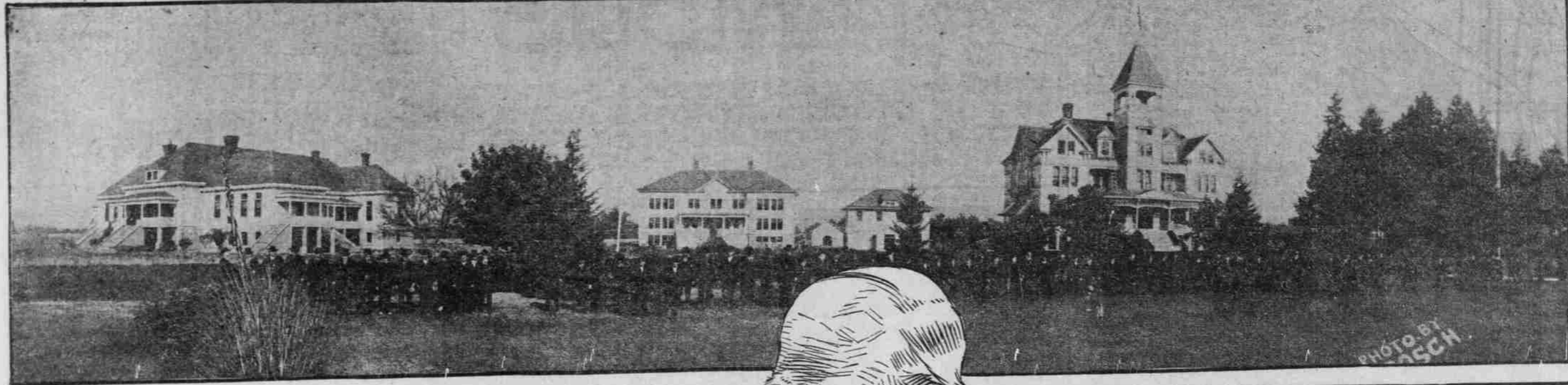


AT THE OREGON SOLDIERS' HOME



OREGON SOLDIERS HOME ROSEBURG

WHERE DEFENDERS OF THE NATION, NOW DESITUTE AWAIT SERENELY THE FINAL ROLL CALL



BY D. C. HUMPHREY.

IN one of the most beautiful of all the famous valleys of the Umpqua is located the Oregon Soldiers' Home. From the Southern Pacific depot at Roseburg it is one mile to the Home. The South Umpqua makes a large bend in the form of a horseshoe, and in the middle of a rich valley thus formed is the Home. In either direction fine fruit farms and prosperous homes make the scene a delightful and restful one, and a fitting place for the old veterans to pass the few remaining years allotted to them. Thousands of visitors stop at Roseburg annually and visit the Home. Going from this city one crosses a suspension bridge spanning the South Umpqua, round Mount Nebo, and the Home with all its beautiful settings lies before you. The Home is composed of four large buildings, the main building, the barracks, the hospital and the assembly hall, the latter having been completed within the last year. In the rear of the main building is a storage-room, which answers innumerable purposes, serving for a milkhouse, fruit storehouse and also for meat, vegetables and wood. All of the vegetables used at the Home are grown on the Home farm. Enough hogs are raised to supply the Home tables with all the meat of this nature used. A large, fine orchard furnishes fresh fruit during the Summer and Fall.

The main building is occupied by Commandant W. W. Elder and his family, and it is here also that the offices of Commandant and Adjutant E. J. Palmer are located. Part of the old veterans are housed in this building also.

Model of Cleanliness.

The hospital building is equipped with a full stock of drugs, and the operating-room is supplied with all the instruments known to modern medical science. It is here that one sees how time levies tribute on the aged veterans. The hospital always has a large number of inmates. Heart disease and paralysis work more havoc with the weakened constitutions of the old soldiers than any other disease. Twenty-three have died this year, and the hospital is full of those who have lost the use of a leg, an arm, and in some cases both, but they cling to life a little longer before they answer the final rollcall.

