

Gallery of Outstanding Montanans

The *Gallery of Outstanding Montanans* was established by the State Legislature in 1979 to pay homage to citizens of the Treasure State who made contributions of state or national significance to their selected fields of endeavor while epitomizing the unique spirit and character that defines Montana. Inductees into Montana's hall of fame are rotated into the gallery on a biennial basis; each is honored for an eight-year period. This program is managed by the Montana Historical Society.

Past honorees have included:

Mike Mansfield, statesman (1903–2001)

Harold Urey, nuclear chemist (1893–1981)

Gary Cooper, actor (1901–1961)

Thomas C. Power, entrepreneur (1839–1923)

Chet Huntley, journalist (1911–1974)

William Van Orsdel, minister (1848–1919)

Charles M. Russell, artist (1864–1926)

H.G. Merriam, author and educator (1883–1980)

Plenty Coups, statesman (c. 1848–1932)

Marcus Daly, entrepreneur (1841–1900)

Maggie Smith Hathaway, social crusader (1867–1955)

Richard Hugo, poet (1923–1982)

Granville Stuart, entrepreneur (1834–1918)

K. Ross Toole, historian and educator (1920–1981)

Susie Walking Bear Yellowtail, health care and Native rights advocate (1903–1981)

Mattie Bost Bell Castner, booster of community spirit (1848–1920)

Marguerite K. Pfeifle, gemologist (1907–1981)

Reno H. Sales, mining geologist (1876–1969)

Frank Bird Linderman, author (1869–1938)

E.S. Paxson, artist (1852–1919)

CHARLO (ca. 1830–1910)

SALISH PATRIOT

Charlo—*Slem-hak-kah* (*Little Claw of a Grizzly Bear*)—was born about 1830, in the Bitterroot Valley of western Montana. The son of Salish chief Victor, he became the tribe's hereditary leader upon his father's death in 1870. For 40 years he defended Salish treaty rights against the machinations of the federal government. Charlo, a devout Christian, consistently placed the welfare of his followers above personal gain.

By the signing of the Hellgate Treaty in 1855 the United States government considered efforts to place the Salish on a reservation in the Bitterroot Valley, their ancestral homeland. In 1871, however, a Presidential Order categorically directed their removal to the Jocko (Flathead) Reservation, north of Missoula. The next year, special commissioner James A. Garfield negotiated an agreement, signed by subchiefs Arlee and Adolf, to effect the removal. Although Charlo never signed the document, published versions included his mark. When Arlee led part of the tribe to the Jocko agency, Charlo and several hundred Salish followers remained in the Bitterroot.

During the 20 years of negotiations with the federal government that followed, Charlo maintained his stand on the tribe's legal right to a home in the Bitterroot Valley. Finally, in 1891—because

his followers continued to suffer—Charlo reluctantly agreed to leave the Bitterroot in return for the special care of his people. For three days in October, Charlo led his Salish contingent on Montana's own "Trail of Tears" to the Flathead Reservation.

A frustrated, disillusioned leader, Charlo brooded:

"[The white man's] laws never gave us a blade, nor a tree, nor a duck, nor a grouse, nor a trout. No. Like the wolverine that steals your cache, how often does he come? You know he comes as long as he lives. He takes more and more, and he dirties what he leaves."

Charlo died on the Flathead Reservation on January 10, 1910, a Salish patriot to the end.



JOHN LOUIS CLARKE (1881–1970)

