
Levi Pennington

People

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Pennington to Reverend John Canse, February 2, 1948

Levi T. Pennington

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February 2, 1948.

Rev. John M. Canse,
3324 N. E. Eighteenth,
Portland, Oregon.

Dear Mr. Canse:--

When you asked me to furnish you with some information about Quaker beginnings in Newberg, I did not guess that I should be so long about getting it done. But we have had company, some distinguished Friends from England, and I have been out of town three or four days since I saw you, and not till today have I found time to write to you.

Quaker beginnings in Newberg -- well, the first right here was the visit of William Hobson from Iowa in 1871, though there were a few Friends in this section of the United States before that. The real beginning, however, was on William Hobson's second trip in 1875, when he selected this Chehalem Valley as the place where he believed the Lord wanted a Quaker settlement, with a yearly meeting and a college as part of the vision he had for the future. He reinforced his decision that this was the place by remaining here, encouraging others to come; and soon there were a number of adventurous and influential families joining him in pioneering enterprise. Friends Pacific Academy was established in 1885, out of which the college grew, which was established in 1891. Pacific College, as did many others, retained its preparatory department till 1930.

There were other settlers in this valley before the coming of the Quakers, among the names being Heater, Brucher, Everest, Hagey, Ramsey, Rogers, Hess, Hall, Shook, Deskins, etc.

One of the numbers of the Oregon Historical Quarterly had a much more complete write-up of early Quakerism in Oregon. I cannot give you the number, but it will not be difficult to find it. The American Friend of May, 1910, also had a fine article, written by Walter C. Woodward and Rainer Kelsey, but the copies which Pacific College had were borrowed at some time, and are not now in the college's possession. A paper written by John Rees of Springbrook on this early history is in the college library, but it is not loaned out, but can be studied in the library by anyone who desires to do so.

Prof. Perry D. Macy of Pacific College is the best authority on Quaker History in Oregon that I know.

Sincerely yours,

Levi T. Pennington.