

WESTERN BRANCH

COMPANY
INCORPORATED

1819

AETNA INSURANCE COMPANY

WESTERN BRANCH
ESTABLISHED

1853

18TH FLOOR INSURANCE EXCHANGE - 175 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD

CHICAGO, ILLS.

WM. J. CRAWFORD, AGENT
ALTON, ILLS.

May 3, 1917.

Mr. H. K. Merrill,
Albany, Oregon.

Dear Brother Merrill and old friends:

Time passes rapidly by and I hasten to comply with your request to say a few words to be read at your anniversary. First of all I wish to greet once more the old friends, now living, along with yourself, who in an early day undertook the burdens of pioneer church life. As memory goes back to those early days - nearly forty years ago - my heart is filled with gladness and I seem to live again under the happy reflections of the years of 1878-79-80 and 81+. It was during this time as your well remembered that I was pastor of your church. You have, no doubt, the exact dates of my entrance and my exit from your midst. It was Dec. 11, 1878, that two young married people, wife and I, landed in Albany. I had just finished my theological course in Shurtleff College and was ready to enter upon life's work as a minister of the gospel. We soon found a house in the upper end

WESTERN BRANCH

COMPANY
INCORPORATED
1819

AETNA INSURANCE COMPANY

WESTERN BRANCH
ESTABLISHED
1853

18TH FLOOR INSURANCE EXCHANGE - 175 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD

CHICAGO, ILLS.

WM. J. CRAWFORD, AGENT
ALTON, ILLS.

of town belonging to a Mr. Prudiff & here
 we "set up" house keeping & Deacon Rice
 lived a block away and he and his
 family were our first neighbors. I need
 not allude to many good neighbors and
 friends who surrounded us at that time &
 Bro. J. P. Hackleman and wife lived only
 a few blocks away and many happy
 social times we four had before there
 were any "kiddies" to molest or annoy.
 Since that time wife and I have reared
 five children, all living, two of whom,
 girls, were born in Albany; two boys,
 were born in McMinnville and one,
 the youngest, a girl, born in Polk Co.,
 on a fruit farm. These details may
 seem somewhat monotonous to you,
 but they will serve to give a setting of
 the whole Crawford family.

It was on the 13th of April 1881 that
 we said good bye to Albany for the
 first time. With reluctance we left
 the city of our adoption, and even now
 regrets linger around the time. We say
 providence hindered our stay and I
 prefer to think so rather than attribute
 a like action to fate. Many times has
 the course of human events changed
 our lives and sent us ^{in a new channel} ~~on a new course~~
 but the memory of those early days can
 never be erased from our minds.

WESTERN BRANCH

COMPANY
INCORPORATED

1819

AETNA INSURANCE COMPANY

WESTERN BRANCH
ESTABLISHED

1853

18TH FLOOR INSURANCE EXCHANGE - 175 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD

CHICAGO, ILLS.

WM. J. CRAWFORD, AGENT
ALTON, ILLS.

Perhaps I might say in passing that I am still engaged in providing an education for my children. If I have no other virtue, I seem to think this one trait will suffice to mitigate many failings. Marie, the second daughter born in Albany, will graduate in June. She has the missionary spirit and hopes to go to the foreign field some day.

Now, to return to former days again. And I presume I must confine myself to the narrow limits of the two and one-half years I was with you. I remember the first text, Rom. 1:16. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first and also to the Greek." The Bible from which I read the passage I still have, and it is more than 40 years in the family. It has many marked and worn pages, but its sayings and exhortations I revere to this day. I love the church to whom I preached and trust that those who have gone on before have triumphed over death through a living faith and have gone home to heaven to await our coming.

I refrain from mentioning any names for, to tell the truth, I do not know how many and who are still living of that happy number. I can recall many who have gone from your midst, and presume the new members, although strangers to me, are bound by the indissoluble ties of love

WESTERN BRANCH

COMPANY
INCORPORATED

1819

AEINA INSURANCE COMPANY

WESTERN BRANCH
ESTABLISHED

1853

18TH FLOOR INSURANCE EXCHANGE - 175 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD

CHICAGO, ILLS.

WM. J. CRAWFORD, AGENT
ALTON, ILLS.

to the whole family of God in heaven
and on earth.

It would certainly be a great pleasure
to meet with you again, renew old acquaint-
ances and form new ones, and my wife
would also enjoy the same, but she is
too far away to make the trip. Some
day, let us hope, we may meet and enjoy
each other's fellowship. Till then, "God be
with you."

In order that I may not add weariness
to my letter, I will ask that you
remember the family of which I am
the senior member in your prayers
to Heity, and be assured that I grant
what I ask, to the end that you
may all be blessed of Him who
makes the sparrows fall and safely
wafted to eternal shores.

fraternally your brother,
Wm J Crawford
former pastor.