

Levi Pennington

People

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Pennington to His Cousin Grace, August 3, 1947

Levi T. Pennington

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August 3, 1947.
Dear Cousin Grace:--

We are just back from our place at Woods, and if you had a dollar for every time you were thought of during our stay there, you'd have enough to go on a real "bender." So many times the thought of you and David and of the delightful times we had together came during this stay that it almost seemed that you were there with us at times.

We went out there nine days ago, after we had been going, in intention, every day for a long time. Again and again something would come up to delay us, the funeral of a daughter of the man who was the first postmaster of Newberg and who gave the town its name, a meeting of the nominating committee of the Northwest Institute of International Relations, the prospect of a meeting of the State Heifers for Relief committee, which they did not finally succeed in getting together, and I don't know how many other things. But a week ago Friday we got away, and spent about as lazy a week as we ever spent. Neither of us was very full of "pep", and we ate and slept and read, varying the program the next day by reading and sleeping and eating. I did considerable writing, and a little fishing. Rebecca did very little writing and no fishing at all.

Nobody was catching any fish except that an occasional blue-back was taken trolling. Rebecca did not feel up to that, and so we did not try it. I tried fly fishing for trout just a little, and I hooked and landed one huge fish that was over eight inches long, but less than nine.

They were catching lots of salmon out in the ocean. One man out there, who fishes commercially for sport, since he does not need the money, caught 23 one day and 30 another the past week, and may have done even better than that some days -- I saw him only one day, when I went and bought half of his smallest salmon, which made three meals for us besides what we gave to Mrs. Eckerson across the street. (I did see him another day, but he had sold all his fish before I got to his place. Since he gets 30 cents a pound for his fish with the heads on, he makes his fishing pay for his sport.)

There may be a meeting of this state Heifers for Relief committee tomorrow. The next day the meeting on ministry and oversight occurs. The next day is the Rotary Club luncheon -- it will be five weeks since I attended one, and I'd like to be there -- and in the evening comes monthly meeting, and I'm the clerk.

By that time they may be ready for me to go out with a Brethren minister named Blickenstaff, who is being considered for field man for Heifers for Relief. When the movement first started in the state, they asked me to help get a young man on his way in this county, which I did. It took time, but I knew the right folks, and we got a fine committee appointed, and this county got off the first carload of heifers from the state. Now they feel that I ought to do that sort of thing repeatedly.

I did go to Grants Pass and help to get that county organized, and now they have asked me to help this man Blickenstaff get started. Hope I can do him some good, though I'll not be as much help to him as I was to young Wagner.

Rebecca says that when I get through with that job, we are going to go out to El TeePee again, and I'll be willing. I'd like to stay longer, and I hope that Rebecca will feel a lot better than she has been feeling for some time. She has been feeling far from well, with weakness and lack of energy, things that she has to do looking mountainous. She has been better for the past two or three days, and I hope she is going to gain rapidly.

Bertha May seems to be getting along all right. The night nurse at the home where she works has been off duty for more than two months, going over to Seaside or somewhere where her only daughter was expecting her first baby. The young member of the family postponed his arrival for five or six weeks after the scheduled date, and I suppose the night nurse is just getting back to Portland today, to begin her work tomorrow -- no, she'll not arrive, for a guess, till tomorrow, for she goes to work tomorrow night. She is not just the woman that we'd choose as an intimate, but Bertha May thinks she is the finest in the world. She is very religious, and she prays at times "in tongues" as she claims. She has been married three times, each marriage ending in divorce. Well, she and Bertha May get along well together. Bertha May does not approve of her divorce record, and does not want her to do anything about her "tongues" where Bertha May is, but they play and sing for the old folks in the home, and Bertha May finds her very congenial.

You'd not know the Pacific College campus these days, unless you approached it from directly in front of Wood-Mar Hall. If you came up River Street, the one just east of us that runs into the campus alongside the old athletic field, you'd see a college building before you got to the campus. The big house on the southeast corner of the block on which we are on the northwest corner, has been bought by the college and made into a dormitory for girls, the third floor completed and porch walled in so that it houses some 14 girls more than it would have done when the building was purchased.

Coming to the campus itself, there are three GI houses, each one housing four families. Then comes the science building, then the music and fine arts building, then the dining hall and kitchen, then the library, which occupies the spot that the old gymnasium occupied. All these are buildings from Camp Adair, bought and moved to their locations on the campus. (My mistake. One of these buildings is on the corner of the main campus right across the drive from the girls' dormitory.)

Beyond this girls' dormitory, the remodeling of which was one of the last building operations of the Pennington administration, is the new gymnasium, built of cement blocks, and not from Camp Adair. And beyond this, on the part of the campus last acquired, are three more GI housing units, each accommodating four families. (These are not student GI's, but the college had to furnish locations for these units in order to get the others.)

The old Chemistry building, that wooden structure just back

of Wood-Mar Hall, the main building, is to be moved to another location and made into two housing units.

These additional buildings will add to the usefulness of some of the other buildings. The removal of the library to this library building makes available three more classrooms in Wood-Mar Hall; the removal of the physics laboratory to the new science building will release another one; the removal of the home economics another, and perhaps two others. The removal of the dining room and kitchen from the present girls' dormitory will make the lower floor of that building available for additional quarters for women students. The removal of the art and music departments and the biology work from the old college building will release the entire south half of that building for additional dormitory space for men.

But there, You are not a member of the Pacific College board, faculty nor student body. (If you had been a member of the board we'd have escaped some of the disaster that the board has brought to us, especially in a financial way.)

I do not know how well they are succeeding in the rebuilding of the faculty. One new man is on the ground, the first and so far as I know the only Ph.D. that they have secured of the five or six that were definitely promised before the first week in February. This man preached at the church this morning, I was told by a member of the pulpit supply committee, and she declared that she could have listened to him for an hour and not have known what he was talking about. * Our pastor has been away attending the great Sunday School convention at Des Moines, and this lady said they had been desperate for somebody to supply the pulpit, with Gulley and me both out of town. He is somewhere in California, doing some work for the Herbert Hoover Foundation before he begins his work next month for the Oregon branch of the American Friends Service Committee.

But here I've rambled on and on -- I'm quite a rambler if I am not a rose -- and I'd better end this right now.

With love from both of us to you and all yours,

Affectionately your cousin,

Mrs. David H. White,
529 No. Washington Ave.,
Whittier, California.

* I've known such speakers,
and Ward W. Silver, Mary
Doan Hole and Ethel
Thomas Carter were at
least six of them.