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AN ALMOST FORGOTTEN POET

Sam L. Simpson was born October 10, 1845, son of Ben Simpson who came to Oregon from Missouri in 1846 and was long a leading citizen of Salem. His youngest son, the poet, is today almost forgotten, even in Oregon.

Ben Simpson settled first at Oregon City, then on French prairie and established a store at Parkersville. He served in the Cayuse war, in the territorial legislature, once kept the sutler's store at Fort Yamhill and when he lived at the corner of Summer and Chemeketa streets in Salem in 1871 was Indian agent for the Siletz reservation. He lived into the early 1900s.

Alfred Powers in history about Oregon's literature remarks that Sam Simpson's first prominent poem, like those of William Cullen Bryant and Edwin Markham, was his best. Beautiful Willamette, or "Ad Willematam" as Simpson first called it, was supposedly written on the north bank of the Willamette across from Albany and was inspired by that vista. It was first published in the Albany Democrat, April 18, 1868, just 85 years ago. He was never able to equal that creation and told William W. Fidler years later that Beautiful Willamette "exercised a sort of tyranny over him."

George H. Hines, pioneer historian, who personally knew all those that figured in early Oregon history, writes of Sam Simpson as follows:

"His father was born in Tennessee, March 29, 1818, of Scotch ancestry. His mother was a granddaughter of Col. Cooper, a companion of Daniel Boone in Kentucky. Samuel L. Simpson crossed the plains to Oregon with his parents in 1846. His mother taught him the alphabet when he was four years old by tracing letters in the ashes on the hearthstone of the primitive cabin in Marion county in which the family lived. The first poems he ever read were selections from a worn volume of Robert Burns which was presented to Simpson's mother by Dr. John McLoughlin at Oregon City, where the Simpson family spent the first winter.

"An occasional country school of three months afforded the only opportunity the boy had for education until he was 15 years old. Then he was employed as clerk in the sutler's store of his father at Fort Yamhill, a military post near the Grande Ronde Indian Reservation. Here he became acquainted with Lt. Phil Sheridan (afterwards General) who gave him a copy of Byron's poems.

"When 16 years of age he entered Willamette university, Salem, where he graduated in 1865. Soon afterwards he became editor of the Oregon Statesman continuing in that relation until the close of 1866. He was admitted to the bar in 1867, but clients were few and the profession of law not to his liking and he drifted into journalism."

Of Simpson's connection with the Oregon Statesman George Turnbull in his History of Oregon Newspapers says:

"Sam L. Simpson, better known to fame as a poet, was editor of the Oregon Statesman for about four months in 1866. His writing gifts failed to save the paper, which his father was compelled to sell, December 31, to the Salem Unionist.

"Sam Simpson, writing his last editorial in the Statesman on the closing day of 1866, pronounced the paper dead. He headed the editorial, 'Valedictory' and said with a fine literary flourish, unaccompanied by any pride in his achievements or capacities as an editor:

"With this issue terminates the existence of the Oregon Statesman, the oldest paper, except one in the state. Sixteen years ago the publication was begun, when the present editor was still puzzling over the mysteries of a pictorial printer.

"The Statesman is dead—let us write on its melancholy tomb those generous words of the Latin maxim: Nil nisi bonum—

"And no further seek its merits to disclose
Or draw its frailties from their dread abode."

Joaquin Miller, referring to Simpson's poetical talent, said: "Simpson's 'Beautiful Willamette' is the most musical poem written on the Pacific coast."

Simpson's poems were not published in book form until after his death when a sister and sons collected them and enabled J. B. Lippincott company to issue The Golden Gated West. They were edited by W. T. Burney who gave this appraisal:

"Life's stormy seas have baffled and shipwrecked many a divine genius who bravely faced the gale with little thought of anchor as the safe bestowal of his sail; to whom the flag at the peak was more important than a strong hand at the helm. Such a sailor was Sam Simpson, but he has left us many a beautiful strain of music, caught from the song of wind and tide; many a picture glowing with the gold of sunset or the rose of blossoming spring. We who knew him best, knew he never reached the achievement that was possible to his talents. His poems breathe rather of pathos and shadow than of joy, for they tint from a mind of times world weary. And we who know him will judge him gently and prize the treasures he brought home from many voyages of fancy, in air and sea and sky."

