1986

Archives Newsletter Volume 9

Penrose Library

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Each year the Northwest and Whitman College Archives has been blessed with gifts from a wide variety of contributors. Each contribution, however large or small, has added strength to our growing collection. Financial aid, manuscripts, rare books, periodicals, and photographs are examples of the support we receive. As our facilities develop and the research capabilities of the collection grow stronger, this common interest joins us in building a valuable archival collection, and our efforts are establishing a research facility of quality and importance.

The archives program is divided into two areas:

First is the Whitman College Archives.

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Materials Received Include

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (Northwest & Hawaiian materials);
Archival support; Books & Pamphlets; Business Ledgers; Dogwood Press materials (Frank McCaffrey); Equipment (barrowed for special projects); Family Bibles; Financial support; Fort Walla Walla Walla materials; Geophysical materials; Letters (Family & Business); McFeyl materials; Manuscripts; Maps; Microfiche Indexes; Newspapers (Walla Walla City & County); Paintings (Whitman College People); Periodicals; Photographs (Walla Walla City & County, Whitman,

1986 Activities

During 1986 I presented 12 talks, reaching some 530 people. Most of the presentations were an expanded version of my Narcissa Whitman presentation, which was given August 15, 1985 near Scotts Bluff, Nebraska (dedication of a highway marker honoring Narcissa Prentiss Whitman) .

April 23rd, with the co-operation of Pete Reid (Treasurer at Whitman College), the first College Bell, which has been in storage in the basement of the Old Music Building, was moved to the lobby of Penrose Memorial Library. This bit of college history is prominently displayed in the lobby of the library. An informative pamphlet on the history of the bell was printed. The text was compiled from research conducted by Traci Hill Barela, who is an alum of Whitman College and the archives.

In November the White Temple Baptist Church (corner of Boyer and Park) was removed. On July 16th, before the interior was disturbed, Terri White (then acting director of Sheehan Gallery) took the day off to document the church interior. With the exception of the stained-glass windows, the project was done in black and white.

June 1st, in company with National Park Service personnel, local history buffs, and escorted by a Forest Service employee, a vehicle tour of the proposed Whitman trail (1836) over the Blue Mountains was taken. We spent the day taking photographs and discussing the route. This tour was in preparation for a horseback ride over the route (I decided against doing the latter).

July 25-26 Professor Tom Edwards, Marilyn Sparks,
and I co-ordinated a Northwest Missionary History Conference held on campus. The "Team of Three" found this very helpful, even though our work really paid off, for the conference was a big success. The conference was put together by the National Park Service, and the local NPS personnel were very active in the planning and operation of the conference. The lectures were held in Maxey auditorium, and we averaged 90+ people at each session.

With some gentle pressure from Glenn Adams, Ye Galloont Press, Fairfield, WA, I finally finished footnoting an 1866 book on Northwest history. In October of 1982 Mr. Adams requested that I supply an introduction and footnotes for the book Sketches of Travel in Oregon and Idaho, by Charles Aubrey Angelo (also known as Chaos). I thought that this project would be very simple, so I accepted the responsibility. After a second reading I realized that the potential for improving the book was much greater than initially anticipated. Angelo was a traveling contemporary with Angelo's 1862-1866 travels in the Northwest. The final result was an introduction, preface, list of contributors, list of 46 Alts articles written by Angelo, and some 150 typed pages of footnotes. All the material was delivered to the printer on September 25th, and now we look forward to seeing the finished footnoting an 1866 book on Northwest history.

We continue to receive McCaffrey/Dogwood Press materials. Before Mr. McCaffrey passed away I had discussed with him the possibility of designing a bookplate for the Dogwood Press items. We agreed upon the design, and Frank planned to have it printed. Before he could get the project started he died. This year Matt and Deborah have continued the work, and we have received a bookplate for the Dogwood Press items.

A more formal program was established this year (1986). Nancy Pryor, retired director of the Washington Room, Washington State Library, Olympia, began volunteering two days a week. Her first day was January 28th, and since then she has been a very faithful volunteer. Nancy has been working with the Dorey Synog Baker papers, from developing a typescript of an 1870's letter press book, to transcribing diaries. Her keen knowledge of local and regional history has been of great help in working with the Baker papers. She also has been of great assistance in helping patrons find information in the archives.

The Whitman archives program has increased to $13,700, through the financial support of 42 individuals and two companies. In 1985 Whitman presented Mr. Ferris with an honorary LLD degree. Mr. Ferris was extremely interested in regional history. He wrote a number of articles on various subject, and his work appeared in popular and scholarly journals, and in newspapers. Over the past several years individuals and foundations have financially supported various aspects of the archives program. The progress we have made in several areas is directly related to this support. Collecting is only part of the task; preservation, adequate housing and making materials accessible also require financial aid. With this continued support and the increasing growth of the archives program and its patrons, I hope we will be able to establish new programs that will benefit all those who use the archives, while still increasing the security and protection of valuable archival materials.

