

## Francis (Frank) R. Gooding

(1859 - 1928)

Francis Robert (Frank) Gooding, who founded both Gooding city and Gooding County, was a respected citizen, neighbor, and friend. He was born on September 16, 1859, in Treverton, Devonshire, England, the son of John and Elizabeth Wyatt Gooding. He had five brothers: Walter J., Fred W., Thomas W., William, and Albert. He also had a sister, Jesse Gooding Egelus. As a small boy in England he worked in a box factory. When Frank was eight years old his family moved to Paw Paw, Michigan. His mother could not come due to illness; however, his father's sister came to the states with the family. As a boy Frank was aggressive and always associated with boys older than himself by several years. His opportunity for an education was meager and confined only to the lower grades of the public school. His father was very strict in keeping with the old country customs. Over there, a child belonged to his parents until they became of age at 21. In 1877 when Frank was 17, he bought himself from his father and made his way to California with his older brother, Thomas. They located in Shasta county, in the northeastern part of the state and engaged for about 4 years in farming and mining. On June 1, 1880, Frank Gooding married Amanda Thomas at Red Bluff, California. They left California in the spring of 1881 and the fall weather forced them to spend the winter in Utah. Frank spent the winter doing jobs and visiting with people. Through his talks with everyone, he heard of the mining industry in Ketchum and also that there were neither many eggs or chickens in that area. He packed his wagon with eggs and they left for Idaho. Upon arrival, Frank found he could sell his products and got from \$1-\$5 per dozen for eggs.

Frank and Amanda's first child was Maude, the first white child born in the Wood River Country. She was born sometime in early May of 1881. At the time her father worked in the smelter and also hauled water for the town of Ketchum. This he sold for \$1 per barrel on weekdays and \$5 a barrel on Sundays. Two other children were born to Frank and Amanda - John and A.J.

Frank and his brother, Thomas, started a meat market in Ketchum. Even though the population was comparatively large, it was a primitive area, the homes having neither windows or doors, just curtains. Frank also had a contract to haul mail from Ketchum over Galena Summit to the Vienna Mining section of the Stanley Basin. In the summer he made the trip by horseback and during the winter he used dog sleds. During one of these winter trips, while cutting wood, he chopped an artery in his leg. He headed the dogs for home, crawled in the sled and bound his legs as tight as possible in the blankets. When he finally arrived home, the blood in his leg was frozen. For about 7 years, Frank had a contract with the Philadelphia Mining and Smelting Company for furnishing the wood and charcoal used by them in their mining operations.

Later on, Frank became interested in public affairs and was elected as Sheriff of Ketchum. This led to an interest in politics.

In 1888 Frank filed on a homestead just south of the present townsite of Gooding. From this humble beginning, he later increased his land holdings in this section to several hundred acres, some of which is now the townsite of Gooding. Frank purchased the James Otterson homestead on the north bank of Little Wood River, where Wyoming Street is now for the sum of \$3500. After this transaction the name of the station was changed to Gooding, but it was not until some years later that the name of the post office was changed. Someone once gave Frank a bunch of bum lambs. He cared for them and raised them on a bottle. He sold these and with the money, he invested in a few good lambs and also kept right on raising bum lambs. This small start resulted in his being the largest sheep owner in the northwest. At one time he was running 100,000 head of sheep. Because he had the ability to look ahead, he went on and invested in pure-breed stock that he had shipped in from England: this resulting in not only the most sheep, but some of the best.

Frank moved his family to Shoshone in 1888, where they lived for the years intervening until he was elected governor of Idaho in 1904 and moved to Boise. He was reelected two years later, making four years of service as governor of Idaho.

In 1899, Frank Gooding was elected to the state senate of Idaho from Lincoln County. He was re-elected 2 years later. In his second term, he was made president pro-tem of the senate. He served for four years as chairman of the state central committee.

Because of his interest in and efforts to bring about the punishment of those guilty of the assassination of Governor Frank Steunenberg, he was forced to move from his home and be under guard because of bombings and other threats to his life.

On the surface, Frank Gooding was a stormy, abrupt, turbulent man, but underneath, very religious. He could be calm, kind, loving and gentle. His word was as good as his bond. A promise once made was never broken. "A promise made is a debt unpaid" in his book.

Frank's gentle character is illustrated in his love of animals. One time while fording the Snake River, horse and rider were tangled in the water. It was a struggle, but with the cooperation of his horse and his understanding of animals, the far shore was reached. From that time on, the horse was pensioned and no one was allowed to touch the horse except to feed and care for it. It lived in honor until the day it died.

Governor Gooding founded the town after he got out of the governor's chair. One day while walking through the fields around 1907 with his reliable worker and good friend, Antone Braga, he stopped, pushed his hat to the back of his head, scratched slowly and remarked in a nonchalant manner, "Right now you're standing on the main street of my town. I'm going to build a town here and it will be called 'Gooding'." He immediately called in surveyors and put them right to work; he put in the water system and the hotel was planned and built before the opening of his town.

