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OREGON PIONEER HISTORY.

SKETCHES OF EARLY DAYS—MEN AND TIMES IN THE FORTIES

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The Whitman Massacre

John Lee Lewis to Rev. M. Walker:—After referring kindly to family matters, and particularly upon the safe birth of a son to Mrs. Walker in the midst of all the prevailing terrors and excitement, Mr. Lewis writes:

Colville, Jan. 14, 1848.

I now refer to your letter relating to the lately received Indian intelligence from the lower country. My opinion is that the principal part of it is founded on fiction, and tallies well with Indian reports in general. These people are fond of dealing with the marvelous and are adepts at making up fictitious tales, turning a mole-hill into a mountain. That the news of the melancholy facts of Dr. Whitman and others with him should create excitement throughout the Willamette and other parts of the country, there cannot be a doubt, but that the Oregon government in the midst of them should in retaliation sanction the murder, in cold blood, of innocent natives, I cannot for a moment consider likely; that a great stir, much talk and preparation is making below, to strike a blow where it ought to be struck, on the very lands, and only on the tribe of the guilty wretches. I think ere long we shall have the true version of the late Indian report. One Little Chief of the Hill has just this moment quitted my room. He came in to talk over the news spread in his camp last evening by your Indian courier. He with all his tribe ridicules the late reports. In his own words he says the Indians are such notorious liars that he does not believe a word of what is reported, nor will he, until he hears it from myself, put any trust in such flying rumors; then, and not till then, will he talk of revenge. He says: "When it is proved that the innocent natives of the upper country have been sacrificed for the guilty, then will they be revenged on the guilty Cayuses, for it was owing to them that their relatives have been murdered. Not a word, so far, has been breathed by the Indians of this place against the whites, whether Americans or of our company, and in my opinion some weighty change must come over them to make them change their present good feeling towards us. It behooves us, nevertheless, to keep a watchful eye over all their motions and act with caution and prudence. Their very heavy and recent losses have dejected many of them, tending to sour their minds. While brooding over the premature departure of so many they held most dear, a mad phrensy might lead them to commit some acts of violence, endangering their own lives and others. To be prepared for any such outbreak I must be ever on the alert, not only watching the Indians, but also the actions of my own people. You are not ignorant how thoughtless and silly most of these are, and the daily intercourse they have with the Indians make me feel anxious lest their thoughtless and wanton talk among them should create quarrels, by which I shall find myself involved in difficulties with the surrounding tribes. Everything points out to me the imprudence of absenting myself, even for a few days, from this place. You will not, therefore, I trust, feel disappointed at my not paying you a visit at present. To leave now, on the receipt of what we have heard from below, might appear suspicious in the sight of the Indians, and make them believe we know more than we choose to make public.

After repeating offers of shelter and protection, (which they finally accepted and enjoyed for months), Mr. Lewis continues: A word about the dreadful malady that has so long raged in this quarter, and with such dreadful effect. Up to this date no less than ninety-four (94) men, women and children have fallen victims to it. The Kettle Fall Indians, proper, are now fast on the recovery, only four to-day on the sick list among them. Our Upper Lake Indians, being the last attacked, are now nearly all laid low with it.

What is copied from this letter shows what a fearful state of excitement existed among all the Indian tribes, and that vague and terrifying rumors circulated to create and continue it. It also shows the fearful mortality prevailing by pestilence among the Indians, which was liable to rouse their superstitious fears and create frenzy that would lead to murder and terror.

Under date of February 18, 1848, Mr.

Lewis writes Mr. Walker at great length, several months after the massacre, detailing many facts of historical importance and many incidents that bear on the existing time. I shall, as heretofore, copy only passages of peculiar interest. For instance, he says:

Yours of the 12th inst. I am glad to say, was attended with most beneficent affects among our Indians here, for it contradicted many of the flying and vague reports circulated by Master Nicholas Finley. The purport of that scamp's mission to these parts does not please me. I am yet in the dark as to his motives. Dumont assured me that he came purposely for one or two of his brothers to go down to assist him to get his live stock driven to a place of security. If this was all there would have been no harm in his visit, but the lies the fellow circulated and his tampering with the Spokanes say but little in his favor.

