

It takes more than a good resume to get a government contract.

William Williams Chapman (1808-1892)

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COL. W.W. CHAPMAN. - *It has frequently been remarked, that while many men of great fame, and a deservedly wide reputation, cannot lay their finger upon a single public act that they originated, others whose names are less known can count by the score the progeny of their brains, now alive and active in the affairs of the world. Of the latter class is*

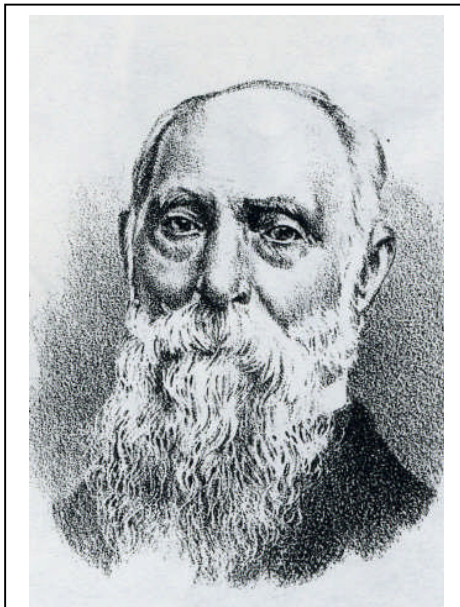


Figure 1. William W. Chapman.

Colonel Chapman of Oregon. There are few men in America, even among those esteemed great, who have originated and carried to completion a greater number of particular acts of large scope and general beneficence. Many whose names appear constantly in current literature can point to no policy or institutions established by themselves, while he has been the projector or formulator of measures which have become established from the Atlantic to the Pacific, having launched them in complete form upon the sea of political or judicial activities. This is a broad statement, but is fully borne out by an investigation of the facts.

The Colonel is a man who works unostentatiously, relies little upon public enthusiasm, and never resorts to the noisy methods of the demagogue. He prefers to bring together forces already in operation, and to change their current not so much by agitation, or even by persuasion of public men, as by the inevitable movement of human tendencies. On account of this manner of working, what he performs may be accomplished before the public know anything of it; and his name may scarcely appear. While thus deep, it scarcely need be said of him that he has never reached his ends by the improper use of money, or by any method approaching chicanery. He has ever been perfectly honorable, and although able to keep his own counsel like the Sphinx, relies at the last upon the simple justice and rights of the case. His ability lies in arranging matters so that they will come to a head just at the right capacity for reading men's motives, and measuring their power, gives him ample time

to prepare work for them to do, and shape matters so that they will naturally fall in with his plans.

The story of his life is chiefly the enumeration and record of his public endeavors, since he has lived almost wholly in the activities of the community or state where he has resided, and has followed principally public movements, not only not giving attention to the accumulation of a private fortune, but even giving away, for the sake of public increase, property that now in its individual segments is worth a number of fortunes.

As some guide to the reader's thoughts, let us here enumerate the famous acts in which Colonel Chapman has taken a prominent or controlling part. Beginning with his life in Iowa, we find the following: The settling of the boundary between that then territory and Missouri; changing the right of state land from internal improvement to the use of public schools, a policy which has been copied into every state constitution since; framing the provision in the Iowa constitution for the election rather than the appointment of judges, a policy which has become almost universal in the United States; and the first suggestion of a standing pre-emption law for the relief of settlers. In Oregon we find that it was due to him as at least one among three, and as the originative mind of the three, that Portland became the metropolis of the Pacific Northwest; that the Oregon & California Railroad was determined by him to become a road for Oregon as well as for California, and to be above the possibility of extortion or discrimination; and that he made it possible for Portland to have transcontinental railroad communication. With these as guiding points, let us now proceed with the plain story of his life, and make good these broad statements, not with any purpose of lauding a man who cares but little for, and is in little need of, praise, but with the simple aim of tracing these public acts of great weight and moment to their source.

William Williams Chapman was born at Clarkesburg, Virginia, August 11, 1808. At the age of fourteen he suffered the death of his father, and was thenceforward thrown chiefly upon his own resources, although assisted to some extent by a kind brother and faithful mother. After obtaining what information and mental discipline was to be gotten at the public school, he secured a position in the office of the clerk of the court of which the eminent jurist Henry St. George Tucker was chancellor. In these endeavors at self-improvement, he was much encouraged and indeed assisted by a kind lady, Mrs. Schon, mother of the eminent Methodist minister of that name, who, noticing his studious habits, directed the servants to keep well warmed and lighted the room that he occupied. He also was given free access to the libraries of the noted members of the bar in that city.

Receiving in due time, from Judge Lewis Summers, Daniel Smith and Chancellor Tucker, his license to practice, he at once took up his residence at Middleburn, Tyler county, Virginia. The spring following, 1832, he was married to Margaret F., daughter of Colonel Arthur

Inghram, a farmer of means, and also a leading gentleman and public man, who served twenty years in the legislature of the Old dominion, and afterwards removed to Illinois, but made his last home in Iowa, where he died.

In the autumn of 1833, Mr. Chapman went to McComb, McDonough County, Illinois, and in the spring of 1835 moved out to Burlington, in the "Black Hawk Purchase," now a part of Iowa. Those were early times for even the Mississippi states; and this region was then reckoned as a part of Wisconsin, and was attached to the territory of Michigan. It may be inferred that Mr. Chapman was a man of mark, with a penchant for forming new society, or he would never have been in that new country with his large legal acquirements. This presumption is confirmed by the fact that we find him the next year appointed prosecuting attorney by John S. Horner, acting Governor of Michigan. In 1836 he was appointed by President Jackson United States Attorney for the territory of Wisconsin, established upon the admission of Michigan as a state. The most exciting litigation of the time was with reference to "jumping" land claims. The settlers had a court of their own before which jumpers were tried, and by it summarily ejected from their hold, if found guilty. Mr. Chapman proved to be on the side of the settlers, defending a body of them before the court. Military officers and men, including General, afterwards President Taylor, and Jefferson Davis, his son-in-law, used in those days to come around sometimes to remove "squatters," as the settlers were contemptuously called. That was before the present land laws; and the public domain was opened to legal settlement only as thrown open by proclamation of the President, who sometimes proceeded upon the idea that new land should not be settled up until all the "offered" land was occupied; while the settlers preferred to live and take land where they pleased. On account of his friendship, the Iowa settlers were willing soon after to and did send Mr. Chapman as delegate to the United States Congress.

