

Levi Pennington

People

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Pennington to Jonathan Steere, October 3, 1947

Levi T. Pennington

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Jonathan M. Thayer,
The Acres, Walnut Lane,
Haverford, Penna.

13 Marlon Ave., So. Glens Falls, N.Y.,
October 3, 1947.

Dear Friend:--

When I was at Poughkeepsie Monday to Wednesday of this week, I was as close to you as I am likely to be on this trip east; and here in South Glens Falls at the home of my daughter and her husband your letter of the 21st. of last month caught up with me.

You see, the meeting of the Friends World Committee for Consultation, Indiana Yearly Meeting, the Earlham College Centennial, and my desire to see relatives and friends east of the Mississippi constituted a combination of pulls that I found myself unable to resist. I thought I was coming ^{alone} till almost the last day, and then Rebecca decided that she could come with me. And so on the last day of August we left home; two days and three nights later we reached Chicago; the latter part of that day and the next day we spent in Indianapolis with relatives; the next day we spent some hours with a woman who was very kind to us during Rebecca's long illness the year after our marriage; then we spent ten days attending that World Committee for Consultation; then came Indiana Yearly Meeting and the Earlham College Centennial; then a visit to Wabash, where I was once pastor; then two days at the home of a sister in Michigan, with the other sister and her husband visiting us there; then my daughter and I drove in two days from Hastings, Michigan, to South Glens Falls, New York, just under 800 miles; I spoke at Fort Edward Sunday morning, and then preached the radio sermon at the South Glens Falls meeting; the next day I went with Mary and the Glens Falls pastor to Poughkeepsie for the Workers Conference of New York Yearly Meeting, where I was plenty busy Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, with a talk to Oakwood School as an extra; yesterday I wrote on this machine nearly all day, as a great mass of correspondence had caught up with me here; and today I have read and corrected 140 pages of my son-in-law's doctor's dissertation, which he is preparing for publication. Another day of that, and then I shall be ready to go west, meeting Rebecca in Detroit for a visit with her niece and her husband and my niece and her family. Then visits with other relatives, and then back to Oregon.

What a long and tedious recital this is. Let's turn to other things.

First let me say that we are sorry no end to know that your wife's health has not been all that could be desired. Do hope that the happy time you have spent in Little Rhody may have done her a world of good.

I do not remember all that I told you about the college situation. At last yearly meeting time, the thing was done that seemed to me the best thing that could have been done under the circumstances. Gervas A. Carey was elected president of the college. He is the one man in all the world on whom I should suppose the yearly meeting could come nearest to agreeing. His "doctrinal soundness" could hardly be questioned, as he was unanimously asked by the college board to take again the position at the head of the biblical department. If the "radical" element had proposed a man from outside -- they had already offered the job to two or three or maybe four who had their O.K. -- a lot of us who have believed in the ideals for which the college has stood for more than half a century would have had no confidence in him; if we had proposed a man from outside, they'd have fought him; but with Gervas Carey clerk of the yearly meeting and as such clerk of the "executive Committee", which has been made the yearly meeting in interim, and supposedly entirely satisfactory

to all concerned, we are hoping for a better situation than for the past two or three years, though the quarter to a half million dollars that was thrown away by the persecution of Gulley is doubtless gone forever.

In his defence of Gulley three years ago, Gervas Carey "told off" the folks who had been guilty of innuendo, false rumors and even lies about Gulley. He said he would not accept the job, if it were offered him, for \$15,000.00 a year. When we went to him to ask him to take the presidency last June he reminded us of that statement. I told him of the nurse who was caring for all sorts of loathsome diseases and injuries in the hospital, and some one who was watching her said, "I'd not do that for a million dollars!" "Neither would I", replied the nurse. I told Carey that we knew he'd not take the presidency of the college for \$15,000.00 a year, and he knew that he'd not get more than a very minor fraction of that sum; but I suggested that he might take the job to save the college; and he did.

Glad that things are looking so good for Haverford. And I hope with you that Pacific College may come through this period of stress and strain all the better for the tough going. It is good to know that God's resources are not exhausted.

You'll not be likely to say anything in praise of that daughter-in-law of yours which will start any argument with us. You see, we met her, and we know she is lovely. I'd think that loving her would be one of the easiest things to do. So far as I know them, I'd say that the Steere family are what the fellow in the restaurant called "good pickers."

From what I know of those same Steeres, I'd not suppose that the breed is declining in excellence. If it has to the slightest degree, what a fine lot the ancestors must have been!

Wouldn't I have liked to be in that fishing party! I think a 46 pound salmon (the word is salmon) is the biggest fish I ever landed. I've caught a good many of them that were in the vicinity of 25 pounds. But if I had caught a boatload per day, there would still be a thrill in seeing the rise of a trout, even if he were only seven or eight inches long -- they have to be seven in Oregon's coastal streams to be legally kept. I'll not get any of that after we return to Oregon, but I hope I may get some salmon fishing.

Sixty years ago since you went to Haverford. What a newcomer I am to Pacific College, or even to Earlham. I was talking to a man in Portland some time ago, and he asked me how long I had been in Oregon. I told him I came out there in 1911. "Practically a tenderfoot", he said, "When I came here, Mt. Hood was a hole in the ground."

But I must get a little more of my "home work" done, for a letter from Rebecca today inclosed a number of letters that had overtaken her at Hastings, Michigan.

With love and best wishes, and I know that Rebecca would want to be included,
I am

Sincerely your friend,