

OREGON CITY ENTERPRISE.

VOL. 36. NO. 38

OREGON CITY, OREGON, FRIDAY, AUGUST 2, 1901.

ESTABLISHED 1866

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MR. MOSS WROTE IT.
Authorship of "Prairie Flower"
Is Discussed.

MRS. CLARK UNEARTH THE FACTS
How Her Father Wrote the Manuscript
and How Bennett Received the
Credit.

The following letter of Mrs. Nora Moss Clark will be of much interest to the pioneers and others of this vicinity, to whom Mr. Moss has long been a prominent figure. An editorial from the Oregonian follows the letter:
OREGON CITY, Ore., July 29.—(To the Editor.)—I have seen your editorial of Sunday the 28th in regard to the authorship of "The Prairie Flower." From earliest childhood I have heard the facts in connection with the writing of this pioneer book. For five years, during the two campaigns of William Henry Harrison for the presidency, my father, Dr. S. W. Moss, was editor of the Piqua (Ohio) Gazette, and had always been more or less accustomed to literary work.



This photograph of Willamette Falls was taken from below the falls and shows the upper river and bluffs in the background. It is probably the best picture of the falls in existence, taken during high water when the falls are at their best.

In April, 1842, my father arrived in Independence, Mo., intending to go on a geological survey to the Rocky Mountains, but some delay occurring, he joined an emigrant party for Oregon. For some time he had had in mind a story of the West, and upon this journey of 1842 he began "The Prairie Flower," incorporating into it many descriptions of actual scenes along the way. The real heroine of the story, as I have always heard, was a beautiful girl of that emigration. Her real name I never knew, or have forgotten. My mother described her as being very graceful and pretty. A well-known spot on the bluff above Willamette Falls, called in the book "The Lovers' Retreat" was often pointed out to me as the place where the heroine and her family camped on their arrival at Oregon City. The tale was completed here in Oregon City, and parts of it were read in the old Lyceum in the winter of 1842 and 1843. When the Spectator was started, and the Argus later, my father was an occasional contributor and some of these early effusions are still in his scrapbook.
My father built the first hotel in Oregon City, and among the many guests came eventually William Johnson, an old friend of my father's first wife, who had died in Cincinnati. On account of old association, my father always had a high regard for Mr. Johnson, and when finally Mr. Johnson decided to return to the States, he entrusted to him the manuscript of "The Prairie Flower," to do with it what he would or could.

Mr. Johnson handed the manuscript to Emerson Bennett, who in his preface does not claim to have written it, but gives a fanciful sketch of the mysterious stranger who placed the document in his hand. Unexpectedly the book became a great success, but my father never received a cent of pay or credit. Oregon was far away then, out of the world, so to speak, and hard to reach or hear from. As a little child I heard all this discussed in the family, but nothing was ever done about it. In the meantime the book went through several editions, amounting in all, so it is claimed, to 100,000 copies, and out of it Bennett won fame and fortune. No one arising to contest his claim, it always went under his name and he added to it a weak and inconsequent sequel.
I have often heard pioneers say that it was the reading of that story that first influenced their fancy for Oregon. Boys sitting on the old ox wagon tongues read it in Missouri away back in the '50s before starting out "across the plains." My father is now in his 92d year, and his memory, of course, is failing, but I speak of matters known in our family for years.
NORA MOSS CLARK.

The account of the origin of the romance or novel known as "The Prairie Flower," given in a letter from Oregon City, bears upon its face unquestionable marks of accuracy and truth. The novel has so many touches of local color that it cannot be doubted that the materials were had from one familiar with Oregon and with the journey across the plains. That these materials, with much of the

narrative, were supplied by Mr. Moss, and by him handed to William Johnson, who passed them on to Emerson Bennett, we see no reason to doubt. Bennett, unquestionably, made additions, gave touches throughout, and perhaps elaborated the plot. It was a great novel in its day. Everybody read it, and down to 1868 not less than 100,000 copies had been sold.