Immediately on the receipt of your first letter I sent for the Little Chief and gave him the principal information it conveyed. The courier of the said letter was present and listened to your statements, tallying exactly with what Big Head had told him previously. All this pleased Little Chief and he was not long convincing his people of the false reports that had been spread among them by the evil disposed. You will be glad to hear that tranquillity is again restored between us and the Indians. The old rascal who was the author of our taking to Americans I have lately seen and taken severely to task for his murderous intentions. I had a conference with him before our Little Chief and some others. He did not deny having threatened us but wished to excuse himself under the plea that some of the other Indians had persuaded him that some among us were Americans—myself among the number—and as the Americans below had killed some of their country people it was time to be avenged on us.

"After much talk we separated to all appearance better friends than we met, he promising to behave himself as he ought for the future."

He discusses at length the question of leaving the station, and authorizing him to break the seal of express packages coming that way to Colville to see if it contained letters or matters for themselves. He also urgently repeats the invitation to come to Colville for safety if danger approaches. Referring to a passage in Mr. Walker's letter, he promises to take care of the family in case a violent death shall reach Mr. Walker and spare the others. He also speaks of their employing Nicholas Finley to guard their station in case of their absence and informs him of the terms usual in making such contracts when paid in cattle and horses. All this is done with great forethought and business sense well as kindness. Then he continues:

"I delivered your message to the Little Chief and he was much pleased. I questioned him again on your removing here, and asked, in case you did, would you run any danger from the Indians here. He answered that he was not aware that you had any cause to fear his Indians. What made me ask this was: While I held the conference with the old rascal that threatened to cut our throats it came out that the same scamps, while planning our destruction, had your names brought forward, saying that you would have to share the same fate intended for us. I do not desire to create any unnecessary alarm but I deem it highly proper in these troubled times that the slightest expression of the Indians should not pass unnoticed. Light and foolish sayings among all people often lead to serious consequences. As you and those with you are so closely mixed up with the present excited state of the country I think it advisable that you should be in possession of all that is said, good or bad, on this question.

I agree with you that it would not be advisable for me to send a great force of people to your place, as it might have a bad affect with your Indians. They would naturally suppose that you put no confidence in them and all their offers of protection were disregarded. Their present kind sentiments we had better not disturb by a show of force which, if they turned against you, might prove inadequate for your safety and protection. Sending one man I do not think will cause any jealousy, or that they will put a misconception on my so doing. We will try it, and to-morrow morning Thomas Ray will leave this,

in company with an Indian for your place. He can remain with you a few weeks until we see what will be the result of the present turmoil. You will employ him as you think best. He is a Canadian, and has heretofore been obedient to all orders.

I am sorry to learn that the Big Head is so ill, I sincerely hope he may recover. Just at this moment it would be unfortunate if he is carried off. His death might tend to change the sentiment of many of the Indians about you and render your situation still more trying and vexatious. We can only hope for the best and leave the rest to God, to do as he may see most fit.

John Lee Lewis to Rev. M. Walker, March 3, 1848.

An Indian from the Stony island chief has arrived with letters. After remaining for a few days the chief returned with all his men, but sent his son below to learn if four of his people had been killed, as reported. The messenger states that all three Finleys followed the Cayuse war party below. If they get each of them a ball in the head it is only what they deserve. They had no business to poke their noses where they are not wanted. The Cayuses and Americans had not met when the letters left. I send you the letters I received that you may have all the intelligence they contain. Please read and return by Artartie, the bearer. I request, further, perfect silence regarding Thomas McKay and the half breeds being with the American forces. The knowledge of this circulating at present among the Indians might create some excitement, which there is no occasion for. It is better for the whole of us to be silent on the subject.

LINN COUNTY FAIR.