The late Charles B. Moores of Salem, who knew him from boyhood, wrote in the "Chronicles of Willamette" compiled by Professor Robert M. Gatke:

"A more genial spirit than Sam L. Simpson never lived. Few men who have no enemies accomplish great things. We believe it is literally true that Sam Simpson never had an enemy, and yet his poems have furnished to many thousands, so many delightful hours that his life work may be accounted a great success. There was an element of tragedy running through his life and his sensitive spirit received many a shock. All who had the privilege of his friendship can warmly reach the sentiment expressed in one of the stanzas of his poem entitled 'Snowdrift.'"

"Oh, when the angel of silence has brushed
Me with his wings, and this penning is hushed,
Tenderly, graciously, light as the snow,
Fall the kind mention of all that I know—
Words that will cover and whiten the sod,
Folding that life that was given of God,
Wayward may be, and persistent to rove—
Restful at last, in the glamour of love."

Sam Simpson in 1868 married Julia Humphrey. Two children were born, Eugene and Claude. Neither are now living. He died in his room at the Old St. Charles hotel in Portland, June 14, 1900, and is buried in Lone Fir cemetery there.

Simpson's fame was regional—perhaps a penalty of pioneer times, but his poems compare favorably with those of many a poet of national fame, especially those of these doldrum days of poetry.

"Beautiful Willamette," now unknown to most Oregonians, should serve as an inspiration to restore much of the river's lost charm and beauty. Most of the stately forests through which the river dashes, have been cut down and its crystal waters tainted by pollution but tardy steps are underway to replant the forests and purify the stream.

SPREADING IT PRETTY THICK



WASHINGTON MERRY-GO-ROUND

Ups and Downs for President's Brother-in-Law

BY DREW PEARSON

Washington — No one in Washington has had more ups and downs during the last 14 months than President Eisenhower's brother-in-law, Lt. Col. Gordon Moore, U. S. Army, retired.

His ups and downs are unique even in Washington's unstable society. But as of today his "ups" far exceed his "downs," and as brother-in-law Ike climbed to the peaks, Colonel Moore was mounting the hills.

Here, in brief, is the colonel's success story.

In February of 1952, Colonel Moore and his attractive wife, Mike — Mamie's sister — were hard put to meet their monthly bills. They'd recently bought a rather impressive home and the going was tough. They were even considering selling their new home for some ready cash.

At this crucial moment, however, O. Roy Chalk, head of the newly organized Independent Military Air Transport association, offered Colonel Moore a \$6,500 — per — year job. He accepted at once.

Chalk assigned the colonel to handle the association's relations with the Pentagon, also public relations of the association's 17 member airlines.

Chalk's selection of Colonel Moore was not exactly an accident. He had been thoroughly briefed on Moore's relationship to Ike and had hand-

BEAUTIFUL WILLAMETTE

By SAMUEL L. SIMPSON

From the Cascades' frozen gorges,
Leaping like a child at play,
Winding, widening through the valley,
Bright Willamette glides away;
Onward ever,
Lovely river,
Softly calling to the sea,
Time, that scars us,
Maims and mars us,
Leaves no track or trench on thee.

Spring's green witchery is weaving
Braid and border for thy side;
Grace forever haunts thy journey,
Beauty dimples on thy tide;
Through the purple gates of morning
Now thy roseate ripples dance,
Golden then, when day, departing,
On thy waters trails his lance.
Waltzing, flashing,
Tinkling, splashing,
Limpid, voluble, and free—
Always hurried
To be buried
In the bitter, moon-mad sea.

In thy crystal deeps inverted
Swings a picture of the sky,
Like those wavering hopes of Aldenn,
Dimly in our dreams that lie;
Clouded often, drowned in turmoil,
Faint and lovely, far away—
Wreathing sunshine on the morrow
Breathing fragrance round today,
Love would wander
Here and ponder,
Hither poetry would dream;
Life's old questions—
Sad suggestions,
"Whence and whither?" throng thy stream.

