

Recalls Early Tragedies.

James H. Twogood, a pioneer citizen of Boise, Idaho, and one of the earliest residents of Jacksonville, writing in the Boise Capital—News of recent date on the text "Thou shalt not kill," tells the story of two early-day tragedies in this county that is of interest to many old-timers who are now readers of the HERALD:

"I will cite two cases in southern Oregon which happened in the '50's. In those times everybody 'packed' a gun who was able to own one. I plead guilty to the charge myself. It was strapped to a young colt and nights I slept with it under my head. That was from 1851 to 1856; during the Rogue river Indian war.

"Simeon Oldham, a sporting man from Rock Creek, Mo., crossed the plains in the early times and settled in the Willamette valley. He went out to Yreka, Cal. in the summer of '52, with a little sorrel race horse that he called the 'Gold Digger.' It was truly named, for he could dig out more gold in a quarter mile dash in 20 seconds than most men dig all summer. On his return trip the horse got lame and he left him with me at Goose creek. It was there that I first got acquainted with Oldham; as fine a man as one would wish to meet.

"In after years, when southern Oregon got more thickly settled, they had a race course near Jacksonville. It was here, on this track, one spring in the '50's, that Mr. Oldham got into an altercation with Dr. Alexander, a noble, good man. Everybody was his friend. Mr. Oldham must have been under the influence of liquor, but that is no excuse. He pulled his gun and shot the doctor dead. He was tried and acquitted by a 'lower court,' but the brand of Cain was placed upon his brow, and, like others, he became a wanderer upon the face of the earth, and never knew what 'peace on earth, good will to men' was, ever afterwards. He wandered up here to Boise in the early '60's and then drifted over to Silver City, where a young man shot him.

"Simeon was a brother of J. B. Oldham, ex-sheriff of Ada county, whom all the old-timers knew and respected as a man, although a gambler. He was as true as steel and 'on the square,' ever ready to extend the glad hand and share his purse with his fellow man. They don't make any kinder-hearted men than J. B., but he has gone to his long home.

"There was a Captain Abel George, captain of a volunteer company during the Rogue river Indian war of 1855-56. He was a fine-looking man, with a nice

family, and was a neighbor of ours, living 13 miles south of us. Some time after the war he went out to Jacksonville and got full of booze, and went into Chuggage & Drum's livery stable, where a colored man was getting onto his horse. George jumped on behind, in his wild, crazy fit; they both fell off, and the colored man was dead. George was tried and acquitted by a 'lower court,' but his life was wrecked.

"And there was 'Ace' Abbott. In the early '50's, when I first knew him, he was a good man but so nothing of a butler. He lived south of us, in the same county, near Kerbyville. He, too, had to get his man with a gun—I think he was a colored man. Abbott was tried and turned loose by a 'lower court,' but his life was wrecked.

"Billy Abbott carried the mail on horseback, and stopped with us in the fall of '55, during the war. They called him up here in '63 and settled in Garden valley. At Placerville, one day, 'Ace' got into a shooting scrape with others. When the smoke cleared away it was found that he had killed his brother, Billy. Abbott was again tried by the 'lower court' and swung clear. He sent for me to come up and buy his ranch, in the winter of 1870. I went up and found two feet of snow and did not purchase the ranch. Abbott sold it in 1871 or '72, left the country and went to Texas, where he could get rid of his troubles, as he thought, but alas! the poor deluded man found a judgment hanging over him from a higher court, that said: 'Thou shalt not kill.'

It set him crazy—conscience would not down, so he passed in his checks, going via the double-barreled shot-gun route. Oh! if men would only stop to think!"

Illegal.

Ethel—That sixteen-year-old boy asked me to marry him. Edith—And you threw him over? Ethel—Yes; told him it was against the law to catch leeches so young.—Judge's Library.

Growth of Rocks.

Rocks do not grow in the sense that a plant grows. They may increase by accretion, and they may undergo chemical change. The old sea bed, being lifted up, becomes sandstone and limestone. The volcanic ash and lava strewn over the plains become tufa, hard enough for building stone. The pebbly shore of a river becomes conglomerate. The simple mineral does grow, however, when it takes a crystal form. The sparkling prism of quartz increases from an atom to a crystal as large as a forearm by a process of addition and assimilation, wonderfully slow but beautifully regular, exactly as crystals of ice form on the window pane.

A Medal of Honor.

[Original.]

