

PEASE & MAYS.

The foundation of this firm was laid in 1862, when D. M., J. W. and J. M. French became associated with G. B. Gilman, and as French & Gilman opened a store on Main street, near Court. The year following they removed to the stone building, northeast corner of Second and Washington streets.

At this time The Dalles was the commercial center of a vast scope of country, Western Montana, Idaho, Eastern Washington, parts of British Columbia, all of Eastern Oregon, were tributary and The Dalles supplied the goods for this Inland Empire. The business of this firm grew rapidly, and in 1868 exceeded half a million dollars.

D. M. and J. W. French, in 1868, bought the interests of the others and this marks the commencement of the well known firm of French & Co. This firm, perhaps as well known as any in the Pacific northwest, enjoyed trade extending over what is now several states. In business before the advent of the railroad, the merchandise sold for these distant points was distributed wholly by pack trains.

They conducted a general merchandise business until 1875, when they sold their stock to E. B. McFarland, who had been in their employ for several years, and S. L. Brooks, and have since confined themselves to banking.

Mr. Smith French purchased in 1877 the interest of S. L. Brooks, and the firm of McFarland & French succeeded.

The business situation was now different. The Dalles was no longer the shipping point for the northwest. Railroads were in successful operation; and other distributing points further east had been built up and trade had been very much curtailed.

This made several changes imperative. The firm was compelled to pay more attention to the retail trade; this necessitated more floor space, and in 1883 Robt. Mays erected for them the store northwest corner of Second and Federal streets. Edward C. Pease joined this firm as salesman in the spring of 1884, and was admitted as a partner in 1888.

Robt. Mays and Edward C. Pease, in 1892, bought the interests of E. B. McFarland and Smith French and formed the firm of Pease & Mays.

You will observe that in all the changes some one connected with retiring firm has been an active partner in the new concern; that each new firm has had some one member who for several years had been under the tuition of the senior members of the older concern, and that everyone of these firms have had a very successful business career, perhaps the most successful in the history of The Dalles.

1862-1898 forms quite a span in the history of The Dalles, and we think she can well be proud of a concern that under different firm names, it is true, but still having some partner in the new that was in the old firm, thus knitting them together, has withstood all the vicissitudes of mercantile life for over a third of a century, and is to-day recognized as the leading mercantile concern of Oregon east of Portland. The last few years have been trying ones for all who have been engaged in commercial pursuits. Panics, short crops, and the extremely low prices prevailing for all products have taxed the business ability of the country to its utmost. Still in spite of these most unfavorable circumstances, this firm has pushed itself to the front and stands to-day head and shoulders above the general merchandise concerns of Eastern Oregon. When they commenced business, owing to the fact that McFarland & French had contemplated retiring for some little time, business had been curtailed, and the force of the new firm consisted of but six. To-day, in spite of the unfavorable conditions existing during the past five years, and which we have heard some of the acutest business men of the country state have been the hardest in which to successfully conduct business that have existed in the last half of this century, it requires the services of nearly double the number of people employed in any other Dalles store to meet the requirements of their trade.

For this unusual growth there must be reasons. If this had taken place under favorable circumstances it would perhaps cause no great comment; but under the existing conditions it seems remarkable.

When Pease & Mays opened their doors it was with the distinct idea that volume meant success; that they could no longer figure upon profits that existed in the past. The country had settled up, and business would be conducted more upon Eastern principles. Profits must necessarily be greatly reduced, and the firm would have to look to a gradual increasing business for adequate returns upon capital invested.

With this idea in view they have ever been alive to the proposition of selling goods at figures that would enable them to handle more merchandise until, today they are recognized as being the heaviest buyers in Oregon outside of Portland.

They resolved to have a modern store, conducted as far as practical upon the same general basis as the department stores in the larger cities. The store was divided into five departments each, having a responsible head, thus securing the same attention to each department as if it were a distinct store under different ownership with this difference in favor of Pease & Mays—their clientele of customers is larger and expense of doing business less.

Experience gained by many years in business, taught them the importance of having all goods designed to be hauled into the interior by wagon, most carefully packed. They have a packing room where all goods are first carefully re-checked to avoid errors, and then packed by an experienced packer.