In 1836 he removed to Dubuque, and in 1837 removed back to the neighborhood of Burlington. In 1838 Iowa was set apart as an independent territory, through the efforts of G.W. Jones, delegate from Wisconsin; and, upon the election held September 10th, Mr. Chapman was found to be successful over three other candidates. In Congress he became very active, the first bill prepared by him being for the opening of a military road from Dubuque through Iowa City to the southern boundary of the state, for another to run from Burlington west, and for still another to run east and terminate at De Hague, a place in Illinois. It was essential to get this road to the latter place in order to cross the extensive low bottom lands on the east or Illinois side of the Mississippi river, which were flooded with water during the summer freshet. On account of the opposition of Van Buren to internal improvement in the states, Chapman omitted to mention in his bill that De Hague was in Illinois; and the President, not being aware of this fact, signed the bill contrary to his own policy of non-interstate improvement.

In 1836, at an election in Dubuque County, Wisconsin Territory, now a part of Iowa, W.W. Chapman, then twenty-six years of age, was elected colonel of the militia by a most flattering majority, which was particularly gratifying to the young man from the fact that his acquaintances had made him believe that they were all voting against him, some telling him that he was too young and inexperienced and he overhearing others saying, "It won't do, he is too young," etc.; but when the votes were counted, and he found that he had received the almost unanimous support of the electors of his township, he too felt able to enjoy the joke. His commission as colonel, issued December 2, 1836, is signed by "H. Dodge, Governor of Wisconsin Territory," and attested by J.P. Horner, secretary of that territory. Colonel Chapman qualified December 30th of the same year, by taking the oath of office before Warner Lewis, "a justice of the peace in and for Dubuque County." The Colonel still preserves this commission and, among others, his commission as United States attorney for the same territory, signed by the great Andrew Jackson.

In the matter of the boundary, the act creating Iowa as a territory fixed the northern boundary of Missouri as the southern boundary of Iowa. One point determining this line was the Des Moines rapids. Missouri, anxious to acquire a large tract to the north, claimed that these rapids were in the Des Moines river, while Iowa claimed that the rapids meant were those in the Mississippi river, above the mouth of the Des Moines, bringing the line some twenty or thirty miles farther south. Governor Lucas of Iowa; advising with Colonel Chapman, promptly occupied the disputed territory with militia, in order that Missouri might not be first on the ground, as it would be difficult to oust a state from her actual holding, while a territory might be easily cut up. Missouri hastened to send up her troops, but found the field already in possession of Iowa; and Chapman rode out and advised a stay of all proceedings, and that the contestants should await the action of Congress and of the Supreme Court; whom he would soon visit. Missouri felt reasonably confident, as she had Benton and Linn in the Senate and three able men in the House at Washington, while Iowa had but one unknown delegate. But when the tug of war before Congress came, Chapman was able to present a mass of testimony to the House, from the writings of French missionaries and others, showing that the Des Moines rapids were in the Mississippi river. Seeing the case going against them, the Missourians hastened to get a bill into the Senate in their favor; and Doctor Linn was pushing this measure with all the vim of his great abilities. It was then, as it is still, unparliamentary for a member of one House to interpose in the proceedings of the other; but Chapman, although then a young man of about thirty, felt no hesitancy in honoring this custom in the breach, and sent a written communication to the Senate, protesting against the action of Senator Linn in bringing forward the question of boundary in a body where Iowa had no representative, and referred them to the fact that this question was then pending in the House. As a result of this communication, action in the Senate was stayed. While the decision was still in suspense, private overtures were made from the Missouri

members to persuade the Iowa delegate to unloose his grip and Benton proposed to Chapman, if he would yield, to grant great favors and an early admission of Iowa into the union. But in reply to all of this Mr. Chapman could only say that he was intrusted by the people of Iowa to hold their line as claimed by them; and this eventually prevailed.

As to his suggestions with reference to a permanent pre-emption law, it is to be remembered that in the former times there was no regular or legal way for the settler to acquire public land wherever he might choose in the United States territory; and it was customary for Congress to pass a bill from time to time granting existing settlers the right to pre-empt the lands which they might have occupied. This was a cumbrous and in many cases a dilatory way of granting title to settlers; and it was while a bill to grant a special pre-emption was before Congress that Colonel Chapman proposed a standing law providing for pre-emption, to be a permanent arrangement for prospective as well as actual settlers. The idea was novel, and met with some ridicule, but has now become so much a part of the land policy of the government that it seems as if it must be almost as old as the statute-book itself.

In 1844 Colonel Chapman was chosen a member of the state convention to prepare a constitution for Iowa, and originated the measure to transfer, in the face of the act of Congress, the grant of five hundred thousand acres of land to the state for internal improvements for the use of schools. Such a proposition was then unheard of, but has become the policy since followed by all the new states. He also proposed the measure providing for the election of judges, which when then wholly an innovation; and, although there has been much question of its wisdom, it is a policy that has extended wholly over the West, and to the East in many instances. Colonel Chapman is himself a firm believer in the usefulness of the plan; for, while the judges are thus more subject to the entanglements of politics, they are also more immediately responsible to the people, and are removed from executive or legislative patronage.

Although having accomplished so much for the young State of Iowa, and having become so well known among her citizens, with a large future opened to his enterprise and ambition, he was led by a spirit of adventure, and perhaps even more by the underfeeling that his greatest strength in establishing and formulating principles for future states, to seek a new field where political and business forces were yet in embryo, and determined upon Oregon as the most promising field for his endeavor. The choice has been most fully justified by the result. On or about the 4th of May, 1847, from Oskaloosa, Mahaska County, Iowa, Colonel Chapman and family set out for their journey across the plains to Oregon. The family consisted of himself, his wife and seven children, five boys and two girls, Sarah Eveline, thirteen years old; Thomas, eleven years old; Arthur I., nine years old; James Grimes, seven years old; William Warner, five years old; Mary Catherine, three years old; and Houston I., seven days old. Their mode of conveyance was by two good ox-teams and wagons, one

being a family wagon and one for provisions, which also served as a sleeping-place for two or three of the boys. The family wagon was conveniently arranged, having a long body with a jut-over on each side, to which the boys for the cover were attached, and upon which springy boards were placed to serve as a support for the bed in which Mrs. Chapman and the babe were accommodated. A neighbor emigrant lady, looking upon the baby, exclaimed, "Why, Mrs. Chapman, do you expect that little one will ever get to Oregon?" To this Mrs. Chapman, pressing the boy to her bosom, replied: "Yes. If I get there, it will."

