

Washington Territory.

WAITSBURG, WALLA, WALLA COUNTY, JANUARY 24, 1880.

EDITOR JOURNAL: It was my intention to write to the JOURNAL sooner. Waiting to learn more of the country must be my apology for delay. There is much to interest the reader by giving a description of the whole route from Boise City, Idaho, to Walla Walla City, but I must overlook the route for the present, and speak of Walla.

After crossing the Blue mountains by the Thomas and Nuckles toll-road, we cross a corner of the Unatilla reservation and reach the town of Weston, situated in a fine farming district. It was the 5th of September and the harvest was not near all cut, but the headers were in the fields and the header wagons were coming back and from the threshing machine; then in a trot for another load. The horses are generally large and well built, at least I never saw on an average as fine teams in any farming community as I did here and in Grand Round Valley, Oregon. There are two things strike the eye of the stranger as rather odd, one is to see no level land, all high rolling country; and another is to see the piles of sacked grain corded up in the fields as if in a ware-house, six hundred to one thousand bushels sometimes in a pile, you would naturally ask Does it never rain?

The roads are deep with dry dust, and looking at the dry appearance of things generally, you are surprised to see such fine fields of grain.

There is very little prairie, the land being pretty much all farmed and well fenced; occasionally there is a farm where they have not been able to reach water, and here we see them hauling water for the harvesters and the teams; this is the picture presented all along in the fields, while many who have got their thrashing done, are hauling the wheat to market. "When did you have any rain?" we ask of some of the farmers. "Not since last May," was the answer, and the rain don't generally commence till October. It looks strange to see forty or fifty bushels of wheat to an acre where there has been no rain for three or four months. The point is this, that the grain is sown any time along through the winter, when the ground is not frozen, but the greater part is sown in February and March; then the grain is well rooted before dry weather and when that does set in, it is not hot; the weather in summer is seldom hot and the nights are always cool. Another point is, the soil is a heavy loam. You can dig post holes and never press the spade with your foot, and yet wells are dug and left without curbing, and remain good for years. The moisture appears to rise to the surface. I have seen pieces of boards which had been left on the dry ground in the evening around the camps, have the under side wet in the morning. It is generally regarded as one of the evils of this territory that the atmosphere is too damp, and while it promotes the growth of crops, it is severe on those who are most subject to throat and lung diseases, and also on young children. We seldom hear any one complaining of anything else than colds; fever and ague, and kindred diseases are unknown. Diphtheria was very severe a year and two years ago; great numbers of children died of it, but I have not heard of it anywhere this winter.

This territory has settled very fast for the past two years; a heavy immigration from California is pouring in all the time, and the land is being taken up very fast. The place I write from is about eighteen miles nearly due north from Walla Walla City, and I know of one farm of 160 acres about a mile from town being sold about a month ago for \$5,000, and this is not an exceptional case; farms are all held at high figures.

Nearly all the immigration of the past season has located north of the Snake river, in what is known as Pollux country and Spokane Falls, Four Lakes and Deep creek. A considerable town called Colfax is central in the Pollux country, has the U. S. land office there, and is distant from here about sixty miles. Spokane Falls is one hundred miles nearly due north from here. The Northern Pacific R. R. is surveyed through the latter town, and will be built past that point the coming summer; the graders are at work since October last; they have commenced between the forks of the Columbia and Snake rivers, and that point is called Ainsworth. Railroad iron and all supplies are shipped by boat up to this point. About one hundred white men and some four hundred Chinamen constitute the present grading force; the contracts for the ties were let some time ago. The division which they intend to complete next summer will extend from Ainsworth to Pen Deoral lake, which is some ways east of Spokane Falls. I was talking to-day with Mr. Cooney, brother to our friend Clark Cooney; he has a large herd of cattle and horses down near Ainsworth, and has been furnishing beef to the company there. He is well posted in regard to the country, and he thinks that the emigration the coming season will go further west down near the big bend of the Columbia river; the climate will be better there than in

the Pollux country, that is it will be warmer; most of the country north of Snake river is pretty cold for farming; wheat does well, but for garden stuff, such as vines of all kinds, the frosts very often injure them, and for fruit it is pretty cold, but everywhere on this side of the Snake river fruit does splendid. When we came to Walla Walla last fall the apple, pear and peach trees were all loaded down with fruit; trees such as I never before saw in any country; all had to be propped to keep the branches from breaking off, and grapes of the finest quality in great abundance; apples sold at the orchards at one-half cent per lb. for windfalls, and three-fourths of a cent to a cent and pick them off the trees; peaches were a little higher. There were several people camped in a grove east of town who had long tables made for drying apples on, and were likewise canning fruit. The fruit crop of Walla Walla county has been immense the past season; scarcely a day after the fruit was ripe but freighters were starting out with loads of apples to different points in the newer settled districts.