We take the following from the Eugene City Guard of recent date:

A meeting of the Board of Directors of the Lane County Agricultural Association was held last Monday in this city. Superintendents of divisions were appointed as follows: A, David Stanton; B, G. R. Chrisman; C, B. F. Powers; D, Jas Stevens; E, John Simpson; F, J. C. Jennings; G, Miss Mary McMurray; H, Mrs. Martha Buoy; I, Mrs. T. J. Vaughan; J, I. Mrs. Sam'l Nelson; K, J. M. Thot. Craig; L, Miss Rose Baxter; M, S. G. Thompson; N, S. F. Kerns; O, F. T. Hayfield; P, Miss Frankie Odell; Q, A. C. Woodcock; R, Mrs. T. M. Jackson.

Purses for races during the fair aggregate nearly \$700, being double the amount heretofore given. For the one-half mile race, best two in three, \$150 for first and \$65 for second is offered; for the mile trotting, best three in five, \$150 for first and \$65 for second. The fair will be held the Wednesday in Sept., after the State fair, and promises to be the best yet held in Linn county.

Heart Disease!!

Read the hospital reports, read the mortuary reports, read the medical publications, read the daily newspapers, and learn how wide-spread is heart disease, how difficult of detection it is to most people, how many and how sudden are the deaths it causes. Then read Dr. Flinn's treatise on Heart Disease, and learn what it is, what diseases it gives rise to, what its symptoms are, and how it may be attacked. If you find that you have heart disease, ask your druggist for a bottle of Dr. Flinn's Heart Remedy. The treatise may be had on application to J. J. Mack & Co., Nos. 9 and 11 Front street, S. F.

Edward S. Lamport comes to the front this week with a neat ad. and we trust that all who may need anything in his line will call upon him as we can insure them fair treatment and good value for all the money they invest.

Says the Independence west side:—Several head of stock died in this part of the country during the recent cold spell. There are a great many that will have a tough time of it yet, even if the winter is over, they being so very weak and poor. This winter, we suppose, has taught many farmers of Oregon dear lessons. This we think will be a gentle reminder for years to come. Farmers should not burn up their straw, but stack it in a dry place for such winters as we have experienced for the last three years. It will keep nice and mellow for three or four years; if it is not needed it takes but a minute's time to touch a match to it and it is soon out of the way."

Correspondence.

THE NEW STRAWBERRIES.

CROSTON, Feb. 26, 1887.

Editor Willamette Farmer:

Many friends are urging me to write in regard to the "new strawberries." I have not tried all the newer kinds, and, consequently, cannot tell all about them. If we may believe the various agricultural, horticultural as well as catalogues scattered all over our country, the newer kinds "beat the world." That there has been improvement may, and no doubt, is true; but we cannot think there has been such vast improvements as claimed. How many new strawberries are now heralded forth as "extra," "every blossom makes a berry," "very firm," "very large," "exquisite flavor," "carry a 1000 miles," "yield 300 bushels per acre," "out sells all others" etc. etc., how many I don't know. Here's some of them. Cohanziak—"The most wonderful of the age." Jessie—"The most remarkable new fruit of the age." Mammoth—"The largest in existence," "50 berries making four quarts." The fruit as large again as the Sharpless." This is big talk.

The great Ontario—"Entirely free from all diseases." Bubach, Belmont, Snow Flake, Truitt's Surprise, Ruby, Gandy's Prize, Crimson Cluster, Monmoth, and some others, are among the newer kinds. Should these prove equal to their flaming advertisements, there will be a wonderful advancement in the strawberry line, I, however, have been so often disappointed by these new things that I am getting shy of them.

The Jewell I have in bearing, so also have I of the Parry. These, though good, are not equal to the Sharpless. I hold to the Sharpless, if properly managed, as a ground plant and fruit. I know of none better.

Out of 26 or more kinds, this season, the following have proven worthy in my soil and location. The Sharpless, Jersey Queen, Bidwell, the genuine Big Bob, Finch, Golden Defiance, and old Jucund. The old Wilson for canning has no superior. I grow only a few of them. The May King and Early Canada I am experimenting with. We need a very early strawberry. We also need a very late strawberry. Gandy's surprise may prove a valuable late one. At least I hope so. The Jersey Queen and Jucund are now our latest. The Jumbo is a failure; too soft, and the hot sun burns up the plant. The Lacon is a noble plant in growth and has a fine, firm, berry, but the hot sun scorches the leaves.

