

George L. Curry, who was once its editor, has enabled us to present some facts and figures—curious, amusing and interesting—upon the subject in hand, which will entertain while they instruct the mass of the readers of this day. We find in the copy of the *Spectator* of January 7, 1847, a statement of the wheat product of the preceding year for the whole area now embraced in the great Willamette valley, the West Side and Columbia river counties, Clackamas and Clatsop, and all of Washington Territory between the Columbia and Puget Sound. It is as follows:

Champoeg County.....60,000 bushels.

Tualatin ".....30,000 "

Yamhill ".....27,000 "

Polk ".....15,000 "

Clackamas, Vancouver, Clatsop

and Lewis Counties.....25,000 "

Total.....157,000 "

Of this total product the estimated surplus was

50,000 bushels. The population at that time could

not have been far from 8,000 souls, counting

settlers, half-breeds, and Indians who lived in the

settlements or in somewhat civilized condition.

The American white population was about 4,000.

At the election for Governor, in June, 1847, the

total vote was 1,974, and it is fair to estimate that,

as the proportion of adult males to the number of

women and children at that day was much in ex-

cess of what it is now, and the ratio of voters to

non-voters much less, the total population must

have approximated very nearly the figure we give

above, and in this estimate we are supported by

good authority from pioneer citizens. The home

consumption of wheat was then, we may safely

reckon, much larger per capita than at present, be-

cause the supply of other essential articles of food

was materially less. In oat, beef and venison

and wheat (bolled) and salmon (in season), were

the staples of food of that primitive period, and

even flour was not so commonly to be had in re-

mote regions on account of the lack of grist mills

and the difficulties which interposed in its trans-

portation to far-off localities.

We have shown what was the wheat product of

nearly thirty years ago, of the vast area out of

which has since been carved half of Wash-

ington Territory, and the remainder now com-

prises the counties on this side of the California

Ranges, from the Cascades to the Pacific. The

statement of 1847 gives no idea of the average

yield per acre, nor of the acreage under cultiva-

tion. But the omission was evidently not attrib-

utable to the editor, who seems to have been

fully awake to the importance of the development

of the Territory in agricultural and other points

of view at that early day. He remarks that

"Oats grow excellently well throughout the Ter-

ritory," and he foresees with an intelligence and

accuracy of judgment in these days being realized

that: "In the space of a few years, or soon as it

is made an object, we shall have another

great and important staple in the article of Hemp,

the culture of which has been already fairly tested

in this county with the most gratifying results."

With correct prophetic mind did editor Curry

further say that: "The cultivation of Tobacco,

which had been tried with equivocal success, will

hardly afford sufficient encouragement to more ex-

tensive operations." But he wrote confidently

and soundly, too, in prophecy, as the demonstra-

tion is now simply before us: "Only give Oregon

but a fair chance, and her commerce will yet

whiten the waves of the Pacific and Indian oceans."

He might also have added the Atlantic. For,

since he penned his "hasty and unfinished article,"

as he himself characterizes the now very valuable

statement of facts which he then gave and the

singularly correct predictions he then put forth,

to a grand and gratifying position has Oregon

grown and advanced in the realm of Agriculture

and in the broad channels of Commerce. Instead

of a total product of 100,000 bushels of wheat out

of which to furnish a surplus of 50,000 bushels,

the counties of the Willamette, the Umpqua, and

the West Side, produce a yearly aggregate of

nearly 8,000,000 bushels, of which more than four-

sixths is exported in the grain to Europe, or man-

ufactured into flour, is shipped to the various ports

of the Pacific and the China and Indian seas, to

the Atlantic side, and to the United Kingdom.

And what is especially a matter of pride as well as

of profit to our producers, this wheat ranks as the

finest in the world and the yield per acre is greater

than that of any other of the States of the Union, far

more so several of them are for the fertility of the

soil and the excellence of their wheat.

Agreeably to the sanguine prediction of the Ore-

gon City *Spectator* of the long ago—and, in the

table of Oregon's existence as a settled Territory

or State, thirty years back is equivalent to more

than a century of the Atlantic sea-board—"long

ago"—Flax, too, has already become to be con-

sidered as an "important staple," and so has the

super-excellence of the crop in Oregon been

demonstrated. Much of our low, wet lands, not so

well adapted for wheat culture, will gradually be

turned to more profitable account in the cultiva-

tion of flax, and though there seems to be a slug-

gishness in the market this year the superiority

of the product will eventually open its way to lucra-

tive trade. And another staple, not so much as

described, of hardly, in the primitive days, already

known with what quite disputes the title to promi-

nence in our State—that of Wool. Here the

Spanish Merino, the hardier British and Aus-

tralian Cotswolds and Leicestershires, and the

improved thoroughbreds or graded breeds from

Canada, or from Vermont and New York, thrive

as they do where else seem to do, and the fine and

course wools of Oregon have become noted and

favorites in the great wool markets of the Atlantic

Coast.

Then came our great Lumbering trade, our un-

equaled Salmon fisheries, and our growing and in-

creasing manufacturing enterprises—Iron Mines,

Iron Works, Woolen Factories, Machine Shops,

Furniture Manufactories, Ship Yards, Flouring,

Oil, Paper, and other Mills—and the very lucrative

and extensive lines of ocean and river steam

navigation, the outgoing and home traffic in which

sailing vessels are engaged, and the improvement

wrought in internal transportation by means of

lines of railway,—all so far in advance of what

even the most sanguine, the most prophetic, and

the most extravagant in hopefulness, among the

Pioneers of 1843, could have conjured or antici-

ipated would so soon have come to fruition. We

copy from the advertisements in the *Spectator* the

following quaint and humorous notice to all con-

cerned, which will in itself best reveal the situa-

tion so far as the navigation interests of the

Territory were then involved:

Passengers' Own Line.