On the roaring waste of ocean
Shall thy scattered waves be tossed,
Mid the surge's rhythmic thunder
Shall thy silver tongues be lost.
O, thy glimmering rush of gladness
Mocks this turbid life of mine,
Racing to the wild Forever
Down the sloping paths of Time!
Onward ever,
Lovely river,
Softly calling to the sea;
Time that scars us,
Maims and mars us,
Leaves no track or trench on thee!

POOR MAN'S PHILOSOPHER

Our Forces Lacked Lot of Things in Korea, Hal Says

By HAL BOYLE

New York (AP)—All soldiers, winners or losers—Americans, Germans or Russians — are short-changed by their country in time of war.

They all are given less than they feel they ought to have to do the job they are assigned and want to do.

They hate to pay with their blood and limbs for the shortages—but the shortages are always there, no matter what country they come from.

That is why the current congressional exploration into the ammunition shortage in Korea is wryly amusing to more than one million veterans of that troubled peninsula.

The whole thing is put as an argument between generals and politicians. One group of generals wanted to take a chance the other generals did not, and the politicians who were undecided how to vote the blood and money still straddle the fence and ask each other:

"Who is responsible?"
But what about the individual soldier, sailor and airman? How does he feel?

The fact of the shortages in Korea is beyond question. We were short of properly trained infantry, tanks, the right kind of bazookas, food, clothing—name it, and we didn't have it there when we needed it at the start.

The North Koreans put a tougher, better-trained dough-boy in the field, a better all-purpose tank to back him up, and over him they soon flew a faster supporting jet plane than America could throw in combat.

The MIG-15 was certainly superior to the first jet planes we put into action there. Only our later swept-back wing jobs now deliberately tangle with the MIGs.

Was there an ammunition shortage in Korea? When the first two 8-inch artillery pieces were put into action, a gunner told me, "We don't have enough shells to keep one gun firing."

Shortages? Why are Congress and parents always surprised by them? An Army representative a nation pretty closely. If the people are unready, the Army is unready. The boys at the front do keep a steeper morale. How? I do not know. Professional soldiers do not know.

Korea to me was a sad repetition of Tunisia. Unready men, not enough armor, poorer tanks than the enemy had, poorer planes, no proper winter clothing.

I have made three sad retreats on three different continents with the American Army in 10 years—Kasserine gap in Africa, the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium, and a drawback in Korea.

In each of these campaigns the American soldier in the field loyally lost his frozen arms and legs doing his duty without warm clothing.

Napoleon lost most of his grand army besieging Moscow because he overlooked the weather. Hitler made the same mistake. Doesn't the Pentagon have a thermometer and a climate map? Why are the

supply officers there always surprised by the arrival of cold weather, so that the warm boots a soldier on the front needs in December arrive in the March thaw after his frozen feet have been cut off in a field hospital in January?

Shortages? Make no mistake about it. The American people for too long have sent their sons into battle with too few guns, too bad tanks, too poor planes, and too lousy equipment for the job they have to do.

The kids are always in short supply—at least at the start. I have seen the first one thrown into battle try to do a good job with second-best equipment on the continents of Africa, Europe, and Asia, for the glory and prosperity of their homeland.

I think it is a bitter waste of our best manhood. I am bitter about it, merely as a camp follower who went along with many boys who won't come back. And I feel it is a situation that will take more than blame—talk in Congress to change.

We must somehow learn how to back up our men better before we toss them into the red fire of battle. We have to give them a better chance of coming home.

Salem 47 Years Ago

April 18, 1806

San Francisco early today was shaken by a great earthquake and the city is now being swept by fire. A press dispatch says 3000 are dead and that from an elevation the city appears to be a seething furnace. Loss will be at least \$40,000,000. Dome of City hall has fallen, Majestic theater has collapsed, Call and Examiner

THE FIRESIDE PULPIT

We Love God Only If We Realize He Is Our Father

BY REV. GEORGE H. SWIFT

By Rev. George H. Swift, Rector, St. Paul's Episcopal Church

We are deeply impressed with the things which have stood the test of time. The giant Sequoias are awe-inspiring, not only because of their tremendous height and girth, but because they have outlived hundreds of generations of mankind, and are still living. One stands speechless before these trees as he recalls that they were flourishing here when Jesus Christ was delivering his famous Sermon on the Mount in Palestine.

