

Levi Pennington

People

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Levi Pennington Writing to Adena Joy, March 14, 1947

Levi T. Pennington

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March 14, 1947.

Miss Adena Joy,
Lewis & Clark College, 0615 S.W. Palatine Hill
Portland, Oregon.

Dear Miss Joy:--

You left that meeting Wednesday when the discussion was well started, by which I mean that it had been going on for some time, but it had hours to go yet before the group separated. The group actually adjourned at one o'clock; but then we all had lunch together, so that we continued some phases of the discussion until after two.

The conclusions reached were substantially as follows:

1. That the previously organized committee ought to be approached, with information that there is a prospect that a branch of the American Friends Service Committee may be organized in Portland, to do a broader work than the peace education work contemplated primarily by the committee already organized, with the hope that this committee will function as the Peace Section of the branch, with at least one other coordinate section, that on Relief. It was the hope that you would call this committee together soon, when the two of us can try to make it clear to the members of this committee what the situation is. We were told that Prof. Hutchins had been named on this committee but had declined to accept the position. I do not know how accurate this report is. If he is still a member of the committee, he could help adjust matters with this committee.

2. That some of the leaders of Oregon Yearly Meeting of the Friends Church should be approached, with information in regard to what is in prospect, making it clear to them that the reason why this is being considered is the feeling that there is work that ought to be done that is not being done, and that those who are working toward a possible establishment of a branch of the American Friends Service Committee are doing it from a sense of real concern and obligation, with no desire to split Oregon Yearly Meeting or oppose it. It is not the idea to ask for the approval or to give opportunity for disapproval, but just to let some of the leaders know what is in prospect, and to ask their cooperation so far as they can conscientiously give it, as many of us are cooperating with the program of the yearly meeting as far as our consciences will allow. President Gulley was assigned, and accepted, the task of conferring with these leaders of Oregon Yearly Meeting, and was given full liberty to secure anybody he desires to accompany him. It was felt that the presiding and recording clerks of the yearly meeting, the yearly meeting superintendant and the yearly meeting treasurer should be interviewed.

3. It was proposed that some financial solicitation be carried on within the next ten days, to see how well Friends who are interested in this project are willing and able to support it financially. Chase L. Conover assumed the responsibility for this solicitation in Newberg and vicinity; Ross Miles agreed

to attend to this solicitation in Salem and Corvallis; Mr. Thornburg (why can't I think of his first name?) was to be asked to do the same for Forest Grove. Each of these is free to seek any assistance desired in making this solicitation. Nobody was able to suggest anyone who could and would solicit interested Friends in Portland.

4. Another meeting of interested Friends is to be called in the near future, probably about March 28. President Gulley was instructed to make this call, and to do it, so far as members of Oregon Yearly Meeting are concerned, through invitations sent to each local meeting. This communication was to contain the information that the meeting was being held to consider the possible organization of a branch of the American Friends Service Committee, and that all who are interested in such a project are invited. In addition to these invitations sent to meetings, there will be, of course, information of the meeting for a possible definite move toward the organization of this branch to be sent to interested Friends who are not connected with any meetings of Oregon Yearly Meeting.

Those were the final decisions as to definite action. Homer L. Morris made it clear to us that the establishment of a branch here involves no little preliminary work. There must be a request to the Board of the American Friends Service Committee in Philadelphia, and this request should contain the names proposed for the Executive Committee of the branch, a proposed budget, and the names of the officers of the proposed local organization. It would be better still if a proposed executive secretary could be named, and if there could be a considerable share of the budget provided, with a clear statement as to the sources from which the rest to be raised locally is expected. This request would have to have the approval of the Peace Section, if half the work of the local branch is to be for peace; it will have to pass the personnel committee; and finally it must be approved by the board.

We were surprised to learn that the Board is not completely committed to the establishment of branches. I was surprised to learn that the one in Southern California was the first one ever organized, and this later developed into two, one in the Bay district. The other two are the one in Seattle and the one in Chicago -- only four in all.

I shall hope to be able to attend a meeting of this previously organized committee when it is called, and I hope it may be possible to so present the matter of the larger plan that it may meet the entire approval of the committee.

Sincerely your friend,

Levi T. Pennington.

Homer L. Morris thought he could come back from the Bay District to attend this meeting to be held, probably, on the 28th of March.