In July we had the honor of assisting eight Japanese scholars (two teams of four each) who had received a research grant from the Japanese Ministry of Education, to conduct "A Comprehensive Research on Japanese Education Documents under the Occupation of the Allied Powers in the United States". Their purpose for visiting the Northwest and Whitman College Archives was to research the files of Dr. Walter Crosby Bells (a grandson of Cushing Eells). Initially only one team was to visit us, but when both teams met in Pullman the scholars that had visited Whitman informed the second team that they had to see the Bells material, and the second team made a special trip to Walla Walla just for that purpose. The importance of this collection is that from 1947 to 1951 Dr. Eells was with General MacArthur's staff in Tokyo as advisor on higher education to the Japanese government. As a result of his experiences in the Far East and elsewhere, Dr. Eells produced important bibliographies on Japanese education, and his collection of pamphlets and writings on this subject has a significant contribution to the subject. Our visitors were very pleased and impressed with the collection, and were surprised to find materials that they had not seen nor heard of before. As a result of their return to Japan they received a very nice letter from them expressing their "sincere appreciation for your kind assistance for our research work in Walla Walla" and that "The Papers of Walter Crosby Bells will contribute Japanese scholars for studying the postwar Japanese education."
Ithaca Tompkins Co N.Y.
Sept 18th 1883

Rev Mr. Bells, Dear Sir: Your article in the Seattle Weekly Post Intelligencer on Rev Samuel Parker – man who spites all the missionaries as that has been written, is excellent and an excellent one.

But few sentences are as true as I would not use. It is the most unexceptionable article that Dr. Whitman and others set him that I have ever seen; and does much credit for fairness, truth and dignified defence, and states of one to which Oregon owes so much. It is a pity that he could not have lived to the wonderful "Oregon," he saw so miserably destitute, when he saw it.

A few typographical errors need correction as not Miss S Sears but S. J. Parker is sometimes called Apulia is not in New Jersey – it is in Onondaga Co New York and a few others. But for these you are not responsible.

I suggest that you give in another article the facts and proof of who were sent by the Nez Perces to St Louis in 1832 to get the Bible and a few others. But for these you are not responsible.

I shall examine the coming winter the boxes of letters &c that may have correspondence from same corrections. Mainly others. Rev Mr. Eells wrote (original in the Northwest archives), and then the newspaper article Eells wrote (from the Eells scrapbook collection in the archives).

Should you obtain any of my father I am &c yours

S. J. Parker

REV. SAMUEL PARKER.

There were pioneers to this coast, and there were others; there were homesteaders, by wagon, on horseback, and there were pioneers of pioneers. Among these latter was the subject of this sketch, who explored the way for the heroes and heroines of 1836 and 1838.

Dr. Marcus Whitman did a great work for this coast; so great that it has been thought proper to give him a county and a college in our Territory, and erect a monument of stone at his grave. As he was one of the first to precede him in the work, who led him and other missionaries, and through them many others into the country; without whom it could not have been settled, his name should be forever remembered.

He was born at Ashfield, Massachusetts, April 23, 1779, and was the son of Elisha and Thankful M. Parker. He was of Puritan ancestry, his grandfather residing in the county and college in our Territory, and erect a monument of stone at his grave. As he was one of the first to precede him in the work, who led him and other missionaries, and through them many others into the country; without whom it could not have been settled, his name should be forever remembered.

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favorable influence of the climate on the health of his wife.

About the time he was at Middlefield the five Nez Perce and other Indians who went to St. Louis in search of the white man's God and bible reached them. They were all the great news to the public in the early part of 1833. Mr. Parker saw this as no less than a great opportunity for the work of prayer for foreign missions to his people. As he thought the matter over it became a personal matter to him to be more than any missionary and eventually led him to offer himself to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to go to Oregon. The year before he did, but Mr. Lee did not offer himself first to the board, the board called him to this, and they made the offer to him. It was the first for the kind of offer that was ever made. It is true that the Methodists had never done this, or some similar thing, but it was invested in the same object, and sent out Rev. Jason Lee and others, who started a short time before Mr. Parker did. There was no lack of encouragement; instructions from the Board Messrs. Dunbar and Allis entered upon the work among the Pawnee Indians, and Mr. Parker was requested to continue to com- plete that mission and relinquished the respon­ sibility of the Oregon work. Mr. Parker returned to Ithaca and was commissioned by the Board to spend the time until the next February in holding missionary meetings, monthly concerts for prayer, and in preaching and raising funds in New York. A letter of his dated Franklinville, N.Y., Dec. 5, 1834, gives the following information:

My Dear Family:—My labors have been fa- tiguing [sic] owing to the very bad state of the roads. He traveled with his own horse and wagon. My success, I think, has been striking, and my collection, though small, have been greater than any other similar collections. The people taking up on any sympathy of like nature. I have found some missionaries. Dr. Whitman, of Wheeler, Steuben County, New York, has offered himself to the board to go beyond the mountains. He has no family. Two ladies offering themselves, one a daughter of the Presbyterian Mr. Allen’s, and the other a Miss McCoy of Cuba, offers herself. Also one man, offering himself as a missionary. Also a Mr. Clark and Rev. Samuel May, brother to Mrs. Powell. Ever affectionately, SAMUEL PARKER

It is impossible to say now whether Dr. Whit- man and Miss Prentiss, who afterwards became his wife, would have been like Misses Allen and McCoo, or Miss Prentiss, of Amity, Alleghany County; the other a Mrs. Whitman, of Ithaca, as they no longer felt that the Mission was under their care. At St. Louis he met Dr. Whitman, who had preceded him a few days. They left together, and Dr. Whitman remained a little more time in Missouri before they left what was called the United States.