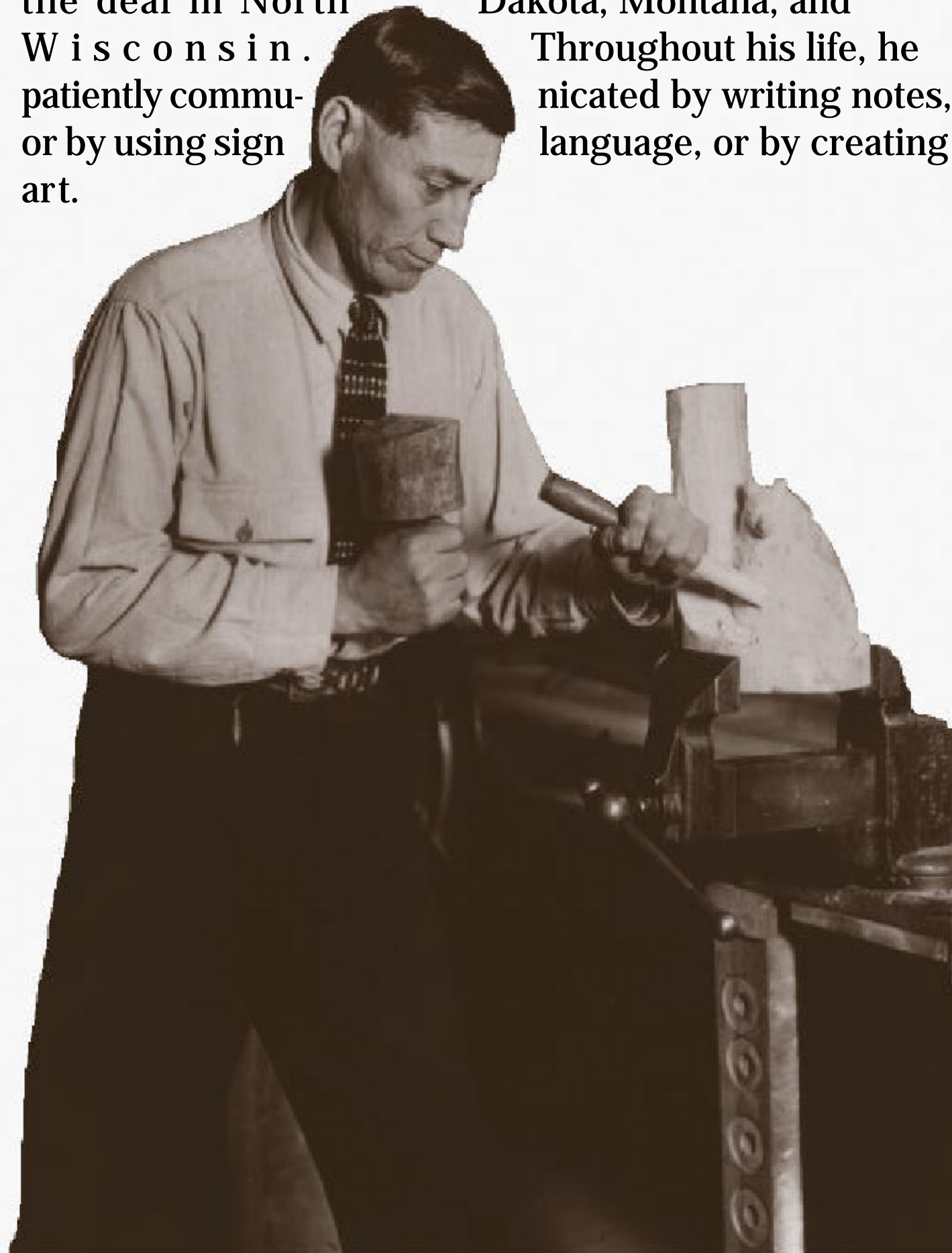
CUTAPUIS—“THE MAN WHO TALKS NOT”

“In whatever he did, John Clarke’s intensity belied the odds that faced him throughout his life.”

— Author Dale A. Burk, 1982

blackfoot tribesman John Clarke quietly earned an international reputation for his sensitively executed, vibrant wood carvings of bears, mountain goats, and other wild animals of the Glacier National Park area. His successes were particularly remarkable because—at the age of two—scarlet fever left him permanently deaf and mute, earning him his Blackfeet name, *Cutapuis*—“the man who talks not.”

