

WILLAMETTE FARMER.

VOL. XIX.

SALEM, OREGON, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1887.

NO. 2.

OREGON PIONEER HISTORY.

SKETCHES OF EARLY DAYS.—MEN AND TIMES IN THE FORTIES

BY S. A. CLARKE.

Copyright applied for. All rights reserved.

Mission to California in 1848.

In the winter of 1847-8 great apprehension was felt in the Willamette country because of the painful circumstances that involved the entire region, the western settlements as well as the country east of the Cascades. The Whitman massacre blocked the highway for emigration and western Oregon was cut off from the world by that route of travel. That massacre precipitated the Cayuse war that called for all able bodied men to take the field and subdue the savages. The pioneers had no serious fear but that they would succeed, but the authorities felt this apprehension lest such success as might be attained should cost too much and involve many other massacres, which would certainly occur if the native tribes should all combine to attempt the destruction of the whites. Governor Abernethy and his council met to deliberate and consider what should be done and what was the duty of the provisional government under these circumstances. Though it was winter, the American volunteers were enlisted and waiting for spring to open the way of the upper country. Our region was only supplied with such arms and ammunition as the frontiersman and mountain man always had at hand.

When it came to equipping even a small force in a proper manner it could not be done. There was no government station of troops west of the Rocky mountains, no forts, arsenal or garrison within five hundred miles, except that the Mexican war had left a small force in California. The only recourse was then to equip a company to go to California and secure a loan of arms and ammunition from the officer in command there. There was not even a national armed vessel in the Columbia river to apply to for the needed relief.

It was easy to secure a force of picked men as Oregon volunteers to attempt this winter mission. On the last of January 1848, Capt. Scott, as captain, and Jesse Applegate, as commissioner, sixteen men in all, set out from the Rickreall valley. They had succeeded in crossing the Calapoosias and were crossing the main Cascade range to Klamath, and had neared the country when snow blocked their progress. Capt. Scott and seven men had turned back when snow was found to be four feet deep and becoming deeper, but Applegate and the rest of the party moved on, determined to accomplish their mission if it was a human possibility.

Applegate said he felt his responsibility and would spare no effort. Minto said he came along to do what he could, and if "one man was enough to count him in." Walter Monteith said: "I am another." Tom Monteith was with his brother. Five others volunteered, Sol Tethrow, James Lemon, James Fields and A. E. Robinson, who was second in command.

Most unfortunately they had no knowledge of snowshoes, and if they had they could have split out slats from the trees around them and have gone anywhere. That was a branch of mechanics the Oregon volunteers had not been educated in. They had seen the Indians wear snowshoes, not like the Norway ones, and attempted to make something like them out of the willow hoops. In doing this they used up their buckskin gun covers and everything they could spare. The next day they started with eight days' provisions and with Applegate's share divided among them.

They soon found that the lightest men were the best in the snow. James Fields was the heaviest man in the company, and proved too heavy to stay on

top. Every step sank him deep in the drifts. His snowshoes gave way and it was almost impossible for him to travel. Tethrow, Lemon and Minto were the lightest men and succeeded the best. They stayed by Fields to assist him through the drifts and took his loading among them. Snow was falling all the time and it was very cold. Extra exertion used up Fields and he was hardly able to make progress. Just before night-Lieut. Robinson, in crossing the bed of Bear creek, went down through the snow and only saved himself from going through into the creek that flowed under the snow, by sticking out his elbows. It was hard work to get Robinson out of his hole, and when he was extricated they camped and made fire on a rock.

Supper being over they talked over matters and concluded not to let Fields go back alone, as he insisted. They held a council and debated if the Klamath basin was passable, and they could get through it with provisions. It was determined that the journey was impracticable and should be abandoned, and they must hurry back to overtake their companions and the horses.

They were now homeward bound and had no doubts about the way they had to travel. They made their way out of the mountains near the Klamath country in a single march. In Rogue river valley they met Indians who evidently had evil designs for they avoided the Oregonians and wouldn't wait for them when they made signs to do so. They got out of the snow that night, camped, and kept careful guard, and after supper made a long night march.