We are impressed too, by tremendous power. The earthquake, the tidal wave, and even the power generated by man-made dams fill us with awe. And when we look about our universe we are humbled by the evidence of an omnipotent God who plans, arranges, and manages things. However we may be impressed by the evidence of God's power, His omnipotence, His omniscience, this is not a particular reason for loving Him. We do not love

buildings are burning and the Palace hotel is doomed. Martial law prevails in San Francisco and other bay cities are being scoured for dynamite to use in combating the fire. (Now it is known that early dispatches over-estimated the loss of life and under-estimated the loss of property. The fire that devastated about four square miles of the city, together with the earthquake, claimed 400 lives. Property damages amounted to \$500,000,000.)

(San Francisco earthquake resulted from a horizontal shift of earth structures along the San Andreas fault and its pathway extended over a length of 270 miles).

Jim Run, runaway Chemawa Indian student detained here by Chief of Police Howard, made his escape from the jail Saturday night by deftly taking the hinges off the door.

High school news: The Demosthenes society had its regular meeting Monday evening. Albert Minton, Orilla Smith and Winona Savage were appointed a committee to confer with a like committee from the Diogenes society about putting lights in the society's room.

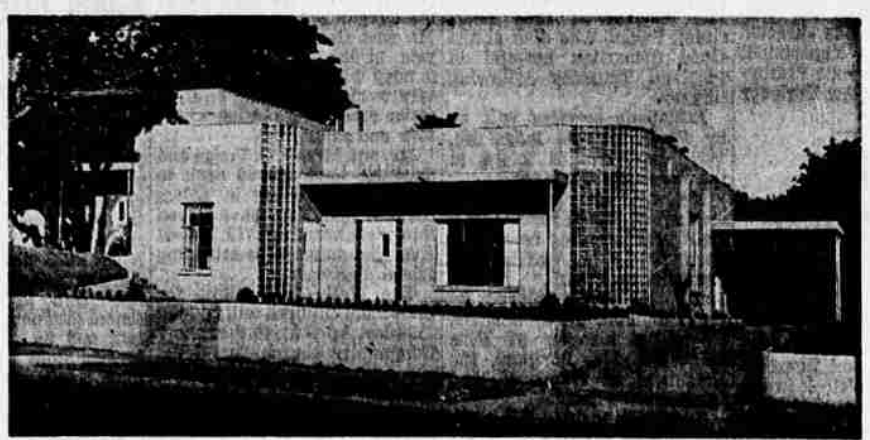
Two old-time Salem livery stables advertise in this 47-year-old issue of the Capital Journal: Red Front stable, M. L. Harrod, proprietor, at 271 Chemeketa street and Club stable, Prunk & Darby, corner of Liberty and Ferry streets.

(A six months' subscription to the Capital Journal (\$2 paid in advance) entitles the subscriber to receive one of three books without cost to himself: Bill Nye's "Comic History of the United States," Webster's "School and Office Dictionary" or Peck's "Bad Boy."

Dean W. C. Hawley of Willamette University has signified his intention of becoming a candidate for congress. Students are signing pledges to support him.

the earthquake, the tidal wave, the atom bombs, or the electric generating plants. We can really love God only if, and when we realize He is our Father. When we realize this omnipotent God is our Father, then we can speak sincerely of the love of God which passeth all human understanding. God reaches down to every living soul as an earthly father would gather his children about him. Scripture says, "If I make my bed in hell, behold thou (God) art there also," much like any earthly father would be if his children were in trouble (get them out of hell).

As a quarrelling family is displeasing to an earthly father, so much more must the Heavenly Father be displeased when his great family of all mankind kills one another. We must continually beseech our loving Father to help us resolve our world problems and bring peace to all mankind again.



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