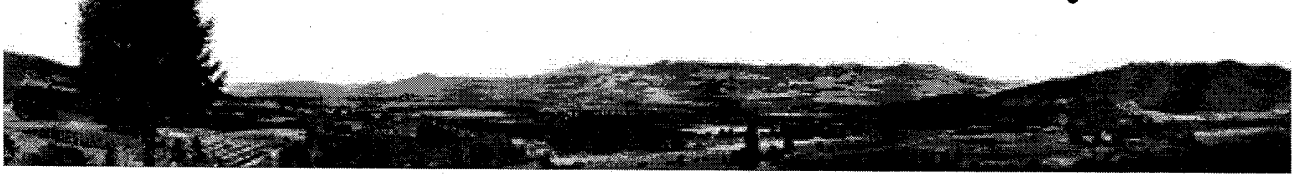


The Historical

Winter 2014

Official Newsletter Talent Historical Society



105 Market Street, Talent, Oregon 97540 Mailing Address: P. O. Box 582

talenthistory@gmail.com We are a tax free 501C3 Organization

Jackson County's Republicans Have a Unique 1856 History In the Eden Precinct (Talent & Phoenix area)

The Republican party was founded by anti-slavery activists in 1854, it dominated politics nationally for most of the period from 1860 to 1932. But it wasn't until 1856 that a candidate for the presidency of the United States ran as a representative of the Republican party. That candidate was John C. Fremont, the western explorer.

According to an article by Walter C. Woodward published in 1911 in The Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society:

"The first Oregon counterpart of the action of Eastern anti-Nebraska men in assuming the name of 'Republican party,' early in 1856, is found in Jackson County in May of the same year. It was a nominating convention of 'the Republicans of Jackson county' and was held at Lindley's school house, in Eden precinct. H. Colver addressed the meeting, 'showing the aims, object and principals of the Republican movement.' After an expression that old dividing issues had passed away or had now faded into insignificance before the one great question, the meeting adopted a ringing platform. It declared freedom to be national, slavery sectional; that the power of the Federal Government should be exerted to prohibit slavery in every territory of the United States. However, in the next sentence, it was affirmed that the people are the rightful source of all political power and that officers, as far as practicable, should be chosen by a direct vote of the people. This is suggestive of what a strong appeal one phase of the doctrine of popular sovereignty made to Oregonians generally. It is rather suggestive that the first Republican meeting in Oregon was held in the southern

2d, "That Congress has no power over slavery in the several States; but that outside of State jurisdiction, the power of the Federal Government should be exerted to secure Life, Liberty, and Happiness to all men; and therefore that there should be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except for the punishment of crime, in any territory of the United States." (Note: Oregon at that time was a territory.)

3d, "That the people are the rightful source of all political power; and officers, as far as practicable, should be chosen by a direct vote of the people."

4th, "That candidates for political offices should be men of undoubted integrity and sobriety; and pledged to the support of the principles contained in these resolutions, by all lawful and constitutional means."

This report was taken up, each resolution separately, and unanimously adopted.

Then the Committee on Candidates reported the following names, which were unanimously accepted as the nominees of the meeting:(Note:This is a direct quote.)

For joint Representation, for Jackson and Josephine, Dr. Wm. Miller.

For Jackson County alone:

Representatives - J. M. McCall, and J. W. McCully.

Sheriff - James T. Glenn.

County Commisioners - Isaac Constance and D. E. Stearns

School Superintendent - Samuel Stearns

County Surveyor - B. F. Myer

County Assessor - A. G. Rockfellow

And then on a motion of D. Geiger:

"Resolved, that we request the publication of the proceedings of this meeting in the Table Rock Sentinel and Oregon Argus. On motion the meeting was adjourned sine die."

(Signed:)

D. F. STEARNS, Chairman.

A. G. ROCKFELLOW, Secretary.

As noted earlier, nearly all the individuals named above were from the Eden Precinct, and history shows that these men were dominant citizens in the Upper Bear Creek valley.

the northern half of Washington county; population---49,351; area---657 square miles; named after the Columbia River which forms the county's northern border.

Coos County: County seat: Coquille; established in 1853 from the western parts of Umpqua and Jackson counties; population---63,043; area---1,600 square miles: named after the Coos tribe of Native Americans who lived in the region.

Crook County: County seat: Prineville; established in 1882 from the southern part of Wasco county; population---20,978; area---2,980 square miles; named after George Crook (1828 - 1890), a U.S. Army officer who served in the American Civil War and the Indian Wars.

Curry County: County seat: Gold Beach; established in 1855 from parts of Coos county; population---22,364; area---1,627 square miles; named after George Law Curry (1820-1878), a governor of the Oregon Territory.

Deschutes County: County seat: Bend; established in 1916 from the southern part of Crook county; population---157,733; area---3,018 square miles; named after "Rievère des Chutes," French for "River of the Falls."