The second camp they made they found where Indians had crossed their trail. They felt unsafe, so changed their style of travel, making long night marches. In the daytime they would huddle together in some greese-wood patch. Monteith and Minto cooked and ate while the others slept, and vice versa. The third day they marched until past midnight. Then they crossed Rogue river on an improvised raft, made a circuit round an Indian village that was on the river since they came past. Next day they crossed the Grave creek hills. Snow had fallen and made it bad going. Here they found their comrades' trail, as well as the trail of numerous Indians on horse and afoot. Our conclusion was that the savages wanted the horses and were following to try to get them. After that, as they traveled hurriedly on, they found camp fires of Indians, and a short way beyond camp fires of their white friends. At night fall, in Grave creek valley, they saw horses to the left of their line march. Monteith and Minto went to see them and the others went square up to the Indian camp, where from the bank they looked down on the creek bottom, where an Indian chief was whipping an Indian dog. He looked up in a moment and, happening to see them, uttered a "Waugh!" at the same instant seizing a bow and placing an arrow in position and bent on them as they stood on the bank. All the Indians ran but one; the women and children were out of sight in the twinkling of a star. It was a singular scene for nightfall. Five whites stood on the creek bank and the old chief was drawing his arrow on them; they in their turn were looking down their rifle barrels.

Walter Monteith said: "Mr. Applegate may I fire?" He could hardly deny himself the pleasure of making a "good shot" at the chief. Jesse Applegate stood a little back and merely shook his head. The future "Sage of Yoncalla" was appreciating this threat of war by nightfall and couldn't waste words. The Indian waited in position to wing his arrow, but didn't wing it. Seeing that the whites did not shoot, but waved them away—a sort of aboriginal "move on"—they made friendly signs to him, and he beat his breast to show that his motives were good. His men came

back and as they talked Chinook jargon all were soon in the most friendly way together. He said their companions were one sleep in advance of them. Applegate's company camped close by the Indians and did not even stand guard. Applegate said as long as the Indians were more scared than they themselves were, there was no need to waste sleep watching them.

Something in the way of criticism has been expended on the condition of the grave of Miss Croly, who died in 1846, having been connected with the emigration that took the southern route that year. Grave creek was named because her grave was on its bank. In the winter of 1848 a little more than a year after her death, Mr. Minto tells me that he took special notice of this grave. It appeared to have been disturbed by wolves. No bones were exposed, but some pieces of clothing were seen—white cotton rags. The ground was scratched to appearance. He said that, as no man would pass such remains and leave them unburied, there was no occasion for the discussion that took place.

The next morning they reached Cow creek, and found there a valuable mule belonging to James Campbell, that was dying; their company lost two animals that were poisoned by eating laurel. That night they camped with their friends on the north side of the Umpqua mountain—those did who were anxious to reach them. When their guns were replied to the five youngest men in the Applegate company camped where they were. The four youngest men of the eight who tried to make the march on snow shoes were the worst used up of all.

The Monteith brothers went to California after gold the next fall, and said the lay of the country satisfied them that their lives were saved by turning back, as they never could have made the journey as matters were that winter.

The Applegate men felt that they did well to overtake on foot, in four days, horses that had two days start.

Capt. Scott reported to Governor Abernethy their failure. They were recognized and enrolled as Oregon volunteers, and got their land bounty as such.

Thus terminated an incident of "Pioneer Days" that could easily have been tragical in its results had they tried to push their way through. The Oregonians managed to fight it out on that line, and had no help from outside of Oregon. Perhaps it is just as well for the unites of pioneer history that they did so.

Tree Culture vs. Rabbits.

Experience is teaching the people of Eastern Oregon the necessity of timber planting. "There is a goodly showing in arboriculture around Heppner," says the Gazette. Formerly box elder was about the only timber thought of, but now alantus, white ash, locust and other varieties are being extensively planted, and the fact is becoming more patent that our uplands will grow almost any kind of forest trees adapted to the cold of our winter (the writer has planted several acres of black cherry and sugar maple.) But those little pests the rabbit, are playing sad havoc with the locust trees. The outcome is hard to predict.—[Oregonian.]

Black Leg.

A Kittitas subscriber gives the following preventative for "black leg" among cattle. Mix powdered sulphur with salt until well colored and place where young stock can have free access to it. When the disease appears take equal parts of sulphur, charcoal, saltpetre and powdered ginger, mix well and give a tablespoonful twice a day in half a pint of water. Give from a bottle. If the animal is down dose oftener. They have been cured when down and the legs stiff and cold.

Correspondence.

Farms, Fences, Etc.

AUMSVILLE, OR., Feb. 7, 1887.

Editor Willamette Farmer:
Mr. J. W. Jory's article in the Oregonian of the 28th ult., entitled "Farms and Fences," is timely and to the point, and your comments on the same subject in the FARMER of the 4th, are no less so.

That our State "is suffering from unjust and unstatesmanlike legislation" is patent to every observer. Our fence law is not only "unjust and unstatesmanlike," but is unworthy of a civilized people; and as Mr. Jory truly and forcibly says, it is just as proper and consistent that people should be compelled by law to bar out and lock out human thieves as quadrated thieves. The legislature should lose no time in remedying, at least partially, this "unjust and unstatesmanlike" condition of things.

