

Do not

TRANSACTIONS
OF THE
TWENTY-FIFTH ANNUAL REUNION
OF THE
Oregon Pioneer Association

FOR
1897

CONTAINING THE
ANNUAL ADDRESS BY HON. JOHN R. MCBRIDE,
AND THE
OCCASIONAL ADDRESS BY HON. JOHN BURNETT,
WITH
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES AND OTHER MATTERS
OF HISTORIC INTEREST

PORTLAND, OREGON
GEO. H. HIMES AND COMPANY, PRINTERS
272 Oak Street, corner of Fourth
1898

November, 1858, then back overland to Clatsop. As it rained the entire trip, and Mrs. Raymond was swept from her horse by the surf in rounding one of the capes of the short sand beach and nearly drowned, this was one of the most disagreeable of her journeys. As, however, the trip at that season was entirely her own wish she could not well complain.

Mrs. Raymond lived at Tanzy Point until 1862, when she moved to Astoria. In 1863 she procured a divorce from her husband. She then returned to the Point for a time and then went back to Salem. While in Salem she sold her half of Tanzy Point (now Flavel) to John Loomis, her son-in-law, who promised to pay her \$1000 and provide her with a home during her life. However, she received but \$400. This money she soon spent in church work and then went in debt. Her daughter paid her mother's debts many times. Finally, not being able to collect the remaining \$600, she went to live with her daughter, Mrs. Martha Loomis. Mrs. Raymond hated trouble of any kind. She took no thought of the morrow, but "put her trust in the Lord" and got cheated in all her transactions.

Mrs. Raymond was a very pious woman, who thought taking care for the future showed a want of trust in the Lord, and was therefore a sin. An instance of this was given when the new Methodist church was built at Salem. Aurelia sent her mother every month \$10.00 expressly for the rent—sometimes more, but always that much. And when Aurelia went to Salem she asked, "What was her mother owing?" and found among other debts was \$50.00 for rent. "Why, mother, how is that? I sent you the rent money every month." Mrs. Raymond said a man had promised to give the Methodist church \$10,000 if they would build a finer church than the Presbyterian church in Portland, and she said she felt the Lord had opened the way for her to assist in that great work, so she gave the money to the church and let the rent go. "But, mother, that money was for the rent, and it should have been paid." Mrs. Raymond's answer was, "The cattle on a thousand hills are the Lord's." Dozens of like instances could be given showing Mrs. Raymond's unworldly character. No woman in

truth could have been more unfitted for the privations of a pioneer life; for she was not strong, and naturally took no care for the future. That trait was intensified by her religion, which made her think she committed a sin if she took any care for the future of this life. Then her religion was entirely a matter of emotion, and unless she was in such a state of mind as to be regardless of everything in this world, she felt that she had lost faith and was unhappy.

Mrs. Raymond suffered much from ill-health the last years of her life, as well as the loss of her sight. She died in 1880. A woman kind-hearted, peaceful and sincere, she obeyed literally the command to "take no thought of the morrow." She could not but suffer more than the ordinary privations of the pioneer.

[The above sketch was prepared by a daughter of Mrs. Raymond.]

MRS. NANCY DICKERSON WELCH.

The narrative I here present to the public of the life of Mrs. Nancy Dickerson Welch, the pioneer woman of Astoria, is necessarily of a rambling and somewhat disjointed nature, comprising various occurrences. The facts, however, will prove to be linked and banded together as related by this pioneer woman. It is to be regretted that more of Mr. and Mrs. Welch's recounts of their wild and perilous adventures and hairbreadth escapes among the Indians was not written as a matter of history. But never thinking we might be called upon to narrate it for that purpose, it was neglected. Mr. and Mrs. Welch were with the first adventurous expeditions among the savage tribes that peopled the depths of the wilderness, and assisted in turning savage life into civilization—wigwams into habitable homes.

Mrs. Nancy Dickerson Welch was born January 2, 1818, in Lud-

low township, near Marietta, Washington county, Ohio. Her father, Joseph Dickerson, was a native of Virginia, and married Sally Daily, of Pennsylvania. Her grandfather, Thomas Dickerson, and his family, in company with General Putnam, of Revolutionary fame, moved to the Ohio river and settled on the west side in Ohio; General Putnam locating on the east side in Virginia.

Mrs. Welch's parents afterwards moved to Delaware county, Ohio, then to Lafayette county, Indiana, where her father died. Her mother and family then moved to Bloomington (now Muscatine), Iowa, where she was left an orphan, with nine brothers for whom she thereafter took upon herself the duties of mother and housekeeper. We have often heard her tell how she performed the manifold duties for that numerous family of young brothers.