In arranging for emigrating across the plains, an unbroken Indian country from the Missouri river to the Pacific Ocean, the thought of danger from Indians was most prominent before entering their country, hence the large trains and consequently increased bands of stock. Before starting from the Des Moines River in Iowa, the number of wagons and teams of the emigrant train, including the Chapman family, had reached nearly one hundred, and had become such an obstacle to travel that the emigration was about a month in crossing a corner of Missouri to St. Joseph. It was customary, when about to launch onto the plains, to conduct an investigation so as to ascertain who were, and who were not, reasonably prepared for the journey, so that there should be no imposition of unnecessary burthen upon the company. Upon this occasion there was a man in the train who, with little more than himself and wife, had a splendid ox-team, indeed, the finest in the company or anywhere upon the route. This man objected to many as unprepared for the journey, saying that every man must help himself and nobody else, as he would do. Notwithstanding this man's assertions, all were permitted to enter upon the journey. There was also another rule observed in traveling, that he who traveled in front to-day must go behind to-morrow. The man with the good oxen kept half of this law; he went in front all the time, always joining the train in time for camp.

From St. Joe the large train moved slowly on for a short time, when it was found that the number of wagons and stock so delayed their movements that it was absolutely necessary to effect a division, and to separate the great train into small companies. This being accomplished, the several parties moved on rather more rapidly, with the well-prepared independent man still in the lead. As the number of emigrants diminished, the fear of Indians seemed also to grow less; and the company moved out earlier in the morning and proceeded with greater rapidity, with the independent man always ahead, to the annoyance of the whole party. After some days, the fear of Indians seemed to have vanished, although prudence required proper guards against thieving Indians, as was evidence by the great care which an esteemed and prudent lady took of her mare and colt. Having tied a rope to the mare's neck, she carried the end of the rope into the covered wagon and made it fast to her garments. Having put down the wagon cover and lighted a candle, she sat late knitting and complacently watching the rope end, when, some disturbance arising outside, she drew upon her cord; and what does the reader suppose she drew into the wagon

About two feet of rope. The Indians had cut the rope, and with the mare and colt silently stolen away.

While yet early in the period of the journey, another division took place, still further reducing the numbers of the respective parties. This time Mr. Frederick moved out; and Colonel Chapman, the Starrs and Belknaps and others followed after, but always with the man of independence in the lead. Everything moved on smoothly for days, until one beautiful afternoon on the Platte, the sun shining brightly and the train moving steadily forward, all at once one wagon came to a halt; and soon the whole train halted, fearing that an accident had happened. The truth was soon ascertained to be that the lady who had made the anxious inquiry of Mrs. Chapman had just presented her husband with a bright, young baby, and that mother and baby were doing well, the mother in the full belief that if she got to Oregon the babe would get there too; and so they all did.

At the crossing of Green river one small family had a narrow escape from drowning. The gentleman with the good team was of course in advance, caring nothing for those behind. The train reached across the river, which was high; and there was a deep pool immediately below the crossing. An old man and his wife occupied a wagon having two yoke of oxen. About midway of the river, something frightened the lead oxen; and they turned short around upon the upper side of the tongue cattle, and were likely to turn oxen, wagon and occupants over into the boiling flood. Colonel Chapman had a yoke of leaders which he often rode through the rivers, and, seeing the danger, jumped onto the near one, threw the chain across their necks, reached the unruly team, hitched onto them, and brought oxen, wagon, and occupants safely to shore. The gentleman often repeated an account of the circumstances which led to his perilous conditions, describing the situation, and always closing with the words, "And there was Polly; and she couldn't swim a lick!"

The emigration pressed forward until they reached a trapper living upon the present site of Pocatello. Here they met the noted Jack Harris, who represented that the southern route was preferable on account of grass and water, and that there was less danger from the Indians. He instructed the company always to keep the Indians at a distance, and allow of no close friendship, as they would take advantage of it. The company consented to take the southern route. On the head of Mary's or Humboldt River they suffered an attack upon the cattle by the Indians; but nothing serious resulted.

Between what is now Winnemucca and Goose Lake is a piece of very rocky road. Here the man with the good team was as usual considerably ahead, and going pretty fast, when suddenly down came his wagon in the road. The rapid driving over the rocks had broken off the spindle. He sat upon the corner of his wagon presenting the most despondent appearance, while the train came up within a few minutes, and, instead of stopping, passed around without a word being uttered. Immediately the road led the

train over into a deep hollow out of sight of the man. He thought he was left in the boundless wilderness, a prey to wild beasts or more savage Indians, a fate his selfishness richly deserved. But, under the directions of the good leader, all stopped. Mr. Frederick, being a mechanic, now took two or three other good men and went back and brought the independent man and his wagon into camp. What does the reader suppose were this man's thoughts when the train passed on out of sight? Some idea may be formed from what occurred afterwards. It was a practice with emigrants, when a wagon or any attachments were abandoned, for each to select a part that might become useful in an emergency; and in pursuance of this economy the leader, Mr. Frederick, had hung under his wagon a piece of an axletree that just suited in this case, and with which he mended and repaired the broken piece. This being done the train moved on, with the man of independence in the rear for the rest of the day. For the remainder of the journey no man was more obedient to the rules of travel, or more ready to lend a helping hand, than this man who cut such an unfavorable figure at the outset. Those whom the afflicted man at first took to be as priests and Levites, passing by on the other side, nevertheless returned as good Samaritans and made him whole, and sent him on his way rejoicing.

About the first of November the company camped just below the narrows of Rogue river, at the head of a small prairie. A great many Indians came in and were quite friendly. In the morning the company had about them crowds of Indians, men, women, and children. The emigrants were yoking up their teams near to their fires and cooking utensils. An Indian came along by the spot where a man was yoking up, and near him was a skillet containing some bread. His request for bread being refused the Indian kicked the skillet over; and the man struck the Indian with his ox-bow, and straightway there was mischief afoot. The Indian warriors gathered in a crowd of fifty or sixty, with bows and arrows threatening to shoot. The Indian women and children disappeared; while it was all the old chief could do to prevent at attack at once. Emigrants were yoking up with guns on their shoulders; but the leader, Mr. Frederick, got onto his horse and rode over into the crowd of Indians; when the Indians took his horse by the bridle, compelling him to dismount. By signs, Mr. Frederick explained that the Whites wanted to be friendly, and were going to a far country. This pacified the Indians, and peace offerings were exchanged. Who can tell of a braver act than Frederick's? After this thrilling incident, the company moved on; and the chief took Mr. Frederick down to his fish trap, and as a token of friendship gave him a salmon. He also appointed four Indians to accompany the train to the boundary between the Rogue River and Umpqua Indians. In addition, the first night after the trouble, he went into the mountains and killed deer and gave them to the emigrants. The four Indians accompanied the train, and often picked grapes and gave them to the travelers.