It is here that one cannot but notice the state of cleanliness which is everywhere evident. An unceasing warfare against dirt in all its forms is being constantly waged. The regular physician to the Home is Dr. E. V. Hoover, the present Mayor of Roseburg; but his assistant, Dr. Palmer, is in constant attendance at the hospital. Mrs. Palmer is the head nurse, and has an able staff of assistants, and the faithful service given by these attendants is greatly appreciated by the veterans whose infirmities confine them there.

On the lower or basement floor of the hospital building is contained one of the best dining-rooms of the Home. Breakfast is at 7 o'clock, dinner at 12 and supper at 6 are the eating hours, and all must be on time. Everyone has his regular seat, and all march in a stately and dignified manner to the table. The old soldiers are well fed, the tables comparing favorably with those of many of the first-class hotels.

Interested in Politics.

In the new assembly recently completed are comfortable settees. Here funerals

and lectures are held and Sunday services are conducted by a pastor from some of the Roseburg churches. However, the average old soldier is not much of a churchgoer and would go much further to attend a political gathering. In times like the present, when the National campaign is on, the old soldiers are like a hive of bees. When at meals or in the presence of officers politics are not mentioned, but when to themselves things wax warm and merry, the old fellows being greatly in earnest in their opinions. It was during the campaign of last Summer that excitement ran highest. Every old veteran who had the strength to walk the distance attended every political meeting held in this city. Chamberlain and Fulton were the issues, and the respective admirers were at sword's point, and it required the exercise of much diplomacy by some of the cooler heads to prevent the disputes from becoming serious.

The main sleeping apartments building, or barracks, contains the majority of the sleeping rooms. The rooms are large, light and airy, and are steam-heated. The entire interior is scrupulously gone over with brush and broom every morning. Several of the inmates have made very cozy and unique spots of their rooms, and in these they spend the greater part of their time.

Maintenance of the Home.

The Home was built in 1894, the present commandant assuming charge in 1902. The state appropriates annually \$16,000 for the maintenance of the Home. The United States supplements this fund by paying to the State Treasurer \$100 a year for each occupant of the Home who was mustered into the United States Army. There are now at the Home 23 veterans of the Indian War, three of the Mexican War, three of the Spanish War and 86 of the Civil War. Forty acres of land is contained in the Home grounds, and in making application for admission to the Home, the old soldier must prove that he has resided in Oregon 12 months prior to the time of making application, and that he is in destitute circumstances, and that he has no adequate means of support and that he is not receiving a pension of more than \$20 per month. If he can prove all this to the satisfaction of the County Judge of the county in which he resides, he is sent to the Home. Many of the old soldiers gave away their houses, hold goods and other property when they were given the opportunity of being sent to the Home.

Rules Not Strict.

The rules governing the Home are not strict, and Commandant Elder is very lenient with the old warriors. Cases of dismissal from the Home are very rare indeed, and then only for the most repeated violation of the rules. Upon receiving their pension money some of the veterans have been wont to indulge in the flowing bowl, but since Douglas County went "dry" at the last election nothing of this kind has occurred. The age of the veterans is from 90 to 96 years, and of such a large number there must be many whose tempers have not grown any milder with the advance of years, but owing to the excellent management everything is as harmonious as if they were all one big family.

At a recent session of the legislature money was appropriated to build four cottages so that when any old soldier was sent to the Home and did not wish to leave his wife, they could occupy these cottages. The number authorized to be



built are now occupied, and being double cottages are permitted to draw from the Home stores anything they may need.

Interesting Individualities.

The visitor will miss one of the most enjoyable parts of a visit to the Home if he fails to make the acquaintance of Mike Finn. Mike served through the Civil War in a Massachusetts regiment, and was present at some of the decisive battles of the war, and Mike can tell many interesting anecdotes of those battles in a manner peculiarly his own. Mike is 71 years of age, and came to the Home from Portland. With him he brought his pigeons and chickens, and for a length of time the inmates of the hospital were provided with many choice bits of chicken and pigeon until an unfeeling management (not the present one) caused the disappearance of the en-

tire lot of Mike's pets. He has not forgotten the deed to this day, and the visitor is never failed to be informed of the event. Another interesting indi-

vidual is Luther King, familiarly known as "Snake" King. Years ago during the month of August, he was bitten on the foot by a rattlesnake, and now every year during that month his foot swells as it did when first bitten. The poison was never completely eradicated from his system. The case baffles the skill of the best physicians.