Douglas County: County seat: Roseburg; established in 1852 from a portion of Umpqua county that lay east of the summit of the Coast Range mountains; population---107,667; area---5,037 square miles; named after Stephen A. Douglas (1813-1861), a U. S. Senator from Illinois who supported Oregon statehood.

Gilliam County: County seat: Condon; established in 1885 from the eastern third of Wasco county; population---1,871; area---1,2904 square miles; named after Cornelius Gilliam (1798-1848), a pioneer who commanded the forces of the Provisional Government of Oregon after the Whitman massacres.

Grant County: County seat: Canyon City; established in 1864 from parts of Wasco and old Umatilla counties; population---7,445; area: 4,529 square miles; named after Ulysses S. Grant (1822-1885), an army officer who served in the Oregon Territory, who became a Union general during the Civil War at the time of the county's creation, and subsequently the President of the United States.

Harney County: County seat: Burns; established in 1889 from the southern two-thirds of Grant County; population---7,422; area---10,135 square

area--980 square miles; named after Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865), the sixteenth President of the United States.

Linn County: County seat: Albany; established in 1847 from the southern portion of Champoeg county (later Marion county); population—116,672; area---2,291 square miles; named after Missouri U. S. senator Lewis F. Linn (1795-1843; the author of the Donation Land Claim Act, which provided free land to settlers in Oregon;

Malheur County: County seat: Vale; established in 1887 from the southern part of Baker county; population---31,313; area---9,888 square miles; named after the Malheur River (formerly the “Riviere du Malheur” or “Unfortunate River” named by French trappers whose property and furs were stolen from their river encampment.

Marion County: County seat: Salem; established in 1843 as one of the original four districts in Oregon prior to becoming a U. S. territory; population—315,335; area--1,185 square miles; named after Francis Marion (1732-1795) the American revolutionary general known as the “Swamp Fox.”

Morrow County: County seat: Heppner; established in 1885 from the western portion of Umatilla county and the eastern portion of Wasco county; population---11,178; area---2,033 square miles; named after Jackson L. Morrow, a state representative who advocated the formation of the county.

Multnomah County: County seat: Portland; established in 1854 from the eastern portion of Washington county and the northern part of Clackamas county; population—735,334; area---435 square miles; named after the Indian village of Multnomah which was located on Sauvie Island. The word is derived from *nematinoaq* probably meaning “down river.” Lewis and Clark made note of the name in 1805 and that name was applied to all local Indians.

Polk County: County seat: Dallas; established in 1845 and was part of the Yamhill District; population 75,403; area---741 square miles; named after James Knox Polk (1795-1849) who was President of the United States when the county was named.

Sherman County: County seat: Moro; established in 1889 from the northeast corner of Wasco county; population---1,765; area--823 square miles; named after William Tecumseh Sherman (1820-1891) American Civil War general, business man, educator, and author.

Hiram Colver Had a Big Impact on the Upper Bear Creek Valley

October 20, 1850, marked the day that Hiram Colver arrived in Oregon according to his Donation Land Claim application, a land claim that was adjacent to his brother Samuel Colver's donation land claim. The Colver land claims were near and included today's city of Phoenix. Hiram Colver, a lawyer by occupation, made his land claim on 13 January 1852.

Hiram was born in 1819 in Irwin, Union County Ohio, to Samuel and Rachel Colver. He was admitted to the bar in Ohio in 1845. He originally settled in the southern part of the Willamette Valley, but moved his wife and children to his Jackson County land claims in 1853. Eli K. Anderson in a deposition dated 19 September 1853 indicated that

“he was in no way interested in the tract or tracts of land claimed by Hiram Colver, particularly described in the annexed notification to the Surveyor General of Oregon, and stated that he was personally acquainted with Hiram Colver, and knew that he had personally resided upon and cultivated the said tract of land continuously from the twentieth day of January 1852 to the 19th day of September 1853”

This statement was required because the land had not yet been surveyed. E. K. Anderson was an adjacent land owner. The quotation above was signed in the presence of Edward Sheil, U. S. District Clerk on October 29, 1853. Hiram claimed 640 acres of land just south of the butte in the south part of the present city of Phoenix, and on the west side of Bear Creek, then known as Stewart River. Incidentally, that butte was covered with pine trees in 1853. Hiram's land claim also included a hot spring. His claim was bounded on the north by the claim of his brother Samuel Colver, on the west by W. M. Lynch, and on the south by the claims of Woodrow Reams, and Chase and Nelson D. Smith.

At the time, Hiram was married to Maria, and they had five children: Maria, Hiram, Solon, Abi, and Martha. He and Maria were married on April 10, 1841, in Madison County, Ohio. In 1855, Hiram built a frame house for his family for by that date several sawmills had been established in the upper Bear Creek valley—one in Ashland, one in Talent, and one in Phoenix which was then called “Gassburg.” In 1856, Hiram Colver served in Company A, First Recruiting Battalion of the Second Regiment, Oregon Mounted Volunteers during the Rogue River Indian War.

Politically, Hiram Colver was instrumental in the first effort to establish the Republican Party in the state of Oregon. (Note the beginning article in this issue of