Born in Highwood in 1881, John was the grandson of noted Montana fur man Malcolm Clarke and the son of Blackfeet tribesman Horace Clarke. He was educated at the Fort Shaw Indian School and at institutions for the deaf in North Dakota, Montana, and Wisconsin. Throughout his life, he patiently communicated by writing notes, or by using sign language, or by creating art.



John’s artistic abilities emerged at a very early age. In 1913 he returned to East Glacier where he opened a studio from which he operated until his death in 1970. John Clarke quickly became a widely acclaimed, greatly respected member of the reservation community. In 1918 John married Mary “Mamie” Simon. Until her death in 1947, Mamie served as John’s invaluable business partner—handling his scheduling, contracts, promotion, and sales. The couple adopted a daughter, Joyce (Mrs. Irvin Turvey), in 1931.

John Clarke is usually considered self-taught, although he attended the Chicago Art Institute for a short time. John became a most prolific artist who worked in oils, watercolors, clays, charcoals, and even crayons. But his real fame developed from his reputation as a wood carver, particularly using cottonwood. At his height, John was “generally considered the best portrayer of Western wildlife in the world.”

Clarke’s works were exhibited in Paris, London, Boston, New York City, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and throughout Montana. His patrons included John D. Rockefeller, President Warren G. Harding, Louis W. Hill, and Charlie Russell. Some of his more famous pieces include flanking panels at the Museum of the Plains Indian in Browning, a massive bas-relief at the Montana Historical Society in Helena, and the Philippine-mahogany entrance panels at the Blackfeet Indian Hospital in Browning. The John L. Clarke Western Art Gallery and Memorial Museum opened in East Glacier in 1977.

John Clarke was a patient, kind, determined man with a strong sense of humor. Facing odds that would have deterred lesser men, he crafted a career as a renowned Blackfeet artist. His legacy survives as a worthy inspiration to all Montanans.



FANNY CORY COONEY (1877–1972)

UNDAUNTED MONTANA ARTIST

Talented illustrator and cartoonist Fanny Cory Cooney epitomized the optimistic, pragmatic Montana artist who was able to mesh creativity with the realities of Western life.

Born in Waukegon, Illinois, in 1877, Fanny grew up the youngest of four surviving children. After her mother's death in 1887, the family moved to the Montana Territorial capital of Helena. In school Fanny encountered local artist Mary C. Wheeler who encouraged her to pursue her obvious artistic talents. In 1895, at the age of 18, Fanny and her ailing sister Agnes moved to New Jersey. Fanny enrolled at the Metropolitan School of Fine Arts in New York City and joined the prestigious Art Students' League.