Among other things which the present Legislature should by no means neglect, I may mention, the assessment and taxation question. Steps should be taken to so amend our State constitution to the end that assessments be made on tangible property only.

The law protecting "game" should be repealed or greatly modified as it is "unjust and unstatesmanlike" to compel the farmer to raise game for the city sportsman without due compensation. But we should by all means have a law protecting the useful birds.

We should also have a better trespass law; one which does not require the posting of notices.

Our road laws need changing radically. As they are at present not more than one-half the road work is effective, and that is often woefully misapplied. A county supervisor, elected by the people, and road taxes collected in coin, with other taxes, would be a vast improvement.

But the legislature has been now a month in session and what is it doing? It has managed to give three of its members a pleasure trip to England at the people's expense. Some "unstatesmanlike" fellows are working up impractical schemes to "sinch" John Chinaman; others are asking for \$2500 for "making Josh" to the penitentiary convicts. While still others appear to be possessed of the idea that they are the people's guardians, and that everybody outside of the Legislature are "idiots and infants and Indians not taxed," who are incapable of managing their own affairs. Therefore, we have beside the regular schemes of the prohibition cranks, one Emmett, who appears to think it is the duty of the Legislature in general, and himself in particular, to take charge of the education of other people's children, and force them to school whether the parents will or no. It appears to be the ambition of some men to compel somebody else to do something which is none of their business.

Then we have another "statesman," who is accused of blackguarding some girls and the rest are hauling him over the coals for it. (It don't appear that the girls have any "big brothers.")

And still another "cow county statesman" has been twitting other "statesmen" of some foolishness that was done at the extra session, and there is another "tempest in a teapot." Will these things not bring our Legislature into contempt? Surely, better things are expected of them.

As usual, it appears that there are many interested parties bringing forward their schemes, and the lobby is filled with oily-tongued persuaders engineering them. Every interest appears to be represented, except the farmer. He cannot well afford to leave his business to attend at the State House to work up what he asks for. Therefore, little attention is paid to his interests.

What he asks for costs no money to the State and usually has little or no political bearing, yet it is advantageous to the whole State generally, and ought to be granted unhesitatingly by the Legislature. But I know of no better way for the farmers than for them to take a more active interest in politics, and remember those who remember them, and also those who neglect them, when they again are asking for positions within the gift of the people.

Every person in Oregon should read John W. Jory's article in the Oregonian and then controvert it who can.

A. F. ARMER.

Monmouth Correspondence.

MONMOUTH, OR., Feb. 14, 1887.

Editor Willamette Farmer:
The Sunday school concert which was held in the church Jan. 30 was a complete success. The proceeds which was \$9.75, will be used to buy books for the school.

Mrs. Margret Mason died at her home in this place Jan. 30. She leaves a husband and many relatives and friends to mourn her loss.

Some of our students have gone home but expect to join our ranks next year.

On Sunday the 6, Mr. A. Nelms and May Johnson were united in the holy bonds of matrimony, by President Stanley. We have heard of matches made in heaven but this one was made at school. The next morning the happy couple took their departure for Portland. Their many friends join in wishing them a long and happy life.

All who attended the party at Judge Dawson's report having had a good time.

The Vesbentine and Hesperian societies accepted the invitation given them by the Utopian and visited them last Friday. The societies are in a flourishing condition and each meeting proves more interesting and shows advancement.

The athletic concert that was held in the chapel on the 12th was a very pleasant affair. The principal features of the evening were college songs and chorus. Misses Brodie and Wade and Mr. Emmitt's declamations were well spoken. The proceeds will be used to help build a gymnasium.

Mr. Wm. McFaddin and Miss Mary Hallack, were married on the 12th, at the home of the bride. Their many friends wish them a long and happy life.

The Christians will hold a series of meetings here, beginning on the 14th.

C. A. H.

Comet Visible.

A long-tailed comet has made its appearance in the horizon, and may be seen every morning after 4 o'clock, until the dawn causes it to sink into obscurity. The location of the traveler through the cerulean dome is at the east northeast, and though not very brilliant has a tail visible to the naked eye for two or three degrees, and with an opera glass may be traced a much greater distance. The celestial visitor is known as the "Barnard comet of Oct. 4th," and derives its name from the discoverer and date of discovery.

How sad to see one gifted with youth and beauty, a pleasant home, surrounded by loving friends, and every thing that makes life desirable and enjoyable, fading away day by day, with no hope of release save death. It was only a slight cold at first. A single dose of Fress's Hamburg Tea would have removed the obstruction, restored the circulation, and given back to society one of its brightest ornaments.

Mr. D. Kauffman, of Needy, Oregon, sends us his illustrated circular and price list of aparian supplies. He has for sale Italian bees and Queen's, and various kinds of hives. Send for a copy which will be sent free to all who apply.