Frank Gooding and his brothers and sister held a family reunion in September 1909 in Gooding. Walter J. Gooding resided in Gooding. Fred W. Gooding was president of the National Woolgrowers association. He was originator and chief actor in establishing the

National Wool Warehouse in Chicago. Thomas W. Gooding was associated with his brothers Fred and Frank in business ventures and owner of a large number of sheep. William Gooding was a wealthy farmer in Michigan. Jesse Gooding married E.C. Egelus, a pioneer merchant of Gooding.

The opening of the Lincoln Inn in 1909 on Lincoln's birthday was accompanied with much fanfare. Official political families of Boise were in attendance and ladies even had gowns sent in from Chicago for the Grand Opening. F. R. Gooding was an admirer of Abraham Lincoln, and he named and dedicated his hotel on Lincoln's birthday. Frank arrived in his Pierce-Arrow, the only car in Gooding. At the dedication ceremony, Governor Gooding threw the key across the street and proclaimed that the doors would never be locked. Frank built the Lincoln Inn in Gooding not only as a restaurant and hotel, but as a symbol for the town. The fine and elegant hotel was an anchor for Gooding, attracting travelers and settlers and thus permanently rooting the town. Frank Gooding himself designed the hotel and had it built in 1908 for \$60,850. During the building, he let it be known that the Lincoln Inn was to be an extravagant affair. He spoke particularly of the imported marble for the floor.

The Lincoln Inn of the early 1900's compared with some of the finest restaurants and hotels in the nation. French food was served, and the inn had an extravagant French menu. A dinner menu from Easter, 1909, is reproduced below.

Cooking all this French food were Oriental cooks, and serving it were black waiters, who gave the restaurant a formal and proper atmosphere. Governor Gooding supplied the hotel with the finest cloth and china. It was decorated with green velvet carpet and crystal chandeliers. The rooms were graced by brass and oak, and, most surprising, each had an electric light.

The hotel kept its original furnishings until it was destroyed by fire in 1960.

"I have learned to know the value of a tree, it is one of God's greatest gifts." After seeing our area covered with bare, hot sagebrush, Frank learned to love and appreciate trees. It is told of the time the builders were building his potato cellar and just before it was complete, it was discovered it would be necessary to cut down a tree to get to the door. Instead of moving the tree, he told them to move the nearly-completed cellar.

During World War I, Frank was appointed as the United States Fuel Administrator in this area. He was also active on bond drives and used to speak from the steps of the Lincoln Inn to people, urging them to buy bonds for our country.

Through his foresight, Frank Gooding saw the need of a Woodgrower's Association which he organized. He was first president of this organization and exactly 50 years later, his nephew, Tom Gooding, was elected president of this same association. At one time the national headquarters was located in Gooding.

Frank Gooding was the prime mover that landed the location of both the State School for the Deaf and Blind and Gooding College for Gooding city. He led the campaign to take this part of Lincoln County and organize it into Gooding County, and later the campaign to place the

county seat in the city of Gooding. He was one of the leaders again in the organization of the Idaho Irrigation Company's project that made possible the building of Magic reservoir and the establishment of irrigation projects that have ever since been contributing factors to the growth not only of Gooding, but the town of Shoshone and Richfield. He saw the need for livestock in this community and to insure a more continuous and lasting development, he used his efforts to promote both the sheep and the dairy industries here. To him belongs a large share of the credit for the establishment in Gooding of the cooperative creamery.

Frank Gooding is the only person on record who was the governor of a state without being a naturalized citizen. No one seemed to think of him as not being a citizen. Then when running for the senate in 1918, someone thought it up to keep him out. He dropped out of the first running, took out his papers, became naturalized, ran again and was elected in 1920. He was reelected in 1926 and served 2 years of his 2nd term at the time of his death.

"Gentlemen, if I can live to see the day when my grave can be watered by Snake River, I will know I have done a service to my people, the like of which they can never forget." This statement to the senate helped to indicate his interest in the American Falls Project. He worked for this project day and night for several years, before he finally brought it to a successful conclusion.

Another of his works in Washington was battling the Union Pacific for equalized freight rates. With much work requiring many, many long hours, he also got action on this.

In the Senate, Frank Gooding had served on some of the most important committees, particularly the last session attended. He was a member of the committee on agriculture and forestry; on the committee of irrigation and reclamation, on the committee on interstate commerce and of the committee on pensions and Indian affairs. On the interstate commerce committee, he was the ranking member, and had he lived would have become the chairman of this committee at the next session of congress.

Fraternally, the senator was a member of Masons, holding membership in both the Shrine and the Knights Templar.

Frank Gooding died on June 24, 1928.

Source Unknown: Reformatted: 10 May 2016