Arriving at the summit between Rogue River and Umpqua river, which was the boundary between the two nations, the four guards bade the emigrants a friendly good-by and started back; and the company moved on

without any occurrence of note until they reached the crossing of the Umpqua. Here they found the river too high to ford with wagons; and Indians with two canoes were secured to ferry them over. This was done by unloading and standing each wagon lengthwise in the two canoes. The landing was opposite a high bank; and the vehicles had to be hauled up with teams. When but two wagons remained to be crossed, a wagon just reaching the top of the bank broke loose and ran back on the canoes, splitting one from stem to stern. This caused a disturbance among the Indians; and they went away, but came back in two or three days and resumed work, putting the remaining two wagons over. This same civilized Indian stole that night a horse, saddle, overcoat and sundry other things of Mr. Chapman. This horse the Colonel found six years later at Fort Umpqua in possession of old John Garnier, the keeper of the Hudson's Bay farm, who promptly returned the horse to Mr. Chapman on learning that it had been stolen.

The company crossed the mountain into the head of the Willamette valley amid rain and snow, and made an early camp for the night. The next morning they found a small creek to cross near by. Its banks were about two feet high and filled with water. Wagons had cut a narrow way into the creek; and the off-wheel oxen of Colonel Chapman's team were passing down into the creek, when the lead oxen rushed ahead, drawing the tongue around, causing the off fore wheel to go down, while the near wheel was on the bank, and thereby overset the wagon into the creek, filling the fore end of the wagon and the bows with water. The neighbors quickly turned the wagon back; and the water ran upon everything within. The remarkable fact was that Colonel Chapman had driven entirely across the plains without ever stalling or upsetting, and here at the head of the Willamette, upon a dead level, had upset his wagon and family into the creek. but all got out safely, and in due time, on the evening of the 13th of November, 1847, reached Mary's river, near what was then called Marysville, now Corvallis, Benton county. The small company as it was then, consisting of the Chapmans, Gilberts, Starrs and Belknaps, here came to a stop, it being substantially their journey's end.

Illustrative of the great difficulties of a journey with a family across the plains may be mentioned the illness of Mrs. Chapman and her children. In the Klamath country Mrs. Chapman, in order to give assistance to a sick woman, entered her wagon. After a little while she made inquiry as to the cause of her sickness, and was informed that she had the measles. This was a surprise and a source of anxiety to Mrs. Chapman, since she had not had this disease herself, and that she should have it now was inevitable. Neither was there hope of escape for the little baby or any of the children; for not one of them had ever been affected. Mr. Chapman alone of the whole family escaped the affliction. This exposure was moreover needless, had the prostrated woman known her ailment, as it was in the power of Mrs. Chapman to have assisted this woman without going into the wagon; and, besides this, there were undoubtedly others not liable to contract the disease who would have readily, as they did afterwards, afford all

necessary aid and comfort to this woman. Mrs. Chapman first indicated that she had contracted the disease, then her infant child, and, passing on, the whole family of children became subjects of the pestilence. When it is remembered that there was but one wagon (the provision wagon having been left near Snake river) for all the family to crowd into, or under, for sleep or rest; that Mrs. Chapman's eyes were so affected as to be without sight for sixteen days, almost to the end of the journey; and that they must have undergone great exposure and suffering, it may well be considered almost a miracle that they all came through alive. But there was not only an unbroken friendship among the members of the company of which Mr. James Frederick was the leader, but there was a sealed friendship among the ladies which none but they could appreciate, making them all ever ready to aid and encourage the sick and unfortunate; and Mrs. Chapman and her children received every attention that these kind ladies could bestow.

After a few days' search, the Chapman family found shelter for the winter in an unfinished cabin, with two young men, Nye and Getteys, whom he soon learned to address familiarly as John and Sam, in accordance with our easy Western custom, and whom the family ever remembered for their integrity and generosity. Being anxious to see the rest of Oregon, and especially to make the acquaintance of the leading men of the young settlement, Colonel Chapman made, between Christmas and the New Year, following, a trip by horseback with his two new friends to Oregon City, or the Falls, as then known. At this quaint little capital, and then indeed the metropolis of the region west of the Rocky Mountains, where congregated Oregon's early heroes, "men of renown," Mr. Chapman formed a pleasant acquaintance with Judge S.S. White and Colonel B. Jennings, formerly of Iowa. He met also the most of our early celebrities, and with Governor Abernethy had a long and most valuable conversation, in which he learned pretty much all of the history and prospects of the young commonwealth, and, with his aptitude for formulating a distinct policy, described almost from that moment his own future work and governing ideas in our state. He decided to make his home at the Falls, but, returning to his residence near Corvallis, was stopped on the way by Dr. Wilson of Salem, who treated him with such kindness and cordiality, and moreover made it so advantageous for him, that he altered his purpose and accepted Salem as his residence.

In February, 1848, he with his family reached Salem, where they were furnished quarters in the lower story of the Methodist, or old missionary, academy building, and were treated with all the consideration of members of the Doctor's family. In this place he remained for some time, although school was kept in the upper story of the building.

With the facility of the pioneer, he turned his hand to manual work, and as spring came engaged in making a garden, and also righted the fences that inclosed the big field upon a portion of which the State House now stands. He also picked up as rapidly as possible the threads of legal

activity in the state, attending during the spring and summer several terms of court held under the auspices of the Provisional government by Judge Eugene Skinner. The last of these was on Knox's Butte in Linn County, and which became memorable for its abrupt adjournment from the report of gold in California.

Mr. Chapman was no less interested than the rest, and, although not excitable, made speedy arrangements for the comfort of his family during fall and winter, and in a party containing also Mr. Alanson Hinman of Forest Grove, J.B. McLane of Salem, and Mr. Parrish of Linn county, packed across the mountains to the mines on the Sacramento. The whole of Oregon was moved; and this little party had swelled to a considerable army by the constant aggregation of other little parties on the way; but before Sutter's Fort was reached the company broke up into little bands, scattered out in all directions to the gulches and bars of Northern California. Some of these early settlers were lost to our state forever, going nobody knows where in the world; while others, having made their fortune, came back to Oregon to spend their days in peace and plenty, and to assist in making our state the glory of the Northwest.