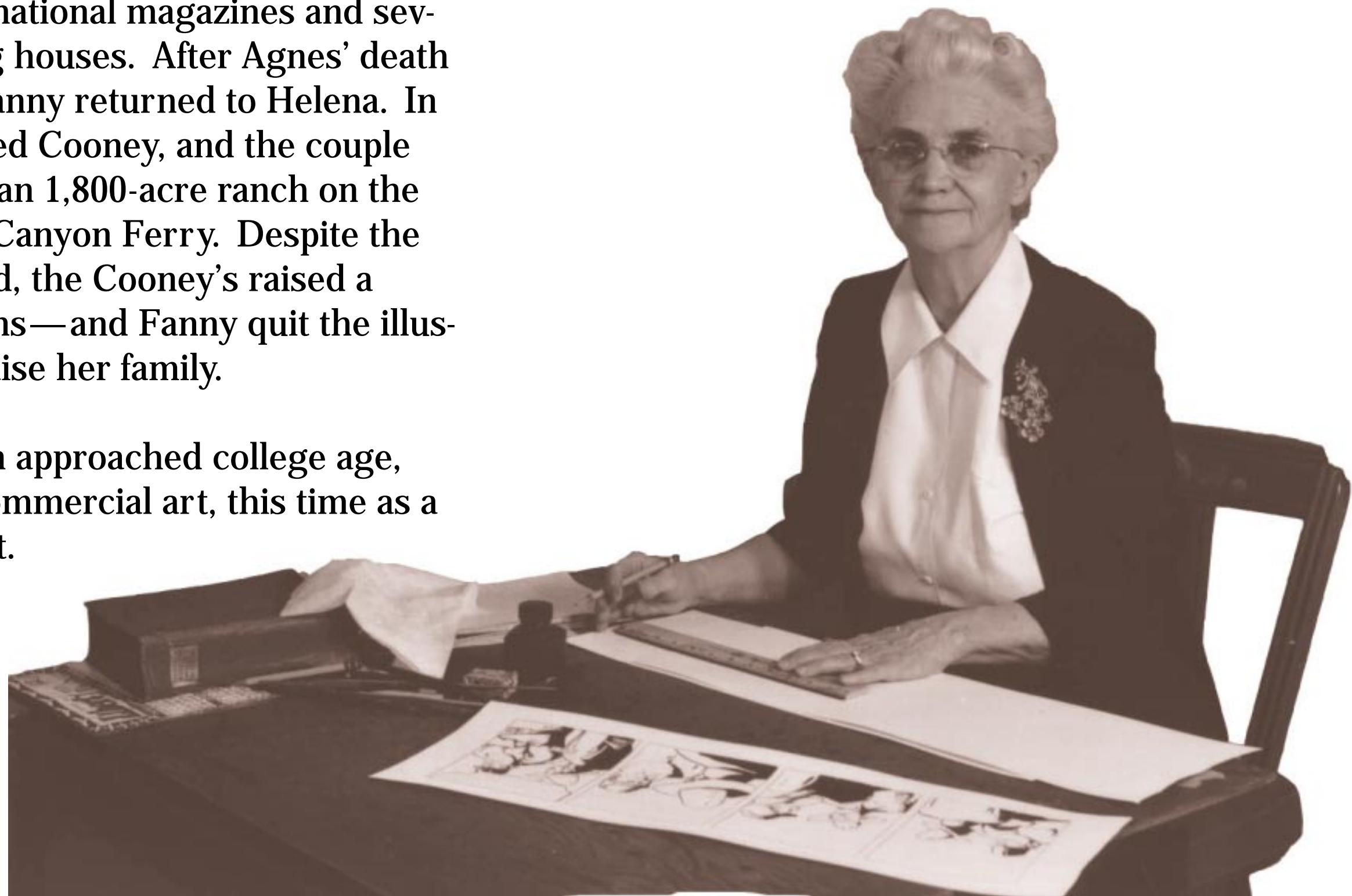
In 1896 Fanny sold her first illustration, to *St. Nicholas Magazine*, and within a year she was drawing for a dozen national magazines and several major publishing houses. After Agnes' death in 1902, a desolate Fanny returned to Helena. In 1904 she married Fred Cooney, and the couple made their home on an 1,800-acre ranch on the Missouri River near Canyon Ferry. Despite the loss of their first child, the Cooney's raised a daughter and two sons—and Fanny quit the illustrating business to raise her family.

As her three children approached college age, Fanny returned to commercial art, this time as a syndicated cartoonist. She developed *Other People's Children*, *Sonnysayings*, and *Little Miss Muffet* for national distribution. By the time she retired in 1956,

at the age of 79, Fanny had created more than 10,000 *Sonnysayings* panels, and *Little Miss Muffet* had run daily for 21 years.

Fanny's earnings funded college educations for her three children, and in 1951 she was named Montana Mother of the Year. Upon Fanny's death in 1972, her children wrote a fitting eulogy to this remarkable Montana artist.

"Fanny Cory Cooney had more than her share of tragedy and heartbreak in her life. Yet she saw and appreciated beauty in the world more than most of us—its sunsets, rainbows, bird songs, spring flowers, babies, crisp winter mornings, clouds, and breezes. Through her trials . . . her humor and imagination bravely returned to make life more joyful and beautiful for the rest of us. She brought sunshine from the shadows."



