

CARTER WRITES OF "BACK EAST"

After 35 years of sojourning in the great northwest, 33 of which were spent in the Grande Ronde valley, I concluded to satisfy a desire that had been with me for several years—to visit the scenes of boyhood days, to wander over the old trails, to see relatives and schoolmates—back where the latch string's hanging from the door, where every neighbor round the place is dear as a relation, back where we used to be so happy and so poor.

Accordingly, I boarded the train at La Grande on the 18th day of May and began retracing the trail where 35 years ago the elite mode of traveling was the northwestern stage, whose locomotive power was engineered, fired and presided over generally by such men as George Quinby, Jimmy Cutter and a multitude of others. In four days lacking five hours, I arrived in Broad St., Pa., railroad station at Philadelphia. After visiting a few days with relatives and schoolmates at this place, I repaired to the rural districts in Lancaster county, Pa., and Cecil county, Maryland—my old stamping ground.

On May 28th I attended the funeral at West Nottingham of the late governor of Maryland, Austin Lane Crothers. For a number of years in boyhood days we had lived within a mile of each other, hunted the feative rabbit together and attended the same schools, one an old log cabin with rudely constructed desks, and when this homely edifice of learning was destroyed by fire, an old wheelwright shop was fitted up and did duty for school purposes for two years until a more pretentious one took its place. Alpheus Crothers was a poor man who maintained his large family mostly by playing the violin for the country dances and Austin, who was the seventh son, arose from a poor boy to the highest office in the state, and left a fortune of \$50,000.

The first relative I visited in Maryland was a cousin 32 years old. He had a wife and three children but of course I had a very faint recollection of them.

The country looked very much the same but the houses were nearer together and the houses much nearer together than I imagined. The roads are 30 feet wide. The country is rather hilly, so that in traveling one is constantly going up or down a hill and where it is necessary to construct a grade there is usually just enough room for teams to pass. To keep the frequent downpours of rain from washing out the roads it is necessary to construct occasional offsets in the roads, to let the water into the side ditches. After giving this description of the roads it is for me to state that this country is not a paradise for the automobilist.

The homes are beautiful and at the prices that had...

The improvements would be the greater part of the purchase price. In order to raise crops in that country some kind of fertilizer has to be used and this means that the commercial fertilizer bill is ever present with the farmer whether any crop is raised or not and landed debts like the poor are with them always. The help problem with them is a difficult one. When farm wages were reduced to ten dollars a month young men flocked to the cities and obtained employment there, mostly from the railroad companies until now there is very little help left except some of the colored population.

On June 12th with a party of school mates I attended the commencement exercises at the Tamm Institute at Port De Poell, Md., and listened to an interesting lecture on the "Six Leading Poets of America" by Russell H. Conwell, pastor of the Tamm Baptist church, and president of the Temple academy in Philadelphia. On the 3rd of July I went to visit friends in Jersey City and New York. Passes were obtained to inspect the inside wonders of the Olympic, the Massachusetts and the Lusitania. We explored the mysteries of the Olympic (steamer ship to the Titanic) the largest passenger vessel afloat and left anchored at that time. We visited the Statue of Liberty on Bedloe's Island in New York harbor. Wall street, the change, Trinity church, Broadway, park, Gen Grant's tomb and many other places of interest. Almost two weeks had passed away and seemed but a very short, hasty visit when I

was struck with what my eastern friends term the "Call of the Wild" but it was what very few of them know anything about: "The Call of an Oregon Harvest."

As I was checking my valise at

Philadelphia, the man next in line remarked to the clerk "I wish you would put me inside that valise and ship me. I used to be out there and would like to go back again."

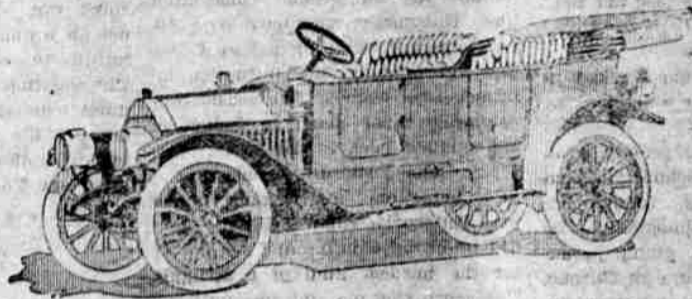
A short time after registering at a

hotel in Chicago a man stepped up, looked over the register and remarked: "Hello! A man from God's country." I came back by the Great Northern to Spokane. The crops were good in North Dakota and Montana. A res-

ident told me it was the only crop they had had for three years. There were occasional showers of rain as we came along. This side of Spokane the wheat had fallen down badly in many places. Harvesting and threshing were just starting in the Walla Walla country. I reached La Grande July 14, after a two months' round of

pleasures, the last but not least of which was arriving at home, better satisfied than ever with the lines, "Grande Ronde valley"

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