After mining with good success, until autumn, Mr. Chapman made a somewhat indefinite tour to San Francisco, with an eye to establishing some kind of a center of trade or society, thinking a little of forming a combination with Sutter to build a city at Sacramento; but he discovered that the quick mind of Judge Burnett had already grasped the idea and seized the position. At San Francisco he remained some time, and was about to visit the other mines of California, but, meeting with Governor Lane, who was on the way from Washington, was persuaded by him to come to Oregon. He arrived in February or early in March, 1849. Proceeding at once to his home in Salem, he was soon elected representative to the first territorial legislature chosen and convened upon the order of the new governor. During this session he was appointed to draft a code of laws; but, under a technical construction of the Organic law, this act was declared void.

At the end of the session in 1849, he decided upon removing to Oregon City, and remained there for a short time, but upon a close examination concluded that this could not be the place for the seaport emporium, and consequently made a thorough exploration of the Lower Willamette to the Columbia, with the result that he concluded Portland to be the place where transportation by land and by ship could most readily meet. He found Portland built on a section of land owned by General Stephen Coffin and Mr. D.H. Lownsdale; and in this claim he bought a third interest. Although Portland had a natural advantage, her success as the chief city depended upon her making use of that advantage; and only by showing an enterprise equal to that of a dozen other rival places could the favor of nature be turned to account. Mr. Chapman, with his family and household effects, was "bateaued," from Oregon City to Portland on the 1st day of January, 1850. In the spring and summer following, he cleared and

erected, upon the block upon which the county courthouse now stands, a frame building for a residence, and with his family resided therein until the fall of 1853. In this building Mrs. Chapman gave birth to two sons. The first, Winfield Scott Chapman, was born on the 3d day of July, 1850; and the second, Harra Davis Chapman, was born on the 17th day of March, 1853.

The town proprietors of Portland, as Messrs. Coffin, Lownsdale and Chapman were called, at once engaged in any and all enterprises which they deemed calculated to advance the interests and prosperity of Portland as the commercial metropolis of Oregon. Every town or prospective town on the Lower Willamette and Columbia rivers contested with it this pre-eminence. Among these was Milwaukee, five or six miles above Portland; and, had it been a suitable location, the energy and enterprise of its proprietor, Lot Whitcomb but a snug river steamer on the line between Milwaukee and Astoria, ignoring and for a time refusing to stop at Portland; and he also established a newspaper at Milwaukie.

In the fall or winter of 1850, the owners of the steamer Gold Hunter brought her up to Portland, and negotiated her sale for \$60,000 to the town proprietors. Of this sum a few outside individuals subscribed small amounts; but the bulk was taken by the three proprietors jointly. Twenty-one thousand dollars was paid down; and for the balance, Coffin, Lownsdale and Chapman gave their joint notes. It was not known, however, that there existed a controversy between a minority interest at San Francisco and the majority that brought the steamer up and sold their interest at Portland. On making the purchase, as the Oregon purchasers held but a few shares above a majority, it was agreed in writing that no Oregon shareholder should sell his interest except to the Oregon owners. Captain Hall and N.P. Dennison each owned small interests; and the first was put in as captain, and the latter as clerk. The steamer made regular trips for a number of times to San Francisco loaded with Oregon products, such as cattle, hogs, grain and vegetables, and gave Portland such an advantage over all rivals as to fairly annihilate their hopes for further success, and until even the snakes proclaimed the victory. It was in this wise: Uncle Robert Kinney, of Yamhill County, meeting his old friend Colonel Chapman, said to him, "Well, I see Portland is taking the travel and trade of the country." The Colonel asked, "Ah, how did you learn that?" Mr. Kinney replied, "Why, I have been on several roads; and I see the snake tracks are all on the road to Portland. You know they always resort to the most traveled and dusty roads."

But although Portland was thus successful, and the Gold Hunter was doing for her such wonders, a sudden setback was given the proprietors. The captain and clerk mentioned, though their interest was small, had nevertheless enough stock to give the majority control of the steamer; and they were found to be subject to temptation. The California minority, learning their weakness, on one of the trips to San Francisco gave them a large bonus for their interest; and they delivered the steamer over to the

California stockholders. Of this the Portland proprietors learned nothing for some time, as mails were infrequent; and they waited in vain for the return of their Gold Hunter. In the meantime the steamer was run down the coast to Tehuantepec, where he was bottomried and sold; and thus Portland was left in the lurch, and her proprietors lost the steamer and their money. This dishonest and pusillanimous conduct of Hall and Dennison very seriously injured the proprietors and weakened their credit; but the town prospered nevertheless to such an extent that Lot Whitcomb ceased to ignore her, and finally ran his boat no farther up the river than Portland. The Pacific Steamship Company also let go their attempt to make St. Helens the point, and anchored at the port of Portland; and that city thenceforth became the recognized seaport.

To facilitate the coming of the people of the Tualatin Plains and Yamhill and Polk counties, the old cañon road from the head of what is now Jefferson street was constantly improved; and in a short time Portland had the satisfaction of seeing that road dusty, while the Oregon City road showed but few tracks. Only sixteen blocks of the city had originally been laid off, and but two streets parallel with the river opened; and these were but sixty feet wide. Soon after the entrance of Mr. Chapman into the company, the town plat was enlarged so as to include the whole section; and the new streets running north and south were made eighty feet in width.

But one of the most important enterprises of the time was the establishment of a paper at Portland. In point of journalistic enterprise, both Oregon City and Milwaukee were ahead of her; and this was not to be endured. Coffin and Chapman went to San Francisco in a bark, and, taking with them as a present to the people of that place a pole a hundred and thirty feet long cut near the present residence of W.S. Ladd, to serve as a flagstaff or "liberty-pole," secured Mr. Dryer to come up and bring his newspaper plant and run a paper. They promised him a salary out of their own means, and, in fact, paid his traveling and freight expenses. Upon the arrival of the editor, the office was set up; and by working all night the first issue was gotten out. Mr. Chapman, who was one of these night-workers, rendering what assistance a non-typo could, hired a man with a horse to start early the next morning with a pack of papers and distribute them over the country on the west side of the Willamette as far up as Corvallis, and to return by the east side; while in the town and surrounding country his sons, Thomas and Arthur, on horseback, delivered the first edition of the new paper, and thereby became the first newsboys of Portland. Thus was begun with flying colors the first paper in Portland, which has grown to be the chief journal of the Pacific Northwest. At the suggestion of Mr. Chapman, while still in San Francisco, it was given the name Oregonian.