RAYMOND FRANCIS GRAY (1900–1961)

“INDOMITABLE ADVOCATE OF METIS RIGHTS”

no group has contributed more to Montana’s mosaic of ethnic diversity than the Métis. A people of mixed European and Indian blood, their unique heritage has thrived in Montana since 1870. Among their most influential leaders was Raymond Francis Gray, Montana’s first Métis attorney.

From French, Mohawk, Cree, and Ojibwa (Chippewa) roots, Raymond was born in Choteau, Montana, in 1900 to Cecilia Guardipe and James Robert Gray. By the mid-1920s, he was living in Helena, where he found employment as a taxi driver, highway construction subcontractor, smelter worker, and truck driver. In 1927 he married Rosie Armstrong; they would have four children.

During the Depression, Raymond emerged as a state-wide Métis leader and was elected president of the Montana Organization of Landless (nonreservation) Indians. For the government’s Federal Writers’ Project he researched and wrote the definitive work, *History of the Landless Cree Indians of Montana* (1941). The plight of the state’s landless Indians so impressed Gray that he determined to obtain a law degree as a means of benefiting nonwhite minorities.

With the assistance and encouragement of some of the most prominent members of Helena’s legal community, a resolute Raymond worked days and read law at night. In 1946 he passed the Montana bar exam and became a member of the Montana Bar Association—the first Métis attorney in the state’s history.

Shortly thereafter Raymond and Rosie moved to Ronan, where he opened a law office on the Flathead Indian Reservation, and Rosie became his secretary/advisor. In 1956 the couple relocated to Missoula, where Raymond developed a thriving practice, primarily assisting nonwhites entangled in the judicial system. Gray established a solid reputation as a perceptive, respected courtroom attorney whose knowledge of Indian law proved indispensable to his many clients.

A strong family man and a lifelong sports fan, Raymond bowled wherever he lived. His selfless contributions to

the Montana Salvation Army and his encouragement of all nonwhites who wished to improve themselves became legendary. Upon his premature death in 1961, a eulogizer noted:

“Lawyers were his professional brothers, but Indians were particularly his people.” The continuing battle of Montana’s landless Indians for official recognition and for a reservation serves as a living monument to Gray’s commitment.

Raymond Francis Gray established precedents for all nonwhite Montanans and particularly for Montana Métis. Moreover, all Montanans have benefited from his determination, his kindness, his love of the law, and his devotion to Montana’s ethnic groups.



ELLA KNOWLES HASKELL (1860–1911)

“THE PORTIA OF THE PEOPLE”

from the very beginning, Ella Knowles Haskell set precedent. Born in Northwood, New Hampshire, in 1860, she was schooled at Northwood Seminary and Bates College in Lewiston, Maine. At Bates she was the first woman to receive honors in oratory and composition, and she became one of the school’s first female graduates in 1884.

After starting to read law in New Hampshire, she moved to Helena, Montana Territory, in 1888 for her health. Ella’s strong will and determination led her successfully to lobby the 1889 Territorial Legislature to permit women to practice law in Montana. Then she dedicated herself to reading law in the office of Helena attorney Joseph W. Kinsley. Late in 1889, Ella Knowles became the first woman admitted to the Montana bar—and the fledgling state’s first female notary public.

She immediately became a partner in the firm of Kinsley and Knowles. Methodically Ella built a reputation as a attorney committed to fair play, the finer points of law, and courtroom eloquence. In 1892 (22 years before Montana women received the vote) she ran a vigorous campaign as a Populist Party candidate for state attorney general. Thus Ella became the first woman in the nation to run for such an office, earning the nickname of “*the Populists’ silver-tongued orator.*”

Although she lost to Republican Henri Haskell, the victor recognized her outstanding abilities and hired his opponent as an assistant state attorney. Soon thereafter the couple married. In 1896 Populist Ella Knowles Haskell became the first Montana woman elected as a delegate to a national political convention. For years she stumped Montana to promote the suffrage movement and converted hundreds of recalcitrant men to the cause of equal franchise.

