

Object lessons

MAYOR'S PHOTO ALBUM

Photos tell story of family dating back to the 1800s

By **ELON GLUCKLICH**
H&N Staff Reporter

The old photograph is of a little boy among two dozen relatives. No older than six or seven, he carries a serious expression — not smiling, but not frowning either.

His name was George Flitcraft. He would grow up to help shape the modern political landscape in Klamath Falls as its mayor from 1974 to 1992.

His wife, Marijane Daggett Flitcraft, was a lifelong Klamath Falls resident.

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Editor's note: 'Object Lessons' is an ongoing Herald and News series that examines historic items from the Klamath Basin.

George Flitcraft



George Clarkson Flitcraft was born Feb. 27, 1919, in Southern California. At the age of five, his family moved to Klamath Falls, where he graduated from Klamath Union High School in 1937.

In 1940, Flitcraft enlisted, serving as a meteorologist in the Army Air Corps until 1945. He married fellow Klamath Falls resident Marijane Daggett in 1941.

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Flitcraft's family was collecting photos long before his birth

When she passed away in 2009, Crystal Terrace donated a series of her family photographs to the Shaw Historical Library, some of which date back to the mid-19th century.

"He did a lot of good for the community," said Anne Hiller Clark, librarian with the Shaw Library. "He served in many levels of government and did a lot of good for the area."

Photos date to 1870s

Flitcraft was born in Colton, Calif., in 1919, and moved to Klamath Falls at the age of 5. He graduated from Klamath Union High School in 1937.

But years before he was born, his parents, grandparents, even great-grandparents, were keeping their photographs.

"These pictures were George Flitcraft's mother's collection," Clark said. "They were passed down to him."

The oldest shows Flitcraft's great-grandmother, Jennie A. Dubs, at her wedding. She was born around 1858, and the photo is believed to

have been taken in the late 1870s.

"The fashions are a way to date some of these," Clark said.

One photograph, made on a thin iron metal sheet known as "tin type," shows Flitcraft's grandmother, Mabel Dana, as a young girl with her sisters. Another shows Dana on her wedding day in 1894 with Flitcraft's grandfather, Louis Bryant Shehorn.

The photographs run

through the early part of the 20th century. In a series of them, Flitcraft's grandmother can be seen growing from a young girl to an older woman, along with her sisters and Dubs, their mother.

One interesting photo introduces Flitcraft's mother, Annie Shehorn, as a little girl in 1907. She's posing with some of her male cousins, who are holding teddy bears.

"It's around the time that teddy bears first

became popular," Clark said.

Finally, there's the photograph of a young George Flitcraft. The setting is his great-grandparents 50th wedding anniversary in Southern California.

Head to www.heraldandnews.com for a short video about the Flitcraft family photo collection.

Videos can be found in the center of the page.



Clark said photos, such as the Flitcraft family collection, are important because they chronicle the importance with which people viewed family gatherings like weddings and reunions a century ago.

"Not only does it document one family, but it can be looked at as an example of many people who came from California and moved up here," she said. "You can start to think about a lot of trends in families in the late 19th and early 20th century, just by looking at these pictures."



H&N photos by Eion Glucklich

ABOVE: Anne Hiller Clark, librarian at the Shaw Historical Library, shows photographs from the George Flitcraft family album. Some of the photos date back to the 1870s. **RIGHT:** The earliest photo in the George Flitcraft family collection shows Flitcraft's great-grandmother, Jennie A. Dubs, at her wedding in the late 1870s.