For recreation the veterans are partial to the croquet grounds, and at all times during the day when the weather permits in bad weather they can play at chess, cards, checkers, or, as the Home has a good library and receives many magazines and newspapers, they can put in the hours at reading.

The old Civil and Indian war veteran is rapidly passing away, and it will ever be remembered by a grateful Nation that their declining years were made as comfortable and happy as is done for them at the Oregon Soldiers' Home. Roseburg, Oct. 8.

Speaker of the House, Congress appropriated \$1,000,000 for the construction of a public road from Cumberland, in Maryland, to Ohio. This road was specified by Congress to have a width of 100 feet, but it was given only a width of 30 feet. Since then Congress has at various periods donated several millions of dollars to the establishment of military roads; but not a single cent for the establishment and support of postal routes in the shape of public roads throughout the United States.

Statistics given in Whittaker's Almanac show that in 1907 the Government Postal Service had established 62,563 postoffices within the United States and used 483,406 miles of the public roads for the distribution of the postal and parcel matter. The volume of this matter amounted to 12,355,668,387 pieces. For the transportation and distribution of this matter the department paid to railroads, stage lines, etc., \$78,900,093; but not one cent for the

use of the above mileage of roads! If the framers and fathers of the Constitution, in the day when the population was only 11,000,000, thought it necessary to give the Congress power to establish post roads in connection with postoffices throughout the United States, surely the same National policy is far more urgent and important in the present day! The Eastern States wear the mantle of commerce—trade and manufactures—the Middle and Pacific Coast States that of agriculture; the former can better afford the burden of road construction and maintenance than the latter. The public outcry for good roads is yearly on the increase in both the East and West; the farming community is expected to pay the cost. Is it not time, is it not more rational to appeal to Congress to exercise its Constitutional power in this National work? Posterity could well afford to bear a portion of the first cost. Woodstock, October 6.

Consequences to Us of Parcels Post Benefit to the Farmer and to the Country Store.

BY JOHN STROUP.

AGITATION for a general parcels post has been going on for many years and several of our Postmaster-Generals have seen fit to recommend its establishment. It seems rather inconsistent when I can send a package of merchandise from Portland to Rome for half a cent an ounce, but if a similar parcel is to be carried from this city to Vancouver, Wash., double this amount is necessary. Again a dutiable parcel weighing 11 pounds can be sent from here to almost any European country for 12 cents per pound; Mrs. Jones may want to send a parcel to Mrs. Smith, who resides on the same rural route only a mile distant, but she must pay 16 cents per pound postage to do so. It is generally understood that the great objection to a more equitable arrangement in this country has been the fear on the part of merchants in small towns of the catalogue houses in Chicago. If a material injury should result to the country merchant it has been the fear on the part of merchants in small towns of the catalogue houses in Chicago. If a material injury should result to the country merchant it has been the fear on the part of merchants in small towns of the catalogue houses in Chicago.

Increased revenue would be sufficient to provide the additional facilities for the carriers. There is no prospect of any hardship in this respect or of any added cost. On the other hand, the increased revenue reasonably expected will go far toward wiping out the postal deficit. On July 1 of this year \$2,299 rural routes were in operation; by the last of December the number will have been increased to about 40,000. Three packages a day on each at the maximum weight would be \$2,250,000 a year.

This local service ought to add to the trade of thousands of country stores. The commercial bodies in several cities have, I understand, had this measure under discussion, and it is resolved against it, on the ground that it is but an opening wedge for a general parcels post system. But even if the general rates were to be somewhat reduced, the local merchants would always maintain their advantage, owing to the extremely low local rate.