It is proper to state that in commencing work it was necessary for the editor to initiate an apprentice, or devil. This duty devolved upon Mr. Chapman, who called to his assistance a gentleman present. Proceeding

to the discharge of the duty, he blindfolded the "devil," and placed a box between the press and the wall, and fastened upon his back the picture of a mule with the written declaration thereunder, "I'll split no more rails." The apprentice thus prepared was conducted three times around the room; and each time, as he passed over the box by the press, he was made to bow and repeat the words, "I'll split no more rails."

Many other measures were also undertaken, such as the careful examination of Swan Island bar, in order to insure the growth and prosperity of the city. While thus there were for some time rival points on the Columbia and Willamette aiming at metropolitan dignity, the hard blows which they aimed at Portland were all met and parried by the energy and foresight of the proprietors.

In making the purchase of an interest in the Portland claim by Colonel Chapman, the three, Coffin, Lownsdale and Chapman, became joint owners of what was known as the Portland land claim. The titles and the form of conveyances at once became important questions. Pettygrove, and Pettygrove and Lovejoy, and Lownsdale and Coffin, successive owners of the claim, and town proprietors of Portland, had sold lots in the town; and each successive purchaser contracted to recognize and confirm previous sales if he should obtain title from the United States. But the form and effect of previous conveyances were very indefinite until Chapman became interested; then upon him the responsibility was thrown of formulating all contracts and conveyances. Thenceforward all sales and contracts for sales of lots or blocks were made with a clause of warranty against all persons, the United States excepted; and if the proprietors obtained the title of the United States they were to make it good to the purchasers. Prior to the passage of the Donation law, the town proprietors had laid off the whole section into lots and blocks, streets and public grounds, and had caused maps to be made designating the same. The Donation law contained a provision that all future sales before the patent issued should be void under the Donation law, and that claims could not be taken by a company or firm; moreover, the wife was entitled to half of the settler's claim. So the object of obtaining title according to the respective rights of the company seemed impossible. The company had sold a great many lots and blocks to each other, and to other persons, as well as having dedicated streets and blocks for public use. The matter was referred to Colonel Chapman for his advice as to the best plan to obtain title in view of the prohibitory clause in the Donation law, and at the same time hold the town proprietors bound for title.

Colonel Chapman advised that a joint contract be made dividing the claim into three parts as nearly equal as convenient, each claimant being bound to make good their former joint or several contracts for any property within his Donation claim, Chapman holding that this was not a contract for the sale of the property, but only a contract for confirming sales already made. This plan was adopted. Colonel Chapman drew the writings; and the claim was divided, each party taking his separate claim

under the Donation law and receiving a patent. Some years afterwards Lownsdale died; and then his heirs took it into their heads to disregard the contracts for title made by Lownsdale, and brought suits to recover a large amount of the most valuable property in the city of Portland. Many of those against whom suits were brought were induced to compromise, for which thousands of dollars were paid. Doctor Davenport was one of the parties sued for a valuable property. He was frequently met and sought to be influenced to compromise. He would then go to Colonel Chapman, his attorney, to know what he thought about it. On one of these occasions his attorney said; "Doctor, I have given you my opinion; and I have not changed it. If I do I will notify you at once; but if you want to compromise don't let me prevent you." He went away satisfied, and never said compromise again.

The case was prepared for trial before United States Circuit Judge Sawyer, sitting with United States District Judge Deady; and they heard the case. After long consideration, Judges Sawyer and Deady decided the case for Davenport; and the heirs appealed to the Supreme Court of the United States. After hearing the case, the Supreme Court decided in favor of Davenport, upon the very grounds upon which Mr. Chapman, after the passage of the Donation law, drew the confirmatory contract. That settled forever upon a solid foundation the title to property in Portland proper derived through conveyances from Pettygrove, Lownsdale, Coffin or Chapman, as is plainly shown by the following extract from the opinion of the Supreme Court, as delivered by Justice Miller; "But counsel, resting solely on the latest written agreement between Lownsdale, Coffin and Chapman, insist that it was void because made after the Donation act was passed. That agreement was only designed to give effect to the previous contracts on the same subject, and is in accord with the spirit of the proviso." This decision not only made valid the titles by deed, but also the titles by dedication, such as the park blocks, the market blocks, the church blocks, the seminary blocks, the plaza blocks, and the blocks for a public landing upon the Willamette river, as well as the streets represented by the surveys and maps.

In the fall of 1853, becoming impressed with the profit to be made in the cattle business, Colonel Chapman acquired the Hudson's Bay Company's improvements at Fort Umpqua, in what is now Douglas county, and although retaining his interest at Portland, and continuing in the practice of law, removed to the fort with his family, himself returning to Portland about once a month to see to his interests in that city. At his new residence, Mr. Chapman continued to improve and cultivate his farm and herd his cattle.

On the 28th of April, 1855, Mrs. Chapman at Fort Umpqua gave birth to a daughter, who was named Clara. In the fall of 1855, while Mr. Chapman was attending court at the head of the cañon on the road from Roseburg to Scottsburg, the news was brought that there was a great Indian uprising, particularly fierce and violent on Rogue River, with depredations

committed between Jacksonville and Cow Creek. This was the beginning of the war of 1855-56. Under the proclamation of the governor, Colonel Chapman began at once to gather a company, of which he was elected captain. No sooner was this responsibility laid upon him than he went to Portland, riding day and night, to procure arms for his men, and returning took from his own farm, wagons, mules and horses for the equipment of the company. Proceeding thus by forced marches towards the seat of war at the Little Meadows, stopping at Roseburg only long enough to be mustered in proper form as Company I of Major Martin's Battalion, he proceeded expeditiously to join the main command. At Grave Creek he was compelled to leave the wagons and pack his munitions and supplies on mules and horses, having prepared for this emergency. On the trail he overtook Captain Smith of the United States army with his company, on the way to join the forces at the Meadows. The captain was waiting, however, to learn whether the major commanding was going to fight, or give up the campaign. Mr. Chapman learned upon further procedure, that that night there was to be a council upon this very point as to continuing the campaign for the winter.