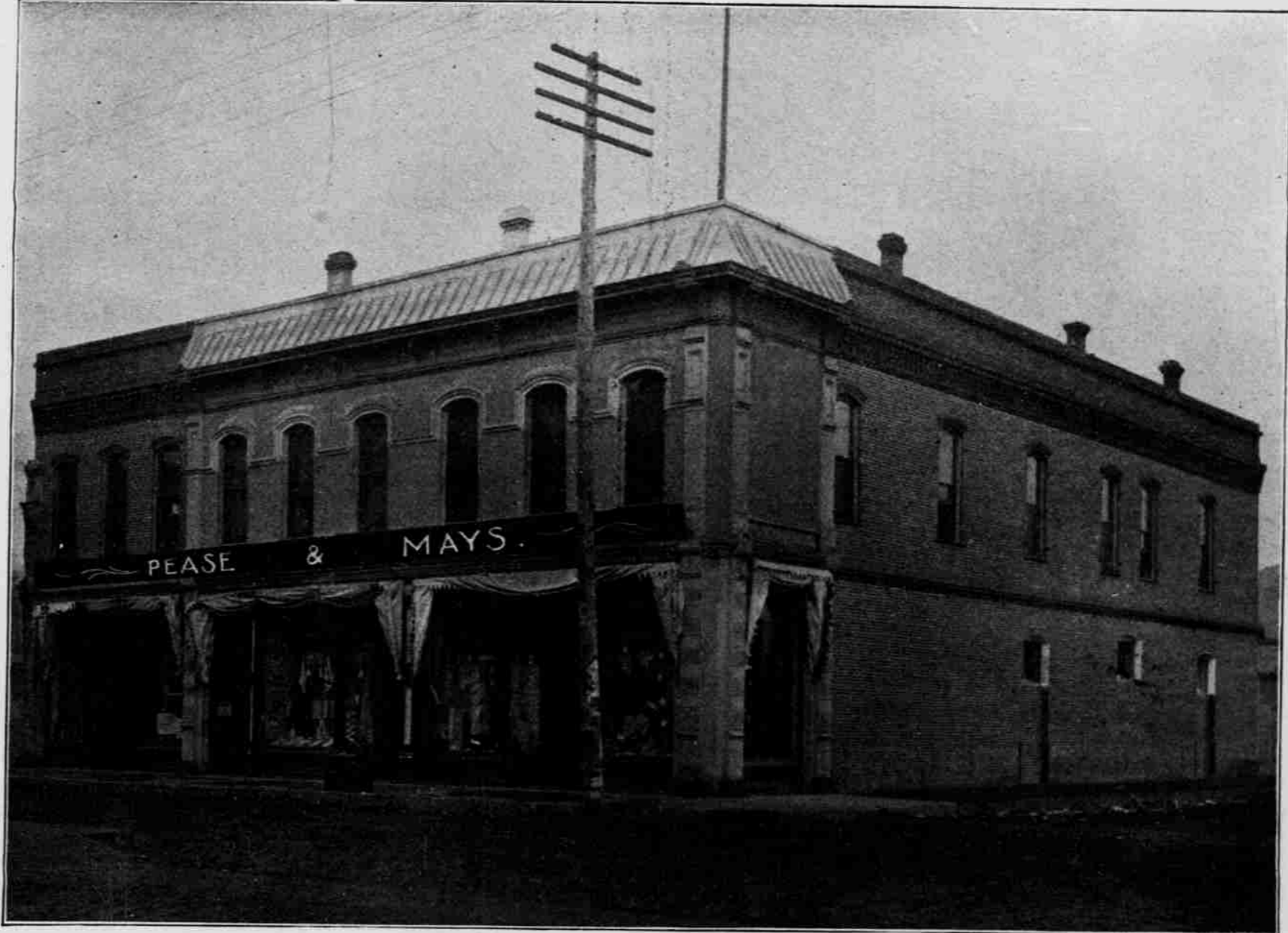
As transient trade forms but a small part of their volume of business they saw from the first that unusual care must be exercised in the selection of goods in filling orders, until now their reputation is such that many customers, to avoid delay, after reaching The Dalles, mail orders in advance, requesting that the articles may be selected, packed and boxed awaiting their arrival.

Believing that what is worth doing at all is worth doing well, while there have been many temptations to increase the number of lines carried, they have never done so until they could handle the new line "right." It is their ambition to buy at first hands as much as possible that means quantity, which implies storage capacity and capital. Business steadily increasing each year has compelled them to provide more room. In addition to the warehouse at the corner of Main and Federal streets, they have erected two

others, one on Main street between Federal and Laughlin, the other between Second and Laughlin streets.

Finding the salesroom inadequate, and particularly cramping the grocery department, they secured the adjoining store, and made it the finest retail grocery salesroom in the city.

They completely renovated the corner salesroom so that would hardly recognize in the strictly modern interior the old store of McFarland & French.



OFFICE AND SALES ROOM.



DRY GOODS DEPARTMENT.



CLOTHING AND MEN'S FURNISHING DEPARTMENT.