THE SUBSCRIBER BEGS LEAVE TO IN-

form the public that he has well caulk'd,

gum'd and greas'd the light draft and fast

running boats, MOGUL and BEN FRANKLIN,

now in port for freight or charter, which will ply

regularly between Oregon City and Champoeg

during the present season.

Passage gratis, by paying 10 cents specie, or \$1

on the stores. Former rules will be observed—

passengers can board with the Captain, by finishing

their own provisions.

N. B.—Punctuality to the hour of departure is

earnestly requested. As time waits for no man,

the boats will do the same.

April 30, 1848. BOIT, NEWELL.

Rare "Old Bob Nowell!" He was well known

to all the early Pioneers, and to many who came

after them, down to the close of his eventful life,

a few years ago. He claimed to have brought across

the Rocky Mountains, in 1810, the first wagon

ever seen on this Western Slope of the Continent,

and almost all the years of his manhood life had

been passed in Oregon, at his Champoeg home—a

spot once so noted, now quite unknown, except to

the oldest inhabitants among us. Those who re-

member the sturdy old Pioneer will readily recall

his spirit of humor in the description of his boats,

in the gratis proviso for passengers, in the regula-

tions which bestow the honor of boarding with

the Captain, and in the ambiguous wording of his

requirement as to punctuality in the note bene—

"so much like stout old Captain Edward Cutler's

"So help me God and so I won't!"

The traveler of this day, as he ascends the beau-

tiful river from above Oregon City, will ask:

"Where is Champoeg?" He will be told it is,

practically, a place of the past. In Old Bob New-

ell's day, it ranked next to Oregon City in im-

portance. Then, there was no Portland, and

Salem was little more than the Methodist Mission.

The Willamette, above Champoeg, was navigated

only by canoes, and from Oregon City to Astoria

was a route without a stopping-place, except upon

the river's wild banks, innocent of settlement or

habitation of the whites, but possessed or roamed

over or used as fishing stations by the various

tribes of Indians. And it was to Oregon City or

to Vancouver—the only other trade depot above

Astoria, which was not then a port of stoppage or

supply,—that the one or two ships fitted out each

year from England with goods to the Hudson Bay

Company, or the less regular ships that were sent

from Atlantic ports to supply the Missions, or

upon trading ventures, in those early times came

to discharge cargo and freight away the furs and

peltry which then constituted the chief if not the

only staple of export from Oregon—now enjoying

an export traffic of several millions per annum.

Champoeg, a sort of ancient Tyre—yet hardly to

be likened to a modern Suez—of Oregon, without

the tool of the winter of 1852-53, which swept

away several of its largest and best located build-

ings for business uses, but it was the more dis-

astrous, terrible flood of December, 1861, which

washed and wiped it out of existence almost as

ruthlessly as did the Great Alexander lay waste

and barren the ancient city of the Tyrians. Only

one or two houses high up and far back from the

bank upon the river mark the site where the busy

place once stood, and yet there had been houses

there not built upon the sand, but on the solid

rock. The resistless waters in their furious rush

swept them as the hurricane sweeps the frail

shoots of the open plain, and to this day no hand

has engaged to warrant the assurance that Cham-

poeg will be itself again. Above the desolated

town site, on the hill whereon he so loved in his

life to roam and make his point of outlook, in a

favorite spot, repose all that is mortal of Old Cap-

tain Bob Nowell, and as from his grave we look

down upon the dreary flat which once was the

scene of his busiest days and boisterous rollickings,

whenever he sailed his "well caulk'd, gum'd

and greas'd" ("shades of the Ancient Mariner, what

a way to serve a boat—to gum and grease her")

light draft and fast running boats, the Mogul and

Ben Franklin," let us drop a tear to the memory

of the rough and ready old Pioneer, and, with the

regret that if the phœnix is powerless to spring up

again in a fresh Champoeg, mingle the joyful

reflection, to make all of us the gladder, that there

has been built up a Portland, now the emporium

of this Northwest Coast, the richest jewel in the

golden crown of Oregon, whose wealth is more in sub-

stance than in shine, more solid to build upon than

merely to display, and whose more prosperous

future is as assured by every sound rule of natured

judgment as is the postulate that the richest soil is

the most substantial and enduring wealth. And,

as it is most natural for towns and cities upon a

river to grow downward with the river's flow,

even as they upward flourish in condition, so now

is it from Portland to Oregon City, and from here,

too, to every other river town, to every ocean port,

domestic or foreign, that boats and ships and

steamers sail or depart on short trips or long

voyages. And the prophet of the *Spectator* of

1847, we are glad to say, still lives to witness the

soundness of his prognostications in Pioneer days

expressed.

AN UNFORTUNATE RESEMBLANCE.

By LIEUT. GRAHAME.

Some years ago, while journeying through

Eastern lands, it was my pleasure to be

welcomed by many of the English officers

stationed in India, and many were the gay

parties we enjoyed together, and the dar-

ing hunts we had in the jungles after "big

game," from the elephant down to the t-

iger.

My most intimate companion among

those noble fellows was Oscar De Luce, a

young Englishman of wealth, and a hand-