In 1902 Ella divorced Henri and relocated in Butte. There she built a solid, lucrative practice based on the intricacies of Butte mining law. She also became the owner/operator of several local mining properties and participated in the International Mining Congress. In 1906 Ella Haskell was admitted to practice before the U.S. Supreme Court in Washington, D.C., where she demonstrated her consummate powers of legal argument and public eloquence.

Upon her untimely death in Butte in 1911, accolades abounded for Ella Knowles Haskell’s remarkable career. Much more than just an eloquent speaker for the cause of women’s rights, she personified Montana’s trend-setting movement for gender equality and courageously broke gender barriers throughout her life.



NORMAN J. “JEFF” HOLTER (1914–1983)

“THE RENAISSANCE SCIENTIST”

“Serendipity and coincidence play a large part in what anyone does in life. The formation of ideas follows a quite circuitous path and often leads to results never originally visualized or planned.”

—Jeff Holter, 1981

a fourth generation Montanan, Norman J. “Jeff” Holter founded the Holter Research Foundation in Helena and became a globally recognized biophysicist. As well, he embraced the humanities, the arts, and the world of practical invention—becoming a true *“Renaissance scientist.”*

Jeff was the son of Norman B. and Florence Holter. He graduated from Helena High School in 1931 and the University of California in Los Angeles in 1937. Holter then earned Master’s degrees in chemistry and physics, and continued his education by completing postgraduate work at the University of Heidelberg (Germany), the University of Chicago, the Oak Ridge Institute of Nuclear Studies, and the University of Oregon Medical School.

During World War II, Jeff served as senior physicist in the U.S. Navy, studying the characteristics of waves. In 1946 he headed a government research team involved in the atomic-bomb testing at Bikini Atoll. Throughout his career, Holter warned against the unbridled use of atomic energy for militaristic purposes.

In 1947 Holter returned to Helena to establish the non-profit, non-commercial Holter Research Foundation (HRF)—dedicated to the public good. While managing the HRF, Jeff periodically took positions with the military and with universities. For example, in 1952 he worked for the Atomic Energy Commission on the hydrogen-bomb project in the Marshall Islands. And, in 1964, he became a full professor at the University of California in San Diego, coordinating activities at the Institute of Geophysics and Planetary Physics.

Holter’s belief in “non-goal-oriented research” produced such HRF discoveries as square raindrops, nuclear-explosion detectors, and a miniaturized heart monitor. Jeff’s research colleague was Wilford R. “Bill” Glasscock. Their late-1950s, not-for-profit development of the Holter Heart Monitor revolutionized the treatment of coronary disease and spawned a billion-dollar industry.

A linguist, a photographer, a musician, and a sculptor of *“explosion art,”* Jeff Holter inspired scores of young Montanans to integrate the arts, the humanities, and science to produce unforeseen results. Montana’s *“Renaissance man”*—a biophysicist who earned worldwide honors for scientific development—always remained dedicated to his state and its people.



JOSEPH KINSEY HOWARD (1906–1951)

“MONTANA’S CONSCIENCE”

“By the time [Joseph Kinsey] Howard died, he came closer to being the spokesman of the West than any other writer has ever been.”

—Bernard De Voto, 1952

Journalist, historian, crusader—Joe Howard packed a whirlwind of activity into only 45 years. Born in Iowa and raised in Alberta, Joe and his mother Josephine moved to Great Falls in 1919. Upon high school graduation in 1923, he became a reporter for the *Great Falls Leader* and soon its news editor. Joe substituted voracious reading for a college education.