The British government gives its soldiers who show great bravery in life saving a decoration called the Victoria cross. The badge is an unpretentious affair made of gun metal, but it is the most coveted of any British army honor. In America we have no such decoration, and when a man bravely rescues a comrade he must be content with the thanks of the man he has saved.

During the Mexican war a general of brigade was one day reconnoitering with an aid-de-camp when he ran full upon a nest of Mexicans, who spat fire like so many rattlesnakes. The aid threw himself before his general and covered his retreat, receiving a wound in the arm and one in the leg. The general escaped unhurt. When the affair was over and the two dismounted before the general's tent he said to his aid:

"What's that on your belt clasp?" The aid looked down and pulled away a bullet that had been flattened against the brass clasp. Had it not been stopped on its way it would have penetrated the youngster's stomach, and that at that time meant death. The general pressed the young man's hand silently. Words would not express what he owed his subordinate.

When Lieutenant Passmore went home after the war he took the flattened bullet with him. He used to call it his medal. A man who is especially adapted for fighting is often useless for anything else, and Passmore failed completely in a business life which he took up on leaving the army. Perhaps the disposition he had shown to bear another's burdens was not in accord with commercialism, where the object often is to outwit those with whom one does business.

The poor fellow at last got ragged. His appearance was all the more slovenly from the wound he had received in the leg in saving his comrade's life, since it caused him to limp. He pawned his belongings one after another. His watch and chain he held as long as possible, because they had been given him by his mother. When his watch went, in order to keep up appearances with his chain he took his flattened bullet and wore it where the watch should be.

Meanwhile the general whose life Passmore had saved had prospered. We will call him Wingate. He had made money, and the prominence arising from his wealth and his service in war had placed him in a high position in politics. He became governor of his state. Since he lived in the eastern states and his former aid-de-camp in the west the two were apart. Passmore after hearing that Wingate had attained so high a position spent six months trying to make up his mind to apply to him for some subordinate office whereby he could make a living.

Finally he overcame his retiring disposition, succeeded in borrowing enough money to pay his fare and went to see the governor.

He arrived on the day of a great parade of the state militia. The governor was to review the procession. Passmore took a position near the stand and saw his former general enter with his suit. He tried to reach a point on the street in front of and below the governor's seat, but a policeman stopped him.

"Let me go on," said Passmore. "I know the governor personally."

The policeman looked suspicious, but passed him. Passmore stood directly beneath his old chief, with his hat pulled down over his eyes. The parade was late in moving and had not arrived. The governor took out his watch impatiently.

"This isn't the way you moved on the Mexicans, governor," said Passmore, looking up from under his hat. The governor glanced down to see who spoke.

"You moved on time, governor," Passmore continued.

"Ah, yes, my good man. They'll be here directly. They're only ten minutes late."

"Half an hour," rejoined the governor. "The head of the column was to have passed here at 12."

"Your watch is wrong, governor—twenty minutes wrong."

"What time have you, my friend?" asked the governor.

Passmore pulled out the flattened bullet.

A change came over the governor's face. His eyes were glued to the crude medal. It brought a far distant memory. Then he leaned over the rail that divided him from the street, grasped Passmore's hat and pulled it off. "Great heavens! Are you Tommy Passmore?"

"That I am, general."

The governor was a large, powerful man. He took Passmore by the collar, lifted him clean over the rail and set him down in a seat beside him. Just then there was a hurrah down the street, strains of martial music, and governor and staff assumed that position of attention and dignity expected of a reviewing party. Then the procession passed, many wondering who was the shabby man beside the governor.

The world is full of ingratitude, but the army doesn't foster it. Soldiers rarely forget that other life when their standards were different. The governor gave Passmore a lucrative office, and when the former went to the senate Passmore went to Washington with him.

And Passmore hung on to his flattened bullet. Senator Wingate borrowed it, and when he returned it the soft metal was incased and on the case was an inscription stating how the "decoration" was won.

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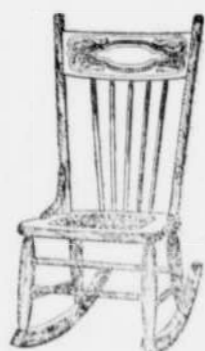
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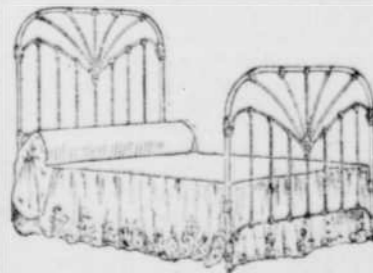
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