So her busy life ran along until March 12, 1840, when she was married to James Welch, who was born in Booneville, Kentucky, February 16, 1816, he having lived in St. Louis, Mo., then in Dav-
 enport, Iowa, and afterward in Bloomington, Iowa, where with his wife he continued to reside until the spring of 1843, when they, with a number of families, left their home and started across the plains for Oregon, traveling over the old Landers emigrant wagon road. They got their supplies from the different stations as they journeyed along with their slow, steady teams of oxen. Mr. Welch had two wagons. The members of the party were all grown persons, except Mrs. Welch's son, James W., he being about 1½ years old. After traveling for some time they were compelled to turn back on account of Indian depredations, so temporarily stopped at "Rubadeau's landing," now the city of St. Joseph, Mo., during the winter of 1843. Here a son was born to Mrs. Welch.

In the spring of 1844 they again resumed their journey with the Gilliam party of emigrants. The spring was unusually rainy. By the overflowing of streams, as well as the softening of the ground so much time was lost that by July 1 not more than one hundred miles in a straight course had been traveled, consequently provisions were consumed, and at Fort Laramie many families were compelled to replenish, and purchase flour at \$30

and \$40 a barrel. Sugar could only be obtained at \$1.50 a pound.

On reaching Fort Bridger they were bitterly disappointed when told they were only half way to their destination. Upon arriving at the Deschutes it was necessary to have guides when fording the river, and here pillaging was done in a systematic manner by collusion between the Indian guides, who extorted all they could from emigrants for showing them the ford. The party of the year before having posted notices by the way of the course to be taken enabled the emigrants to make good time over the latter part of their journey. So after many tedious months they finally arrived at Oregon City, Oregon, in December, 1844, where Mr. Welch actively engaged in the lumber business.

In 1845 Mr. Welch met John M. Shiveley in Oregon City, who had located a donation land claim at Astoria. He induced Mr. Welch to purchase an undivided one-half interest therein.

In the spring of 1846 Mr. and Mrs. James Welch, accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. David Ingalls, with their families and five men came to Astoria, and located permanently. Mrs. Welch and Mrs. Ingalls were the first white woman to locate in Astoria, there being a Hudson's bay station here at that time.

Mr. Welch having bought the land claim and knowing he would lose it if he did not occupy it, was compelled to come when his wife was seriously ill with the measles. She was brought down the river in her bed. Of their arrival in Astoria they camped on the grounds where they made their home.

When Mr. Welch in the spring of 1846 began to build the first frame house in the town, on what is now called block 17, Shiveley's Astoria, an officer of the Hudson's Bay Company ordered him off. But Mr. Welch being a man of great determination would not be baffled. He declared it would take all the guns of the fort to stop him. He stated that this was American soil; he owned the 320 acres and would build where he pleased—and he did, obtaining lumber from Hun's sawmill about twenty-five miles up the Columbia river; lumber being worth \$30 per thousand. Mr. Welch afterward sold the first house he built and erected an-

other, using for flooring in this white pine lumber that cost \$60 per thousand. This house was built on the northeast corner of the block, where it stood until a few years ago, when Mrs. Welch had it moved to give place to a more modern house.

Now thinking of the Astoria of that time, we can but wonder at the fortitude and courage, the serenity and happy contentment that enabled Mrs. Welch to set to work to help her husband and make a home on the banks of the Oregon (now Columbia) within the sound of the roar of the Pacific ocean, with only a few companionable people, surrounded by dense forests, wild beasts and Indians. Her life must for many long months have been often desolate and lonely. The writer has often heard Mrs. Welch tell how she protected her home and children from the depredations of the Indians with her rifle, in her husband's absence. They would try to enter her house, and when prevented would throw stones at them, shoot at the house, and threaten violence in various ways. But she being possessed of rare physical courage, traits that many of those pioneers were endowed with, was always able to defend herself and home.

The necessaries of life were procured at the Hudson's Bay trading post at Oregon City or Vancouver, which was also a Hudson's Bay trading station, and when we remember that the journey to those stations was made in Indian canoes and bateaux, and it took from three to six weeks to make the journey, purchase supplies and return, we may be enabled to have a slight conception of the many vicissitudes, trials and hardships this pioneer mother was called upon to endure, surrounded by her family of small children, spending the weary nights alone, while the father was away on those periodical journeys.

Fortunately food was plentiful in the settled part of the country. But the great want of the newcomers was clothing. All the goods in the several stores being exhausted, even at Vancouver there being no stock on hand except the reserved cargo, which was not open for use. Clothing was made by putting piece to piece together regardless of color or texture, and moccasins tak-

ing the place of boots and shoes was the universal foot covering.