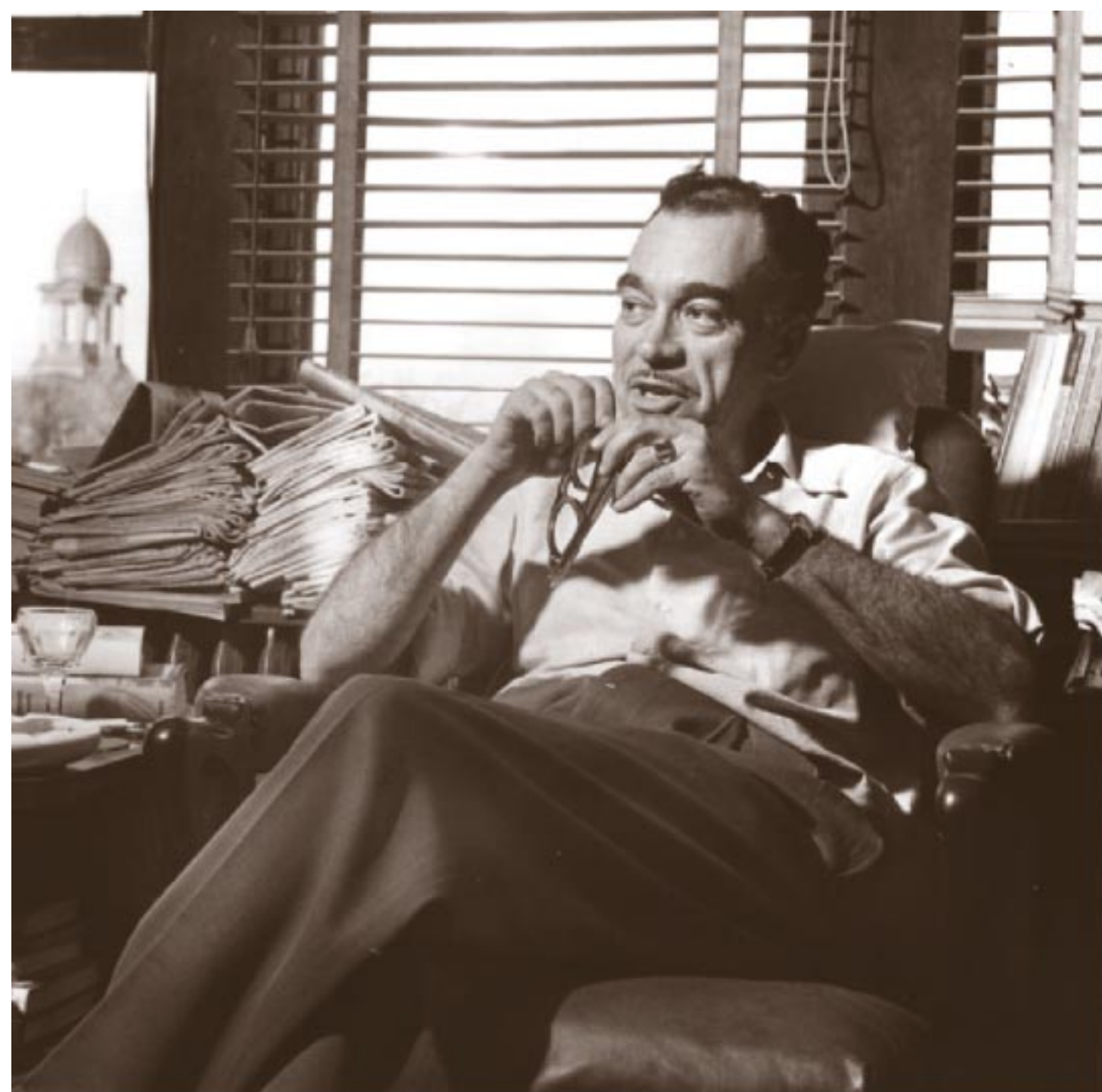
Howard stayed with the *Leader* for 20 years where he developed a writing style of sparse, clear, emotive language and vivid images. Howard also cofounded the Great Falls Newspaper Guild, which organized local newspaper employees.

