the building, with Frank Davis inside, onto its front, leaving him only one possible exit.

Davis, not one to be outdone, figured he would be wise to expect more of the same, so made preparation for the next time the boys felt like giving him a thrill. Only, this time, he moved the outhouse forward a couple of feet and carefully covered the hole with sticks and grass.

Sure enough, the prank was so much fun the boys couldn't resist trying it again. As they quietly approached the back of the outhouse and prepared to push it over once again, they made the fatal error of getting too close, and in they went. (Well, the error wasn't fatal, but they probably wished it had been.)

When the word of the incident had circulated around the neighborhood, those boys who were even suspected of being in the vicinity of the Davis property were locked out of their homes until they bathed and changed clothes outside.

Another story which Helen told about Frank Davis was about the time that Davis decided to re-roof the barn which used to sit on the corner of Territorial Road and Cottage Grove-Lorane Road across from the Mitchell Store. Davis did not have a ladder handy, so decided it would be simpler, anyway, to get on top of the building from the hayloft through a large hole in the roof. He became so deeply involved with his roofing project that it was not until he had completed the job later in the day, that he realized that he had mended the hole – his exit off of the roof – as well. Davis was forced to sit, perched upon the roof, for some time before someone could be convinced to provide a ladder for his descent.

### **MILTON SPARKS**

Milton Sparks very kindly came with Lyle and Hazel Conrad to the mobile home that we used for an office

to grant us a short interview. Mr. Sparks was a very quiet, courtly gentleman who used to live in the log cabin which stands next to the Lorane I.O.O.F. Cemetery when he was six years of age.

He told the story of the Lorane preacher, whose name has since been forgotten, who sat primly on the seat of a buckboard wagon as his run-away team made a head-long dash along the rough and rutted road in the hills around Lorane. As he sat there, unable to physically change the course of his destiny, the words of the song, “Nearer My God to Thee” emitted from him with a strength that must have accomplished what his physical strength could not, as he was miraculously spared disaster that day.

### **WILLARD E. GOWING**

Willard Gowing and his wife, Rena Rieck Gowing of Walterville, Oregon have been married for 37 years. Both were raised in Lorane. They were kind enough to write to all of their relatives and friends, gather, and catalog the very interesting information in this book about their families. The following are some of Willard's boyhood memories:

There was much work to be done around a busy farm for the Gowing children, but there was fun, too. Willard remembers the birthday parties that he would go to at the Bill Mitchell home. The presence of those “nice looking Mitchell girls” and Hattie Mitchell's cakes and ice cream guaranteed his attendance. He related one game they enjoyed playing at these parties. They had a contest to see who could stuff the most eggs (hard-boiled, we will presume) into their mouths at one time. Betty Mitchell always won. She'd put an egg in each cheek and three inside her mouth.

Another memory centered around a P.T.A.-sponsored hog calling contest. “The winner was none other than Lottie Mitchell. The sounds that came from her mouth and nose couldn't be matched.”

Then there was the swimming hole (actually an irrigation ditch) at the Ralph Lynch farm. The Gowing boys and their friends would often skinny dip in the warm shallow water. They would almost turn green from the cow manure, and then would wash off in a dam that Ralph had on the creek. The pool next to the dam was 12' deep, and if not for the help of Kenneth Hayes, Willard Gowing would have surely drowned. Luckily, Kenneth Hayes spotted Willard going down for the third time and hauled him out by the hair.

Willard's memories also included the many times that he and Alfred Peoples were sent home early from school. They had a mink trap line, but often caught skunk in it. When they showed up at school on several mornings smelling like their prey, they were immediately dismissed.