PIONEER BANKER OF SOUTHERN OREGON DEAD AT AGE OF 87

Historic Career of C. C. Beekman Is Ended—Millions of Gold Passed Through His Hands in Early Days When He Acted as Express Agent —Elected Governor, But Counted Out in 1876.

JACKSONVILLE'S FIRST CITIZEN PASSES TO A WELL-EARNED REST AFTER HISTORIC CAREER

INTERIOR OF BEEKMAN BANK

C. C. Beekman, pioneer financier, and one of the most striking figures in the early history of southern Oregon, died at his family residence in Jacksonville, Monday night, February 22, 1915, age 87 years and 26 days, of hemorrhage of the bowels. His wife, his son Benjamin of Portland, and daughter Miss Clara, and the attending physician, Dr. Robinson, were at his bedside. The funeral services will be held in Jacksonville, Thursday afternoon at 2 o'clock.

In the passing of this gentle character, that linked the old with the new, Jackson county loses one of its most sterling and beloved citizens. His acquaintances numbered most of the old settlers of the state. He was the best informed man in Oregon upon historical data connected with the early development of this state, and played a leading role in the growth of Jackson county. For 63 years he occupied the same office in the same building in Jacksonville. Two years ago he closed the Beekman bank, after it had been in operation since 1852, when with Thomas G. Reames, he established it.

Counted Out for Governor

In 1876 Mr. Beekman ran for governor of Oregon. He was beaten by 76 votes. His friends to this day charge that he was counted out by foes of southern Oregon. He gave liberally to educational work, and founded the Beekman fund at the University of Oregon. Its purpose is to aid struggling students, and was a reward for studiousness and thrift and industry. He was a member of the Jacksonvillle Presbyterian church. For years he has been a regular attendant at its services every Sunday evening. He was a member of the Jacksonville lodge of Masons. Every Thursday night for years he has attended its sessions. One of the striking traits of his life was his punctuality in his daily routine. Mr. Beekman celebrated his 53d wedding anniversary January 29. His wife survives.

Mr. Beekman was born in New York City Jan. 27, 1828, where a brother still resides. In early life his parents moved to New Jersey. Beekman learned the carpenter trade.

Came West in '49

When twenty-one years old, gold was discovered in California. Fired with adventure, young Beekman made his way to San Francisco via Panama and reached San Francisco. He made his to the northern part of California, working at his trade at $18 a day, and mining near Sawyers Bar, Yreka, and Scott's Bar. After a year as miner, he accepted a position with the Cram, Rogers company, who detailed him to Jacksonville as their representative. This marks his entrance into the city where he spent 64 years of his worthy life.

The Cram Rogers company failed to weather business storms, and yielded to the Wells, Fargo Express company, who established an overland stage station at Jacksonville, naming young Beekman their agent. In this capacity he came in contact with all identified with Jackson county when Jacksonville was one of the great gold camps of the world. Of those times and the men and women of it he was a spring of information, and never tired of telling, in his quiet way, of pioneer happenings.

Famous as a Banker

For half a century he conducted a banking business in Jacksonville, and the rugged honesty of its management made it famous throughout the west. Mr. Beekman was its president, cashier and board of directors. It was never under the slightest cloud. No financial storm ever shook it. Two years ago, due to advancing years, he closed it, preserving time-worn relics, furniture and equipment. At the time of his death he maintained offices in the building. Thousands of dollars in gold dust have passed through his hands. Two hard and never-broken rules of his bank was that no receipts were given for deposits and no one but the original depositor could receive them.

The following extract from a pen sketch by Fred Locksley appeared a few years ago in the Mail Tribune and is a faithful picture of Mr. Beekman.

A Pen Picture

"As my eye flitted from sign to sign I saw someone step from behind the massive glass case containing the gold scales. It was as though a picture entitled 'A gentleman of the old school,' painted by one of the old masters, had stepped down from out of its frame. Soberly clad in black with immaculate linen, figure erect, hair and beard of silvery gray, with eye clear and kindly, he asked, 'What do you wish to see me?'

C. C. BEEKMAN

"I nodded assent and said, 'I thought I would drop in and see when the stage for California is due to leave.'

Booking for Stage

"He took off his tortoise-rimmed glasses, looked at me earnestly and said: 'If you want to step back through the years you have come to the right place. This is the booking office for such a trip. Time has gone on, but we have let it go. We have not tried to keep step with it here in Jacksonville.'

"'Your bank and your bank furniture, Mr. Beekman, certainly take one back to the old days,' I said, as I pointed to the gold scales and tallow candle in its metal candlestick and the worn counter.

"'Yes, I presume that you would hardly call the bank or its furniture modern. That bench beside you I made in 1852—60 years ago. It is hacked and whittled and worn. Thousands of passengers have sat there while waiting for the stage to leave. If that old bench could tell all it has heard and witnessed it could tell some pretty interesting things. Frequently strangers bustle in here, glance at the old registers of passengers or the old Wells Fargo records, see the old signs and the worn furniture and think they have gotten in the wrong place and that this is not a bank, but they are newcomers—strangers. What they think doesn't matter. I neither solicit nor desire their custom. Many of my customers have been on my books for more than fifty years, and yet if they were asked to they could not fill out a check. They come here and hand me their money to keep. When they need any they drop in and ask for $20 or $50 and say, "Set that down against my account."

His Banking System

"'I don't speculate or live riotously and my customers know that their money is always here for them. In 1873 and again in 1893, as well as in 1907, some of the banks felt pretty uneasy. They didn't have the money in their vaults to pay their obligations and if Governor Chamberlain hadn't established bank holidays there would have been a lot of banks go out of business and even with that they had to issue certificates of deposit and the bankers lost a lot of sleep as well as their customers. I didn't, nor did any of my customers. Anybody who had any money here could come and get it, but none of them did. One or two of my old-time customers asked me if I was alright and if I needed any money. I told them I could pay everybody and have considerable money left, so the only way we knew there was a panic here was by reading about it in the papers.

"Yes, I am getting along in years. I am 84 years old. I was agent for the Wells Fargo company for forty-three years continuously. I was appointed in 1863. When I was 21 years old they discovered gold in California. Next year I landed in San Francisco. The day after I landed I secured a job at $18 a day at carpenter work. In 1852 I came to Jacksonville and I have been here ever since.'"

PARRY NAMED AS REPUBLICAN

WASHINGTON, Feb. 23.—President Wilson met rumblings of a senate fight on his nominations for the new federal trade commission today by the announcement that he intended to stand by them.

Will H. Parry of Seattle, the president said, had been appointed as a republican. Parry hitherto has been described as a progressive republican.

ASSOCIATED CHARITIES NEEDS MORE MONEY

It is to be hoped that those who have not contributed toward the work of this society will see it to be both their duty and pleasure to send in their contributions at once, as the society is in debt and bills must be paid at once. The work was taken up last fall at the request of a public meeting and I was asked to take charge of the same, and this I have done gladly and have devoted many hours each day in taking care of the poor, who otherwise would have been dependent upon the city. I have done this work without pay and have signed bills for groceries, etc., and these bills must be honored at once. It has cost nothing for rent, light, phone, nor for the work which the society has done, and it has done a splendid work. It is the intention of the society to close its work at the end of this month, as conditions are favorable to doing this. Many men have obtained work through the efforts of the society and nearly a hundred families have been helped and generously cared for. This is the last appeal I shall make on behalf of a work which should be liberally supported by all.

DR. J. LAWRENCE HILL.