

Oregon Historical Society

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GEO. H. HIMES, Assistant Secretary and Curator
Phone Main 1944

Rooms in City Hall, between Fourth, Fifth, Madison and Jefferson Streets

Portland, Oregon, ~~Nov. 25, 1907.~~ 190

Cyrus H. Walker,
Albany, Oregon,

Dear Sir and Brother:

Yours of the 23d inst. just in. In reply I am sorry to say that it will be impossible for me to go to Walla Walla, much as I would like to, on account of being "financially disturbed" on the 11th of this month, at which time almost every dollar of my ready cash was tied up for I do not know how long. I feel sure that it will come out all right in the long run, but the contraction at the present time in my "circulating medium" makes me uncomfortable,

I was in Walla Walla last month, and have often been there during the past twenty-five years. The changes in all the surrounding region are beyond description. It is practically a solid wheatfield from the time you leave the Umatilla river at Pendleton ~~all~~ the way to Walla Walla, a distance of 47 miles. Near Athena, Oregon, on the way to W.W., I was told that there was a field of 357 acres of wheat which yielded an average of 72 bushels and six pounds to the acre, this year. About seven years ago, when I was at Pendleton one time, Thomas J. Kirk, whose people settled at Brownsville, Linn county, in 1847, told me that he had one hundred acres near Athena which, for three successive years, had yielded an average of 51 bushels to the acre.

It is sad to think of Mr. Wheeler's ~~condition~~ ^{breaking down}, yet for a good while I have known that his condition was critical. He has borne up remarkably under his weight of years, and deserves to be remembered in the annals of his adopted State as a conspicuously useful citizen. For that reason I would like to have you send me his picture, and such data about his career as you may have or can get, and I will see to getting it into the Oregonian after he passes away, unless you prefer to do so directly. In an ^{interview} I had with him several years ago I secured considerable data about his early life, but in looking over it do not seem to have anything about his second marriage. Kindly send me this, so that it may be added to what I already have. He was and still is a member of the Oregon Pioneer Association and also of the Oregon Historical Society, but I have not collected dues from ^{him} for the last two years owing to his enfeebled condition, and have not asked any one in charge of his affairs for the respective amounts, aggregating \$10.00 altogether.

~~Survey me sympathies to...~~

(breaking ground for)²

In the matter of the first railroads running out of Portland I have this to say: Ground was broken on the west side on April 14, 1868, and on the east side ~~##~~ on April 16, 1868. I have the shovel in my custody with which the earth was first tackled on the east side. It was provided by

— Sam. M. Smith —

"Pill" Smith, a druggist, whose wife was the first white child born in Salem, and whose father was Hamilton Campbell, who came on the Lausanne, leaving New York in October, 1839, and arrived at Fort Vancouver June 1, 1840. This lady was born in Salem October 16, 1840. But this is foreign to your question. This shovel bears a silver plate which is suitably inscribed respecting the event ~~##~~ ⁱⁿ which ^(it) was a mute participant.

With all due respect to the prohibitionists, anti-saloon leagues, and the entire lot of temperance workers combined, the liquor men ~~##~~ of these later days have really done more to further the cause of prohibition ^(practically) than all other efforts combined. It has ~~##~~ been a case of "doing evil that good might come of it"—not with that intention, however, by a great deal, on the part of the liquor men. No sane person can help rejoicing over the failure of the liquor folks in their efforts to make liquor selling "respectable." At the same time, I am disturbed over this condition, viz.: When I was in Portland, Maine, six years ago last October, I took especial pains to make all the investigation I could respecting the sale of liquor there, and did not find one saloon; and yet the fines for selling liquor for the month of September preceding were between \$15,000 and \$16,000, and during the week I was there I saw more drunken men than I ever saw in this city in any one week. ^{And Portland, Me., at the time had a population of ~~##~~ not ~~##~~ 50,000—} This experience, and others that I might name convinces me that prohibition does not, and never will, necessarily prohibit, and that the ultimate end and aim of all temperance workers should be to drop all factional differences--each, however, continuing to work along the line he thinks the most effective,--and unite ~~##~~ ^(absolutely) ~~##~~ solidly on the one and only effective platform of "Total Abstinence." If the people can be reared so as not to want liquor, there will not be any body to sell it to them. In any amount of our temperance work we hitch the cart before the horse,

and wonder why we do not make progress. It is my opinion, and always has been, that the person who steps up to a bar to get a drink of whisky is as guilty as the man who sells it to him; and that it is pleading the "baby act" for any one to say that he was "Tempted and could not help it!" However, I had no intention of running off on a ^a tangent ~~#####~~ like this, and do not mean to cast any reflection upon prohibitionists--on the contrary, I recognize the great value of their work ^(persistently) in keeping up the temperance agitation, which at last is coming to stand for something.

Express my sympathy to Mrs. Wheeler in her trials'

Sincerely yours,

Geo H Stines