The Hoffman's Seedling, of South Carolina being very early would, perhaps, do well here, as the climate is similar to S. C.

I have had the Comely and hoped it would do well, being large and late, but last season was so dry all I had died. My advice to all is this: Be shy of new things, buy and try those you have seen do well with others, and don't spend your money for frauds.

It requires brains and a natural taste to grow fruits successfully, and you must have a good market too. There is such a thing as failure in fruit-growing as well as anything else.

Prudence, energy and sense are necessary prerequisites to success. If you haven't 'em you'll fail.

I am requested to state my method of growing strawberries. It seems people have poor memories; for I have often done so. Here: You want rich, dry soil, deeply plowed four or five times and harrowed—the more it is worked the better—then plant in rows three or four feet apart, two feet in the row, cultivate well, keep all runners off, and keep all weeds down. There it is. Plant the Sharpless and you'll have lots of whoppers.

If you are too lazy to do this, don't plant anything, much less strawberries. Growing fruit is a business. If you

don't know how to do business you'll fail. To be successful you must learn to succeed. There is nothing so successful as success. There it is. See! A. F. DAVIDSON.

Favors Taxing Dogs.

SILVERTON, Or., March 7, 1887.

Editor Willamette Farmer:

In your issue of February 25 there appears an article by F. S. Matteson criticizing the action of our State Legislature on the dog tax law. Really I think friend Matteson and myself are jogging along in the same direction with the same intent and purpose, only viewing the objective point from different directions, to one it appears black, to the other white. I will compare notes. I have a good dog, to me a valuable one, a dog that cost more trials of patience and time in raising and breaking than a good horse, one that stays at home and troubles no one. Well, through very meanness some worthless scamp feeds him poison right in the yard, or puts a rope around his neck and leads him off, what can I do about it? Nothing! It's only a dog. A dog may be of as much value as a horse, but if I commence suit to recover damages, say of \$50 or \$100 I would perhaps get judgement for \$5 or \$10, or more likely the case would be thrown out of court. When our State creates a law placing dogs on the list of taxable property, it makes them property to all interests and purposes, does it not? And any one destroying or stealing the same is amenable to the law, the same as in other property. We pay taxes on our horses and cows, and we expect the law to protect in keeping them. If the State and county levies a tax, say of fifteen mills on the dollar, and imposes a tax of \$2.50 or \$5 on a dog, it at the same virtually sets the price on a dog, provided the dog is property, does it not? If this law is a (special imposition), I will kick too, friend M—, but really I look upon it as a protection to our dogs, even the "worthless hound." So have a care, dog petters. E. S. BROOKS.

Growing German Millet Seed.

PRINEVILLE, Or., March 10, 1887.

Editor Willamette Farmer:

Will some one of the many readers of the WILLAMETTE FARMER, give us their experience in the growing of German Millet Grass. The time to sow. Amount of seed per acre, soil best adapted etc. and oblige an old subscriber.

W. S. McMEAN.

[NOTE—Will some of our reader tell Mr. McMean how to grow millet. We know of no one who grows millet here.—EDITOR].

Letter From Multnomah County.

PLEASANT HOME March 12, '87.

Editor Willamette Farmer:

The past four days tells us that spring has come; the fields of winter wheat is looking well. Fears were entertained that winter wheat was considerable damaged by the cold winds and the freeze, but the sunny days proved different and the beautiful green tint took place of the yellow that some thought was injured. In a few days the plows will be running to get the spring crops in. For the first time in this part of Oregon many of the farmers wore out of hay, which caused a great inconvenience. Last fall farmers had hay to sell at a nominal price of \$7 to \$9 per ton and this month the same parties paid \$15 per ton. When Oregon farmers learn to economize in ways with Eastern Farmers and to save their straw and many other useful articles they will never know what want is.

The concert given for the benefit of the church bell on Wednesday night proved a success. The amount raised at that time was \$17.50. A \$50 bell is proposed, the full amount is now on hand, and the many donors can very soon hear the chimes of the beautiful bell. PLAIN JUANA.