

MEEKER LEAVES WORK UNFINISHED

Bequeaths Great Cause to American People With His Death in Seattle.

By Dr. Howard R. Briggs (Professor of English Teaching New York University and President Oregon Trail Memorial Association)

A few months ago there died in the city of Seattle a pioneer whose name, Ezra Meeker, has become almost a household word in our land.

The work to which he was clinging up to his dying breath, was the saying in vitalized and enduring forms the great epic of the Westward March of America.

At the age of seventy-six, when most men are ready to lay down their burdens, this intrepid American had conceived the idea of re-creating the fading old trails along which fully three hundred fifty thousand covered wagon pioneers from every state then existing—North and South—had made the toilsome journey over prairies and mountains and deserts to plant our empire states beyond the Rockies.

where he was welcomed by President Roosevelt, who gave hearty approval to the old pioneer's efforts to make our history live again in throbbing reality.

Leaves a Cause Ezra Meeker has passed away, but he has bequeathed to us a cause that must not die. What is that cause? Outwardly it is the marking and monumenting of a famous old trail.

We are prone to think of the old Overland Trail as a Western Trail. It is no western trail at all—except geographically.

The West, may I remind you is simply the transplanted East. It is no more—it is in a very real sense the blended North and South.

Native Sons These heroes—may I repeat—were native sons of all our older states. Listen to the names of just a few of them—Captain Robert Gray, who by discovering the Columbia, gave us our initial claim to the Pacific Northwest.

as a boy trapper discovered the Great Salt Lake, were Virginians; Wilson Price Hunt, who led the Mormon overland, and Captain Zouluon Pike, of Pike's Peak fame, were sons of New Jersey; Edward Robinson, who fighting under Daniel Boone, was shot and scalped and left for dead on the Bloody Ground, was one of the three Kentuckians who found the South Pass, the great gateway of the Rockies; Jedediah Smith, the first to dare the great American desert, and Dr. Marcus Whitman and his devoted wife, who gave their lives to carry Christianity beyond the Rockies, were from old New York; Nat Wyeth, who built Fort Hall—a place of refuge and help for weary emigrants to California and Oregon, was from Massachusetts; John C. Fremont, the fearless pathfinder, who by a daring stroke won California, was a son of old Georgia.

It is out of stirring episodes such as this—which may be duplicated by the thousands, that the epic of the winning of the West is woven. The vital significance educationally of the saving and teaching these humanized bits of our history is amply shown in the following incident. Not long since a lecture on America's greatest trail was given in the Bronx, New York City before an audience made up mainly of high school students of foreign parentage.

Let me give you just one glimpse of some of the hardships and of the fine American courage embodied in that epic making march and conquest. Here is a throbbing incident I had read the other day from the lips of George Himes, the aged secretary of the Oregon Historical Association.

It has been my privilege during the past month to cover eight thousand miles of our country in the interest of the cause I have just given in essence to you. Everywhere I found historical activities and a most encouraging spirit of cooperation to forward the purposes of our association.

Blocking our way was a great precipice fully a thousand feet down. The dense virgin forest defied our progress to right or left, we could not hew a way for our train through it. To turn back meant starvation.

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taken out of the wagons to make a cable, but when tied together there were not long enough. The leader rose to the emergency. He ordered that one of the oxen be killed. This was done, the hide of the faithful beast was taken off and cut into strips which were added to the ropes and chains. Still the cable was too short.

"Kill two more oxen," commanded our leader. The men obeyed, and with this added rawhide achieved their purpose. Our twenty-nine wagons were let down the precipice. One of them breaking loose, was smashed into kindling wood. The others, safely landed in the gorge below, were reassembled. Then the goods, carried on the backs of men, women and children down a crazy trail, were reloaded, the oxen brought down. Finally the train moved on painfully down the rocky canyon until at last it reached the smiling country where the great cities of Tacoma, and Seattle have since been builded by these and other dauntless Americans.

There is a challenge to America. If our salute to the flag is to be not merely of the hand but from the heart, we must cease the too common practice of feeding pupils on the husks of history and give to them the bread of life. If we are to implant a living love for our constitution and our country, we must, with all due respect to the virtues, make our history vibrate in the hearts of America's youth.

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Like bees out of a hive, impatient to be buzzing around, thousands of agile boys and young men have begun to swarm upon the cinders, about the jumping pits and over the hurdles. Track and field activity is a sure harbinger of spring in schools and colleges throughout the country.

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La Grande, Ore. Baker, Ore.

Sport Slants by ALAN J. GOULD

How will Campolo fare in a bout with Carnera? It may take a wrecking crew to clear the debris if these two heavyweight huskies meet but the Gasky Gauthier of the Argentine at least is following a more rugged path than the Ambling Alp from Italy, in preparation for their projected outdoor battle.

In his last four fights against such men as Heeneey, Scott and Risko (twice), Campolo has fought nearly 40 rounds. He has taken a battering but he has also improved against tough foemen. Carnera has appeared in an even dozen affairs only one of which, with the negro Ace Clark, bore the semblance of being a contest.

It develops that variations of the Rockne and Warner shifts, in widespread use on the gridiron, caused sufficient trouble for the football rules-makers to take action against them. As taught by the masters themselves, these shifts before the ball is put into play have been so accurately developed and timed that few, if any, infractions of the "stop-rule" have been incurred. Less experienced coaches of the same schools, however, have made it a hard life for officials trying to enforce the old rule requiring a stop of "approximately" one second. They no were fortified by the new regulation calling for a halt on the shift of "at least" one second or the equivalent of a rapid count of six, instead of four.

If it keeps up much longer, sports of all sorts literally will be in the spotlight. College football was played under the incandescents in many parts of the country last year. On May 6 the Dea Moines baseball club of the Western league will spring an innovation by opening its season at night under a battery of 146 floodlights.

In addition to baseball and football the outdoor sports which have taken to illumination include track and field, soccer, tennis, skating, trapshooting and golf, in its miniature course form, such as flourish in Florida.

The Texas and Southern Methodist relays furnished the impetus for an April campaign that draws nationwide attention to the end of the month to Philadelphia and Dea Moines, where the Pennsylvania and Drake 10,000 athletes compete annually in these spectacular meets, with the Fresno relays on the Pacific coast furnishing a simultaneous chance on April 26 for more concentrated track and field competition than any other day in the year.

On this date it may be possible to compare the performances of three of the country's greatest college sprinters. Unoriginally they cannot be gotten together for the day, but it will be worth noting the returns if Frank Wykoff of Southern California performs at Fresno, Cy Leland of Texas Christian does his stuff at Dea Moines and George Simpson of Ohio State again leads the sprinting parade at Philadelphia.

Simpson, Wykoff and Leland all have hit the world's official record figure of 9.35 seconds for the "100" so often that it has ceased to be startling. Simpson ran the first "hundred" ever witnessed on historic Franklin field last April but later, with the starting blocks he did "nine-four" at Chicago. Leland has started his 1930 drive sensationally in Texas and Wykoff has been pronounced unbeatable on the coast.

It will be one of the high spots of the year if these three, with Talan, Bruce and a few others, can be collected for the National Collegiate championships in Chicago next June.

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