The climate is something that is hard to describe; there is not much frost, nor are there any severe storms, yet some would say soon have the climate of Nebraska as this; the reason is there is so little sunshine. I have seen two whole weeks together in which there were scarcely two days of sunshine all put together, and this is the way it is in winter. A little rain or snow, sometimes foggy for two or three days. There was only one cold spell, and that was the only time since I came here that the wind was from the north; it lasted three or four days, ending on Christmas day; the coldest here has 23° below zero, while in the Pollux country it was about 35° below zero. It can change from cold to warm weather here the quickest of any place I ever saw. I have seen six inches of snow on the ground at 9 o'clock at night, and then the wind shifted suddenly, and blow a strong gale from the southwest, and in the morning wake up and find the snow all gone. These winds are called Chinooks, an Indian name. I think they come from the sea, and will melt off the snow and dry up the ground faster than strong sunshine.

This part is not much of a place for stock, as all the land fit to farm is farmed, and no stock range left, but in some other parts of the territory they keep large herds of cattle and sheep. Sheep men say they have no sheds for their sheep—nothing but a grove of timber to shelter in, and some hay to feed in bad weather. All open sheds are built to face the north, the wind being so seldom from that point.

The town of Watsburg has three dry-goods and grocery stores, two hardware and drug-stores, two saloons, two butcher shops, and many number of citizens who rejoice in the title of professor, judge, major, preacher, etc. There is a fine school building with three teachers, and over 100 pupils. School is kept up for nine months in the year.

Some one will naturally ask, when harvest commences. I believe about the first of August, generally, and continues till the grain is cut, which is often six weeks after it has been ripe, without damage, or loss by shelling.

At the rate immigration has been coming in, this territory will be overcrowded in a short time. Some parts of eastern Oregon are as advantageous to settlers, and afford better stock ranges than this territory.

I stopped over at Boise City, Idaho, and Baker City, Oregon, about a month in all, and worked at harvesting in both places; this recruited my team, which was getting pretty well tired out, but as George Barnum told me when I traded with him for the mules, they never left me stuck in a mud-hole, and only once on the whole route did I hitch another team ahead of them, and this was while fording the Platte river, west of Laramie.

BOONE COUNTY. EDITOR JOURNAL:—For a long time I have deferred corresponding, thinking perhaps some one else could write up the "news" from this vicinity better than I. During this long time the pen has indeed been silent as regards the business activity and prosperity of our town. Albion indeed, is rising above boasting of a very few houses, and doing scarcely anything in the line of improvements and prosperity. On the other hand she is all life and business activity since it is a certainty that she like the many other towns throughout the State is to have her railway.

country surrounding us and reaching out to the vast rich lands miles northwest of us; these will be tributary to this town for many years to come. We are now where Columbus was one year ago, or approaching that point in our business relations that will give an impetus to the growth of our town and the general prosperity of its citizens. This will be a large shipping point for all kinds of grains and products of the farm, including that of stock business.

We have a bank; the proprietor of the same is from Red Oak, Iowa, and seems to be a man well and thoroughly experienced in that business. This indeed has been an institution which the community has wanted for the past three years.

Lewis Bros. are still the old proprietors of the Reliable drug-store. L. C. Dearborn, who has settled here, has a drug-store under flying colors and is gaining a liberal patronage from the people.

We have three doctors in our midst, but we are glad to say that at present there is but little sickness, which relieves them of growing rich at the expense of the public.

Nine lawyers I believe can be seen on our streets every day and it is a dilemma to us how they all can prosper, as but little disturbances of any kind take place among our people, who are disposed to settle their own little affairs between themselves.

We have four general dry goods stores, and they all seem to be prosperous. Three blacksmith shops are in full blast all the time. Two harness shops are kept busy constantly.

A new hotel is going up, and still the demands are plenty upon our citizens that we need plenty of houses to let, which would be a paying investment to those erecting them.

Riley & Clark have a large hardware stock and are preparing for the spring demand. They keep all kinds of farming implements on hand for the farming public.