The statement of Dr. Geiger that William Johnson was the author receives explanation through the letter of Mrs. Clark, daughter of Mr. Moss. To Dr. Geiger and others Johnson doubtless claimed the authorship. It is fortunate indeed that light is thus thrown on the genesis of this highly interesting romance and literary episode of the early history of Oregon. Few American novels have had a more extended run than this one had in its day; and their can be no doubt that a large edition of "The Prairie Flower," and of its sequel, "Leni Leati," if now reprinted, could be sold in the Pacific Northwest States. It has had no circulation here these thirty or perhaps forty years.

For a long time everybody attributed the authorship to Emerson Bennett. Literary knowledge, critical judgment, scarcely existed then in the West. And in the literary world Scott, Irving and innumerable writers had followed the plan of presenting their romances and

GOT THEIR SCALPS
Red Men Victorious Over the Foresters Last Sunday.

VANCOUVER BEATS COMPANY A.
Latter Team Has Two Games Scheduled to Play Here.—Willamette Win From Ramblers.

The Red Men took the scalps of the Foresters last Sunday by a 21 to 11 score. Willamette field was fairly well sprinkled with fans when the game was called and both nines were photographed before the game. The pick of Pitcher Randall is deserving of much commendation as he was batted all over the lot and stayed with it. Sheriff Cooke caught like a veteran and took the sphere off the bat with amazing grace. Kelly ran bases like a scared wolf, while Reckner and Holman showed the people bow ball was played in the good old days that are past. The Foresters are a younger and more springy lot of men but the experience of the Indians was too much for them and the score of 21 to 11 tells the tale. The players and their positions were:
Red Men Positions Foresters
Ely L F T Flynn
Reckner 3 B Emery
Kelly S S Price
Fromong R F Stevens
Randall P Hilliard
Little C F B Flynn
Miller 1 B Gieser
Holman 2 B Marsnall
Cooke C Roll
Umpires—Pratt and Boylan.

Company A's nine played at Vancouver last Sunday. The Vancouverians put a stiff game but the Oregon City team held them level until Lee missed a fly and let in two runs. The score stood 7 to 6. Company A will try for revenge on Sunday, August 11, on which date they will play Vancouver on Willamette Falls field.

A game has been scheduled for next Sunday afternoon by Company A with the Hillsboro nine, which beat McMinnville some time ago. As McMinnville put it all over the Chemawas, it is evident that Hillsboro is up to snuff. Just how they will play against Company A is another matter. The nine will leave here in a special car for Portland, in time to catch the 7:30 train for Hillsboro.

The Willamette Pulp & Paper Co's. nine defeated the Portland Ramblers at Oswego last Sunday, shutting them out by a score of 6 to 0. The Willamettes have a game scheduled next Sunday with the Stars at Gervais and will play at McMinnville in the near future. The players and their positions were:
Willamettes Position Ramblers
W. Calif. C Allen
E. Calif. P Reed
J. Jones S S Walling
R. Rapp 1 B Hackett
Hodgkins 2 B Darney
W. Durie 3 B McDonald
Koerner L F Boggs
Kieser C F Ladow
Guitner R F Oswego
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Willamettes 0 0 0 0 1 0 3 2 0—6
Ramblers 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0—0
Base on balls, Reed; hit by pitcher, Calif; two base hits, Koerner, W. Calif, 2; E. Calif, 2; three base hits, Hodgkins; wild pitch, Reed; time of game, one hour and 20 minutes; umpires, Boylan and Woodward.

ORGANIZATION COMPLETED.
Business Men Form a Retail Merchants' Association.

Oregon City's business men met Tuesday evening in the city hall, and completed the organization of a protective association. The meeting was well attended and few of the merchants were absent. The following officers were elected: Charles O. Albright, president; Frank Busch, vice-president; Frank Barlow, treasurer; C. A. Schuebel, secretary. The board of directors will be elected at the next meeting.

A constitution and by-laws have been prepared but will not be presented until the next meeting, when it is expected every business man in the city will attend.

The organization will be known as the Retail Merchants' Association of Oregon City and its objects are:

To foster and maintain a permanent social feeling among the merchants of Oregon City.

To devise ways and means to improve and increase the retail trade of Oregon City.

To improve the roads, to provide markets for all the products of the country, and to advance in every legitimate way the commercial interests of Oregon City.

To attain the results which experience has proven are not attainable by individual or divided effort.

The next meeting will be held Tuesday evening of next week and at that time the new association will be placed on a permanent working basis.