From the mid-1930s through the late 1940s, Joe wrote Montana-based pieces for national periodicals including *Survey Graphic*, *Pacific Spectator*, *The Nation*, *Common Sense*, and *Harper’s Magazine*. These articles challenged the Anaconda Copper Mining Company, advocated the creation of a Missouri Valley Authority, and investigated the plight of Montana Native Americans, Hutterites, and Métis. Howard also published regional fiction in *Collier’s*, *Saturday Evening Post*, and *Esquire*, served as the Montana stringer for *Time* and *Life*, became a book reviewer for the *New York Times*, and worked as an editorial correspondent for the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*.

Howard’s reputation as a preeminent Montana writer-historian benefited most from the publication of *Montana: High, Wide and Handsome* in 1943. The book articulates Howard’s “plundered province” interpretation of the Montana story and provided him enough income to leave newspaper work. In 1944 he joined the Montana Study project in Missoula and worked to promote small-town identity. Howard released *Montana Margins*, the state’s first literary anthology, in 1946.

The recipient of two Guggenheim Fellowships, Joe spent the late 1940s writing *Strange Empire*—the story of Métis leader Louis Riel and his Canadian-American followers. He also taught at the prestigious Bread Loaf Writers workshop in Vermont, helped to found the Montana Institute of the Arts, and created the Northern Rocky Mountain Roundup of Regional Arts—Montana’s annual writer’s conference—in Missoula.

Joe Howard died of a heart attack in 1951—silencing a unique, influential, truly imaginative Montana voice. Generations of Montanans have learned their state history from this journalist-historian, who championed the Native American, the worker, the land, and the community long before they became fashionable topics. Montana author A.B. Guthrie, Jr., simply remarked: *“With Joe’s death, Montana lost her conscience.”*



DR. CAROLINE M. MCGILL (1879–1959)

“A REMARKABLE LIFE”

“Dr. Caroline McGill represented a harmonious union of healing, humanism, and science... She loved the West, she loved her community, and she loved her profession. Her life has symmetry and beauty.”

—Pierce C. Mullen, Ph.D., Montana State University

At a time when American women received only grudging recognition, Caroline McGill set high her professional goals and then exceeded them. She combined a lifelong commitment to medicine with her interests in the arts and the environment, and she developed into a person of wisdom and charm.

Caroline McGill was born in Ohio in 1879—one of five children. Her family moved to a hardscrabble farm in the Missouri Ozarks when she was five, and she excelled in school. In 1901 Caroline graduated from the Lebanon Normal School with a lifetime teaching certificate.

From the University of Missouri she received a B.A. in science (1904), and M.A. in zoology (1905), and a Ph.D. in anatomy and physiology (1908). She graduated Phi Beta Kappa and was the first woman to receive a doctorate from that institution. Caroline taught at the University of Missouri Medical School and then studied on the Sarah Beliner Scholarship (1910).

In 1911 Caroline accepted a position at the Murray Hospital in Butte as Montana’s first trained pathologist. She received her M.D. in internal medicine from Johns Hopkins University in 1916 and opened her Butte office as an internist in the same year. Quickly she became known statewide for her diagnostic skills, her willingness to make house calls, and her expertise in immunology.

During the course of a forty-year career as a physician in Butte, Dr. McGill never married. Rather, she devoted her time to her patients, to the study of Montana history, and to the collection of antiques and collectibles. Her love of hunting drew her to the Gallatin Canyon, where she purchased the 320 Ranch in 1936. Dr. McGill subsequently accumulated more than four thousand acres of land to protect access corridors to Yellowstone National Park. In 1959 she was named a Lifetime Member of the Montana Wilderness Association, honoring her commitment to regional conservation.

“Doctor” retired from her Butte practice in 1956 and launched a new campaign. Her antique collection be-

came the core of a museum on the campus of Montana State University—and that project developed into the Museum of the Rockies.

Upon her death in 1959, eulogizers called Dr. McGill a compassionate scholar, a working humanist, and a dedicated scientist. She had mixed a lifetime of Irish wit with a commitment to the people of Montana. Undaunted, Caroline McGill enjoyed a remarkable career in an age still awakening to the capabilities of women.