Galbraith Bros. are a great acquisition to this town as business men; they have a large building chock full of stoves and shelf hardware, besides in their yard can be found anything in the shape of farm machinery, that a man desires to cultivate the soil with.

We could, if we were not crowding on your space, give you still more items. We will try at some other time to give other and varied information. "SETTLER."

For the JOURNAL. Stock Gossip. I. Mr. Editor: It is an undisputed fact that our beautiful State is well adapted to stock of any kind. No one can deny that stock as a general thing pays best. Add to this the fact that of the different kinds of produce of our soil, corn, oats and barley which chiefly are fed to stock are the surest and most prolific crops. From all this follows that it is best to raise stock, and yet not everybody can raise any kind of stock. While the general small farmer can have only one or two cows and raise a couple of calves he is soon for want of room, or pasture, or hay, or money, compelled to sell his calves. He at least realizes a little something for them. But he cannot enter upon cattle raising to any extent. He may also raise a colt or two by having them in pasture with some one. But there is one kind of stock that everybody can raise and that is hogs. Every farmer can have a few or many hogs according to his liking and ability, and if he only gets the right kind he can make money by it. We say the right kind. Each one of the prevailing fine breeds has their good points. No one can despise the Poland China, the Chesterwhites, the Essex and others, but the writer, after trying a number of other breeds, prefers the Berkshires, or at least a good cross from them. They are easily kept. In the spring, summer and fall they board themselves on prairie grass, wild artichokes and other roots which latter they dig in the sloughs and ravines. And then they easily fatten. The National Live Stock Journal of December last contains a report of an experiment made at the Illinois Industrial University farm, the substance of which is as follows as far as it related to difference between a Berkshire and a Poland China, both fed on old corn:

Sweet Potato Cultivation.

First, select your ground, which should be very loose and mellow, sandy land being the best; but any soil is good if not too hard, and if your ground was plowed last Spring it is all the better. Have your plants all ready, and commence and plow furrows lengthwise, running north and south being best, four feet apart, and when this is done, turn and run the plow right back in the same furrow, making it deeper and throwing the soil out at the other side; now, turn and plow this right back, going twice on each side; thus you have large ridges of loose soil, and if naturally loose it will not pack with heavy rains, and being loose deeper under the ridges, the rain will work under right where it is wanted. Now take a plank about ten feet long, tying the ends of a rope to each end of the plank, having the rope three feet longer than the plank, and hitch the team to the center of the rope. Turn the team in, one on each side of the second ridge, and go back and forth on every third ridge, making the top of the ridge about one foot wide. Now the ground is ready for the plants, and it is necessary to have the plants ready for the ground, and set the plants on the ridge two feet apart, and making a hole for the plants with a smooth, sharp stick one and a half inches in diameter. Drop the plant into the hole, leaving one or two inches out of the ground, and press the soil around the plants. Always set the plants in the afternoon or as near night as possible, keep clear from weeds, and keep the vines rolled up on the top of the ridges so as not to let them take root along the vines. If not dug when the vines are killed by frost, the vines may be cut off close to the potato immediately, or they will soon spoil. Then, the sooner the potatoes are dug the better. Keep in a dry, warm cellar, packed in barrels with dry sand. If this is done you may have sweet potatoes the year round.

JOHN TANNAPILL. She hung upon his arm so lovingly, and beamed up in his eyes with all the radiance of those pale blue eyes. Her heart would speak and yet the tongue refused its utterance. But love and admiration broke the spell and from the rapture of her soul she breathed forth: "Your mustache is beginning to grow."

A great many boys and girls fall desperately in love with each other, and rave over disappointed hopes, before they are old enough to tell the difference between the heartache and the colic. Very few such cases prove fatal.

Said a parent to his little son, who had committed some act of indiscretion: "Do you know that I am going to whip you?" "Yes," said the boy, "I suppose you are, because you are bigger than I am."

A horse in Chicago drank two gallons of beer by mistake for water, and in about fifteen minutes he danced around the wagon and wanted to know who ran the town if he didn't.

Much is said about the healing power of imagination. There must be something in it, because many a man supposes he is well "healed" when it is only in his mind.

Sin always begins with pleasure and ends with bitterness. It is like a colt which the little boy said was very tame in front and very wild behind.

"A hair on the head is worth a dozen in the bush!" says an exchange. But then it doesn't attract near so much attention.

A sweet temper is to the household what sunshine is to trees and flowers.

Worrying will wear the richest life to shreds.

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