At the assembling of the officers, Colonel Chapman felt, as a new member and but one day upon the field, somewhat diffident about giving an opinion, but was nevertheless forcibly impressed with the belief that if the forces were withdrawn the Indians would at once scatter out and fall upon the settlements; while if they were followed and pursued and thereby held together, they would be prevented from perpetrating outrages. He therefore favored building a fort and leaving a strong garrison; but, on account of lack of military experience, he did no more than make the suggestion. His foresight, however, was but too terribly verified by the depredations committed soon after the troops were withdrawn. During the winter that followed, the movements of troops were of little concern, and the army was reorganized. Lamerick was chosen brigadier-general by the legislature, and appointed commander of the Second Regiment of Oregon Volunteers. At an election, John Kelsey was chosen colonel, and Mr. Chapman lieutenant-colonel. James Bruce, then whom there was never an abler or better officer, or one more intelligent or more ready to carry out a command to the letter, was chosen major of the Second or Southern Battalion, and Latshaw, an able and energetic officer, of the First or Northern. At a council of war held soon after the forces were gathered together, to decide upon a plan of campaign, Colonel Chapman basing his opinion upon the experiences of the last year, advised to press the Indians, and unite them as closely as possible, compelling them to concentrate at some point, probably at the Meadows. This place, the fastness of the Indians, was a rocky cliff or bluff on the south side of the Rogue river, opposite a wide strip of clear meadow lands. To cross the meadows, and ford the swift and dangerous river in the face of an enemy concealed among the rocks and trees, was an impossibility.

Colonel Chapman therefore advised that a force; the Southern Battalion, be sent down the south side of the river by way of the Port Orford trail, to

attack the Indians from the rear of their stronghold, and another force, the Northern Battalion, be sent to cooperate on the north side, and if the Indians fled across the stream to be there to meet them. By this strategy the enemy must be crushed between the two battalions. This suggestion was adopted; and, at the request of General Lamerick, Chapman reluctantly consented to take command of the Southern Battalion, with headquarters at Vannoy's Ferry. As soon as he began concentrating his forces, which were scattered at various places in Southern Oregon, he was met with expressions of fear from the settlers that they would now be left without defense, and exposed to the attacks of the Indians. Colonel Chapman, however, assured them that he would stand between them and the Indians; and, having made all preparations, he set out at the head of the forces, numbering some three hundred or four hundred men, all hardy, sturdy soldiers, good fighters, and mostly miners. Moving to Hays, on Slate creek, where the Indians had left tracks by recent depredations, scouts were sent out to find the enemy; and it was soon ascertained, as was anticipated, that the savages had concentrated in the presence of the large force coming after them, and had retreated to their great stronghold opposite the Big or Lower Meadows. This was a point a little below their place of defense of the previous year, which was called the Upper or Little Meadows, and was a stronger position, being better defended on the north.

Returning to Vannoy's, preparations for a simultaneous movement were made. The men were dismounted, only animals sufficient for the commissary being allowed; and the expedition on both banks moved forward. There was a point on the Port Orford trail known as Peavine Camp, high on the ridge, not far from the meadows on the south side, to which Chapman was to repair with his force, and from this point watch the trail below on the north that heights ascertain the movement of Lamerick and the Northern Battalion, whose force would be visible there as he went by. Reaching Peavine, Chapman waited some time in the snow, which still hung on the high ridge, but failed to discover his superior, and at length was told that his flat had been seen on the Upper Meadows. Scouts were sent ahead, who found the Indians in force under the bluff opposite the Lower Meadows; and all preparations were made for an attack, the men being eager for the work. But just at this juncture, however, a message was received by Colonel Chapman from General Lamerick, stating that he had learned that it would be impossible for Colonel Chapman to reach the Indians on the south side, and ordering Chapman and his battalion to cross the river to the north side and join him. Chapman and his men were annoyed at this intelligence and command, and for a time thought seriously of disregarding the order, but, upon consultation, it was decided not to make the attack, but to rejoin General Lamerick, which they did.

At the Meadows, considerable fighting was done across the river. Major Bruce was ordered by General Lamerick, with a small command, in the face of the Indians, to cross the river; and, as has been said, for some reason he failed to cross. The reason was certain and sufficient. It was the same reason (the impassability of the river) why the whole army

commanded by Major Judea of the United States army, and Major Martin of the State Volunteers, with the mountain howitzer to aid them, in the fall preceding, were unable to cross the river in the face of the Indians. This impassibility led Colonel Chapman, in the spring of 1856, to plan a campaign by which the Southern battalion was to go down to the south side of Rogue river, and the Northern Battalion to go down on the north side, and which he partially carried out but it was broken by the order of General Lamerick before mentioned to join him on the north side. At length the Indians chose to leave their camp. Then an advance across the river was made, when General Lamerick found that they had gone; and he occupied their deserted camp one day and one night. General Lamerick then made an order for the army to retire from the further pursuit of the Indians, part to Illinois River, part to Jacksonville, and part to other places. On the same day, before these orders were put into execution, Colonel Chapman, seeing that if these orders should be carried out the whole plan of this campaign would be broken, the Indians left free to destroy the lives and property of the settlers, and the volunteers left with the same unsatisfactory results as after the unfruitful campaign of the year before, urged General Lamerick to build a fort near by, and to man the same, to hold and keep the Indians in check. At this suggestion the General took offense, and swore around like mad, but said he would refer the matter to a council of war. At this council Chapman was called upon to explain his views, which were at once indorsed by every member of the council; and it was decided to erect a fort, which was immediately done; and it was named Fort Lamerick. Major Latshaw was placed in command there; and the remaining troops were sent to various points (as before mentioned). Lamerick went to Jacksonville, and Chapman to Roseburg. Latshaw, a brave and vigilant officer, soon reported to Colonel Chapman that he had found the Indians on John Mule creek, and was only waiting orders to attack them, and asked also for a supply of provisions. Chapman at once issued the order for an attack, and sent off the provisions. Major Latshaw, in pursuance of Colonel Chapman's order, promptly attacked and whipped the Indians; and by this blow, and the timely aid he gave the regular army then coming up Rogue River, the war was ended. The Indians surrendered to the United States troops, they having some natural distrust of the settlers and soldiers amongst whom they had been pillaging and murdering.

