

literary history for his remarkable skills as a raconteur, a münchhausen of the first order. Finn's tales are still widely told, now mostly in the third person, and one of the largest collections of his stories was gathered by folklore student Susan Mullin in 1962 from Arthur Belknap, Finn's grandson and a retired McKenzie River guide.

Finn Upholds His Reputation as a Liar

They was some newspaper men come up by stage coach from Eugene to see Grandad an' they stopped and called him to come out. Grandad, he come out on the porch, and they says, "Mr. Finn, we heard that you're the biggest liar on the McKenzie River, and we come up to ask you to tell a lie for us. We'd like you to tell us a big lie." Well, Grandad, he stepped down off the porch an' he says, he says, "Boys," he says, "I'd like to tell you a lie today, but the truth is," he says, "I've just lost my best friend. Old Man Pepiot died yesterday and I've set up all night with his corpse. I'm just on my way now to build him a coffin. Any other time I'd be glad to tell you a lie, boys, but I just don't feel up to it today. You come around some other time and I'll be glad to tell you a lie." Well, them fellas left Grandad then and drove on down the road, and when they got to the top of the hill, why the first one they seen was the Old Man Pepiot! (Collected from Arthur Belknap by Susan Mullin in 1962. Published by Mullin in "Oregon's Huckleberry Finn: A Munchhausen Enters Tradition," p. 20.)

Moving Finn Rock

Susan Mullin: We've heard a story about your Grandad that says he's the one who moved Finn Rock over to where it is now. There was something about using a buckskin harness, but since he had to drive the mules out cross the river, the harness got wet and stretched; but he just tied it to a tree and when it dried out, it pulled the rock over to where it is. Can you tell us that story, so we'll have it straight?

Arthur Belknap: Oh no, you got it all wrong. Grandad moved Finn Rock over for Emma Dunavan. She was sister to Harvey Scott, who had the *Oregonian*. See, they called that place Pillow Point 'cause of all the rocks, and Mrs. Dunavan wanted to get a wagon through. So Grandad just put a chain around Finn Rock, got his mules, and moved it that way. (Susan Mullin, "Oregon's Huckleberry Finn: A Munchhausen Enters Tradition," p. 23. Mullin notes that "Finn Rock is a formation which lies between the McKenzie River Highway and the river itself; it has quite obviously never been moved by anybody." And "Emma Dunavan" must be none other than Abigail Scott Duniway.)