During Mr. Welch's absence on one of those trips to Oregon City for provisions and other necessaries, Mrs. Welch was taken suddenly ill, and sank away into a comotose state. By accident Mr. W. H. Gray, the honored pioneer, being the only acting physician at the mouth of the Columbia, came to the house to stay over night with his friends, as was the custom in those times. On being informed of Mrs. Welch's condition he immediately went to work with what stimulants he had at hand and succeeded in restoring her to consciousness. Mrs. Welch has related this incident very often and always spoke with much feeling of gratitude of the manly, noble pioneer who saved her life to her family for many long years after.

Mrs. Welch had a moral courage that was so great it precluded any shadow of cant, hypocrisy or deception. She wore upon her brow throughout a long life of arduous duties, trials and temptations the insignia of moral worth and womanly purity, the brightest jewel in the crown of life. She was a woman true to herself, and it naturally followed that she was true to others. In relating the many hardships incident to her early life, there was never a shadow of self-pity, never a thought of what might have been—only a womanly, noble, self-reliant feeling that her duty had always been done as best she knew. Being a true Christian woman, her many acts of kindness and charity will leave for her a name that will be blazoned upon the pages of the history of Oregon and Clatsop county. She has left footprints on the sand of time which no wave of oblivion can efface, while the name of our state, Oregon, shall be spoken by men.

She was a true and devoted wife and mother, deeply attached to her home and friends.

In the fall of 1893 Mrs. Welch, in company with her youngest daughter, for the first time in all these years visited the scenes of her early life, visiting her brothers' children in various parts of Iowa, and her only surviving brother in Atchison, Kansas, whom she had not seen for 53 years, and attended the world's

great exposition in Chicago, which she greatly enjoyed, but returned to her dear adopted Oregon, happy and grateful in the thought that her home was in the best part of the world, as she expressed it. She saw no place equal to the evergreen carpeted Oregon.

In October, 1895, she visited California, and after a protracted visit, and seeing her old-time friend Mrs. Ingalls laid to rest in Los Angeles, Cal., she again returned to her home filled with thankful gratitude that her life had been spared to again enjoy the dear loved scenes, every one of which the tendrils of her heart were closely woven about.

Mrs. Welch was the mother of eleven children, five of whom are now living—James W. Welch, John W. Welch, Mrs. Sarah F. Wood, Daniel H. Welch and Mrs. Mary I. Gillette, all of Astoria. Fourteen grandchildren are living.

Of her we may truthfully say she was indeed a typical pioneer woman, having been born in the western wilds of Ohio, was inured to the privations and hardships, the toils and dangers of Ohio pioneers, which eminently fitted her to cope with the greater dangers and privations she had to endure in helping to establish a home on the Pacific coast.

After a useful life of 78 years Mrs. Nancy Dickerson Welch, at 6:30 P. M., on Tuesday evening, February 11, 1896, surrendered this life to her Lord, surrounded by her children and grandchildren, her husband, James Welch, having died in 1876. On the Friday following her death the funeral took place from her late residence, the Rev. E. S. Bollinger, of the First Congregational church, officiating. The spacious grounds were filled with a mourning mass of humanity which by their attendance paid their farewell tribute to her who first of her sex and race located in Astoria, and assisted in turning a wilderness into civilization. Her friends gave abundant evidence that she solved the principles of life. In recognition of the noble qualities of Mrs. Nancy Welch and the effort for the moral and social advancement of our city by this pioneer lady, every business place and all schools throughout

the city were closed that all might attend her funeral. The representatives of the city government attended in a body. The members of the Oregon Pioneer Society, of which she was a member, was present to pay tribute to the honored dead. A perfect Christian quiet prevailed, the city being at rest during the service. The weather even was propitious, as though willing to add to this closing scene.

So after a life of earnest grappling with the stern realities, we will lay her to rest beside her dear ones who have gone before, and amidst the scenes she loved.

ESTHER D'ARMON TAYLOR.

Mrs. Esther D'Armon Taylor, daughter of Esther and Samuel D'Armon, was born in Lancaster county, Pennsylvania, July 17, 1823. Her parents moved to Ohio when she was but a child, and there, in 1839, she married James Taylor. They made a home in Kalida, and two children were born to them there, the eldest dying when only two years old. In 1844 there was much talk of the great country on the northwest coast and Mr. Taylor decided to join the immigrants the next season and to take the long trip across the plains. This he did for the love of adventure and also for the benefit of his health, which at that time had been greatly impaired. He expected to leave his wife and infant daughter in Ohio until his return, or at least until he had seen what this far-off land was like—but Mrs. Taylor would not listen to this plan and insisted that she was quite as able and ready to go as he. So they made all arrangements, leaving Lima, Ohio, March 6, 1845, for Independence, Mo., where their company was forming. They left Independence May 10, and arrived in Oregon City on the 10th of the following October, after an exceedingly pleasant journey across the plains. Mrs. Taylor was then just 21. They experienced many hardships and privations, but Mrs. Taylor was al-