Resuming civil life, the Colonel removed in the latter part of 1856 to Corvallis with his family. In 1857, on the first day of July, at Corvallis, Mrs. Chapman gave birth to another daughter, which was named Margaret. The admission of Oregon as a state was now taking definite form; and it was supposed as a matter of course that the Colonel would be a member of the constitutional convention from the Corvallis district. There was, however, at that time much division of opinion on the subject of slavery, and what provision in respect to this institution should be inserted in the instrument constituting Oregon a state. A meeting of the Democratic party was held at Salem; and, while returning with a number

of his party friends to Corvallis, the subject was broached; and Colonel Chapman frankly said he would be opposed to slavery, as it was a thing that could not be established in such a community, and that a movement to attempt this was uncalled for. He expressed no hostility to the South, but believed that the attempt of such a social change as this policy contemplated would be only evil. From that moment he was dropped; and Judge Kelsey, of pronounced pro-slavery views, was selected for the place. Among those who thus discarded the Colonel were a number who afterwards became prominent Republicans.

During this or the following year he visited Eugene, and purchasing extensive farming property removed hither with his family. While there the election of territorial and state representatives occurred; and he received the nomination to a seat as territorial member. The number of candidates being large, a very lively canvass was conducted, for a part of the time at least the whole legislative ticket stumping together. The Colonel bore a large part of the burden of this work.

As the contest for senator drew near, a strong movement was set on foot to elect Chapman. He would have been a very strong candidate but for a number of reasons, chief among which was his opposition to slavery in Oregon; and his party could not allow him the honor. He was also spoken of as a worthy man for the position of United States district judge. While the party managers were trying to adjust these claims of his friends, and at the same time not injure the party by offending other aspirants for these positions, the Oregon legislature being still in session, news was received from Washington that the Colonel was appointed surveyor-general of Oregon; and he himself received at the same time a letter from General Lane strongly urging him to accept. Feeling for the General the strongest friendship and personal attachment, he consented to do so; and all the party claims were speedily adjusted. In 1861, believing it unbecoming to hold office under a President whose election he had opposed, he tendered the resignation of his office, and was superseded after some time by P.J. Pengra.

While not believing in the coercion of states, Colonel Chapman did a service second to none in Oregon for the preservation of the peace and happiness of the Pacific states. In the early days of the war, there was a strong attempt on the part of the South to agitate the idea of still further embarrassing the government by the establishment of a Pacific republic. Dr. Gwynn, of Virginia, sent letters to prominent Democrats; and news of these came to Colonel Chapman, to know what to do with reference to this matter. Not only did he not favor the suggestion, but advised to let it utterly alone, and so far disapproved as to sit down at once and write as strong an article as he knew how to compose, deprecating any such an attempt, urging the most weighty reasons, such as that this movement meant the uprooting of society in Oregon, and would bring in changes that would be destructive of her fabric. The article was published in a paper at Eugene, and was copied into a number of other journals, and being widely

read produced a deep impression. Coming from so prominent a Democrat as Colonel Chapman, it had the effect to kill the rash enterprise in the bud.

During the fall of 1861, Colonel Chapman, with his family and household effects, returned to his old homestead in Portland, and in the early part of the year 1862 erected the residence at Twelfth and Jefferson streets in that city, which has ever since been the family home. During the years of his later residence in Portland, the Colonel has practiced law extensively, especially in land matters, and spent a life of energy and a magnificent fortune in his noble determination to secure for Oregon its one great desideratum, Eastern railroad connections. The following explanation of Colonel Chapman, with reference to a matter which he deems of no great importance in itself, but which from its very erroneous treatment in works hitherto published is deserving of a place in authentic history, will not only serve to detach from his life and public acts all imputation of blame, but will also be of interest in showing the true character of the people and of the justices of the Supreme Court, which would otherwise rest under suspicion. The colonel writes, September, 1889:

"In 1851, in the circuit court at Hillsboro, Washington county, Judge Pratt took exception to the language of an affidavit for change of venue drawn by myself for my client, and ordered me imprisoned, and that my name be stricken from the roll of attorneys. The supreme court reversed and annulled these orders; and so the matter rested until of late years, when some writers for history have seen proper to revive it. The first of these I think was Lang's history. The manner of its mention there I did not think worthy of notice. I had long let bygones be bygones. But Bancroft's history so foully misrepresents the facts as to place me in the wrong, and represents the people as rescuing me from the hands of the law; and justice requires that a correct history of the matter be given to posterity. In order to give correct and indisputable knowledge of the cause of affront to Judge Pratt, I have caused the clerks of the supreme court and of the circuit court at Hillsboro to make diligent search for the original affidavit and record entry, none of which they have been able to find. I must, therefore, state the facts from my best recollection; and they are as follows:

"Robert Thompson had a suit in the state circuit court at Hillsboro before Judge Pratt. He wanted a change of venue because, as he said, the Judge was prejudiced against him. He told me that the ground of the prejudice was that they had had a quarrel over a game of cards, or at a gambling table, in Galena, Illinois. Out of respect for the court, I did not fully set forth in the affidavit and motion the grounds of circumstances giving rise to the prejudice, thinking that the Judge would not be tenacious upon the subject. But he overruled the motion and affidavit because they were not sufficiently specific. I then, at the instance of my client, drew an affidavit and motion alleging more specifically the circumstances out of

which the prejudice arose. Upon this the Judge ordered me to show cause why I should not be imprisoned, and my name stricken from the rolls for contempt. Having heard Mr. Tilford in my behalf, the Judge reached to his hat and took out the order against me, which he had drawn up before he came into court or heard my defence. The second affidavit, the one objected to, was made thus specific only because the Judge had ruled out the first because it was not specific. The Judge having directed the order against me to be entered, the court adjourned.

"The statement in Bancroft's history that the people aided me to escape is an unmitigated falsehood. While the Judge was deciding against me, I observed that the people were excited; and I so conducted myself as to avoid, as much as possible, further irritation. As we went to dinner I told the sheriff I was going home; that my family would be uneasy, but that I would be at his service in the morning. After dinner my horse was brought out; and the sheriff took him by the tip of the tail and told me not to go. I, however, jumped upon my horse; and the sheriff's tail-hold slipped, and consequently I rode off. Two gentlemen only were present, who were going to Portland, but they never uttered a word. Next morning the sheriff came into the city past my house; and I went down town with him in order to go back. There some friends who made some demonstration unfavorable to my return; but I put a stop to it and rode off with the sheriff. When we reached his house, three or four miles from Hillsboro, he left me to remain there and himself went on to the town. In a day or two a writ of error came, and I was at ease; and in due time the supreme court reversed Judge Pratt.

"But this is not all. The writer for Bancroft's history goes bac (sic)

ⁱ Evans, Elwood, "History of the Pacific Northwest: Oregon and Washington": Portland, OR.: North Pacific History Co. ; San Francisco : Press of H. S. Crocker & Co., 1889.