On May 24th, the Sabbath, Dr. Whitman and Mr. Parker rested, while the others went on. The moves of this caravan were so slow that they felt they could easily overtake it, and as there was no danger from hostile Indians, they felt it to be their duty to rest on that day. The next day they overtook the caravan before night; but some of the men were much displeased because of this resting on the Sabbath. On the 24th of April they crossed the Nez Percé river, or Columbia, and to expire their dis- pleasure they cut some of the barks with which the canoe was covered. Unfortunately, it did not drift far before it lodged against a tree, and when Messrs. Parker and Whit- man repaired it and passed over. At night one of the passengers, in their tent, was not sober. He drank a great deal of alcohol, and said that they were offended, because of this refusal to travel on the Sabbath, but, if they had been permitted to act, they would have been passed over. This, of course, was refused. He then said that some of the men were highly dis- pleased to find them thus violating the Sabbath. Their lives were in danger, and as a way of reconcilia- tion, they were to eat some of the meat, which they hands, and they ate. They still refused, and after considerable urging without being able to shake the resolution of the men, and without giving up some purpose of revenge in the future. But, as it was stated above, it did not affect the matter into its hands. The company remained at Council Bluffs about three weeks, waiting for more news. When those were received, the spasmatic cholera broke out with great malignity.
The warm weather, intemperate habits of the men and their manner of living, evidently aggravated the dangers of the trip, and but a few more days, and others barely recovered. Dr. Whitman's medical skill was now precisely what was needed, and with Mr. R. D. Hall's assistance, all who were sick were saved. The fever continued, until he feared he should die alone in the wilderness. Yet still he tried to say, "The will of God be done." But afterwards had some misgivings about it, lest some accident should happen to Mr. Parker. Captain Bridge and about fifty men accompanied Mr. Parker to go on with the Indians while Dr. Whitman remained behind. The Nez Perces and Flatheads being their people. All the men were divided into small companies and stationed at the several parcels of goods where they slept. The whole army was transformed into a large hollow square, to keep guard, who relieve each other every two hours. At break of day the usual call is "Out, out, gear up your mules."

On the 6th of October, he reached Fort Walla Walla, where Mr. Pambrun, then in charge, gave him a cordial welcome. He had great pleasure in the kind of food he liked the refinement of life, this surely was the pioneering of pioneer life.

Mr. Parker accepted Dr. McLaughlin's invitation to go with the expedition. He was much better personally than he could by letter pass through six editions, comprising at least sixteen thousand copies. It spread abroad as the new missionaries, which he could do much better personally than he could by letter. After consulting with those he thought could best assist the missionaries, which he could do much better personally than he could by letter. After consulting with those he thought could best assist the new missionaries, which he could do much better personally than he could by letter. After consulting with those he thought could best assist the new missionaries, which he could do much better personally than he could by letter. After consulting with those he thought could best assist the new missionaries, which he could do much better personally than he could by letter. After consulting with those he thought could best assist the new missionaries, which he could do much better personally than he could by letter.
both in its geographical and geological information; first discovered coal in the Black Hills, and the observations on these points, says the New Yorker of 1838, are richly worth twice the cost of the volume. He described the fur companies, collected short vocabularies of the Nez Perces [sic], Klickitat, Calapooya and Chinook languages, devoted one chapter to meteorology, keeping an account of the thermometer three times a day while at Vancouver, spoke of a Willamette falls canal, of railroads in Oregon, and in his edition of 1838, first publicly announced the practicability of a railroad from the Atlantic to the Pacific. He ever kept interested in the country and its political status. In 1839 he addressed Hon. Caleb Cushing, then a representative at Washington, on the subject of Oregon as a Territory of value to the United States, in danger of being lost, and Mr. Cushing requested him to prepare a memorial on the subject, and when Dr. Whitman went East in 1842-3 to warn our Government of British designs, he counselled with his aged fellow missionary on the subject.

After his return he visited New England, the Middle States and Canada, lecturing on Oregon and supplying various pulpits until December, 1849, when he was stricken with paralysis while temporarily supplying the pulpit at Volney, N.Y. This rendered his left side nearly useless. He managed by driving with one hand, to reach the home of his son-in-law, sixteen miles distant, where he lay, unable to swallow, fed by a tube for nearly three months, when he was taken home in a sleigh, on a feather bed. In the course of two years he recovered as far as such paralysis is ever recovered from, and had fair health until his death, of congestive inflammation of the lungs, March 21st, 1866, at the age of nearly eighty-seven years.

--Seattle Post-Intelligencer
August 23, 1883