A general parcels post would never be established at a rate less than the actual cost of the service. From the records of the special weighing of the mails in 1907, it was determined that the average haul of second-class matter is 640 miles. At this rate it is estimated that the average cost of handling fourth-class matter is \$12.16 per ton, or slightly more than 10 cents a pound. With the local rate of only 2 cents a pound, it is obvious that the general rate will always be many times as high. The Postmaster-General is now advocating a general rate of 12 cents per pound, which is six times the rate of the local rate. At that rate, there would be a profit to the department of \$27 per ton. The local rate can, of course, be made only because there is no cost of transportation and no additional cost of handling. The increase in revenue would be clear profit.

It would seem that the opposition to this local service must be based upon misunderstanding of what the proposal means. It is probably much like the communication from a certain merchant in a city which appeared in the Congressional Record of January 4, 1905, arguing against the 12 cents a pound rate.

The Postmaster-General is quoted as saying: "The free rural delivery has improved materially and intellectually the life of the farmer. Is it too much to ask that the department shall make a further use of this important system, a use which, while adding appreciably to the postal revenues, will directly and vitally benefit every man, woman and child within reach of a rural route? The countryman would have the necessities of life delivered at his gate at an average cost of 2 cents a pound, thereby saving him the expense of the roads. Better roads and improved postal facilities in the rural districts would result in increased values of farm lands. The rural service as now organized has accomplished something in this direction; its enlargement would add to the good attained." Portland, October 8.

Roman and American Builders of Public Road

Comparison Between 300 B. C. and 1908 A. D.—Will Uncle Sam Ever Rise to His Duties?

BY R. M. BRERETON, C. E.
ILL the American Nation ever rival the ancient Roman in viewing the construction and maintenance of good roads of paramount importance to the welfare, well-being and prosperity of every class? True it is that the Romans primarily built their splendid roads for the creation and maintenance of their great Mediterranean empire; but their commerce and agriculture always formed main objects. Rome and the chief cities were connected by wonderfully well-constructed roads, which have scintillated

astatement of the ancient and modern world during 2500 years. Rome was proud of her road enterprise. "All roads led to Rome," was the ancient boast. The Curator Viarum, or Superintendent of the Ways, was ever an officer of the highest standing among the Romans. Julius Caesar was the first Curator of the great Appian Way. Caesar Augustus was Curator of the Flaminian Way, Consul Tertullus was Curator of the Aemilian Way and Consul Marcellus of the Latin Way. Pliny and Statius wrote about these surveyors of the ways as holding the most honorable offices of the empire.

Before the Christian era Rome had built 29 of the grand roads connecting her empire with herself, amounting to 48,000 miles. Among these were (1) the Appian Way, 350 miles in length, which connected Rome with Brundisium (modern Brindisi) on the Adriatic Sea. It was Rome's greatest of all roads, and was called the "Queen of the Roman Ways"; (2) the Flaminian Way which connected Rome with the ancient town and port of Ariminum (modern Rimini) on the Adriatic; on this road there stands today the bridge of Augustus, one of the most perfect of ancient bridges; (3) the Aemilian Way, which also connected Rome with

Over 60 generations of posterity have used these roads and are using them today. Truly posterity has benefited by their ancestor's enterprise in this useful work for internal communication, and several times has some such local service been recommended by former Postmasters-General, but the rates proposed were always a straight 5 cents per pound. The rate of 2 cents per pound after the first pound is more liberal both to merchants and patrons, and still further protects the former against the competition of the mail-order houses.

The machinery for the added service is all here. True, some carriers may be compelled to provide the adequate conveyances they now should have. There is fear on the part of some carriers and Postmasters that the facilities may be swamped, but it is not likely that there will be any danger of that. Should the service become so successful beyond bounds, then the

What Has the United States Done? In 1871, the Framers and Fathers of the Constitution provided therein for the general welfare as follows: "The Congress shall have power to establish postoffices and post roads." (See Article 3.) Has Congress ever exercised this power for the general welfare of the Nation in the matter of public post roads? The answer is, yes; but in a most paltry fashion compared with the growth of population and commerce. In 1823-5, under the administration of the Democratic-Republican President Monroe (the "Era of Good Feeling"), and when Henry Clay was