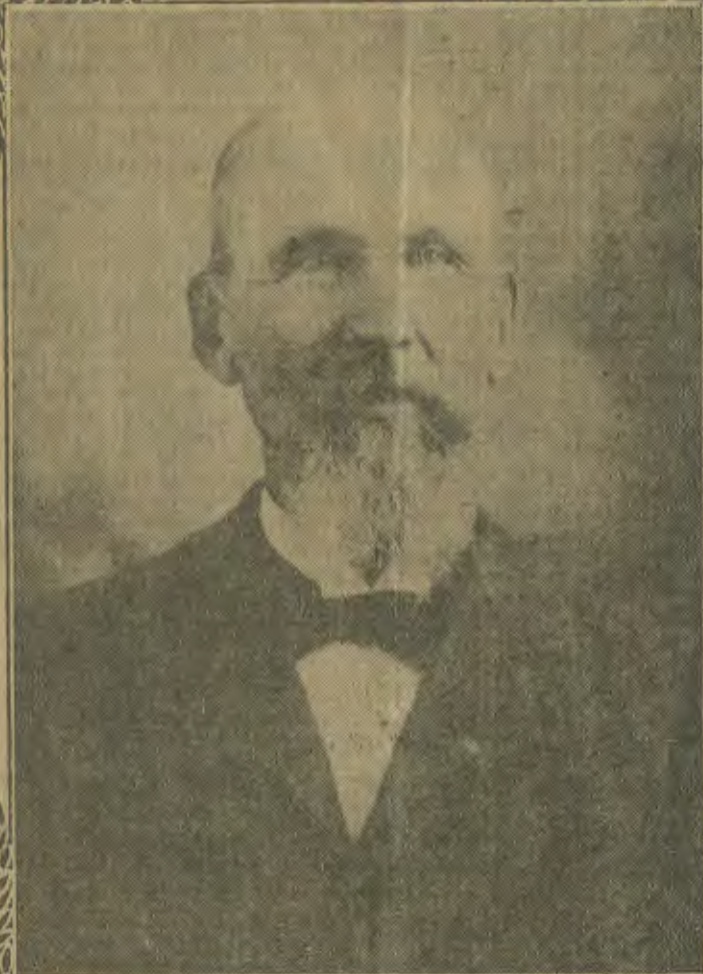


OLDEST LIVING WHITE MAN BORN WEST OF THE ROCKIES

OREGON JOURNAL

JUNE 17, 1906



CYRUS H. WALKER, ALBANY ORE.

NO man in all the world can possibly enjoy the distinction that circumstances conferred on Cyrus Hamlin Walker. He is the oldest white man who was born west of the Rocky mountains. But the fame that came to him through the fact that his birth at Whitman's mission near Walla Walla, in 1838, was a matter of territorial rejoicing did not satisfy Mr. Walker, and he set out to achieve a reputation that would be founded on something else than the accident of nativity. He won honor as a soldier, as a public servant, as a state builder, and as an upright citizen.

The oldest living white man born in the Oregon country bears his honors modestly. He has long ago put away the sword and pistol, and has taken up

the pruning hook; his paths are in pleasant places, and his days are peaceful; a hard, troublous youth has given way to an easy, peaceful age.

Cyrus Walker's parents were the Rev. and Mrs. Elkanah Walker, who were among the history-makers of the Oregon country. They were married in Baldwin, Maine, March 5, 1838, and started next day for Oregon as missionaries of the American board of commissioners of foreign missions.

The journey from the Missouri river to Dr. Whitman's was made on horseback; the hardships endured by the bride, unused as she was to the rigors of travel, were great. At Whitman's, the Rev. and Mrs. C. Eells, the Rev. and Mrs. A. B. Smith and Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Gray aided them in the mission work,

In the spring of 1839, when Cyrus was yet a mite of humanity, his father and Mr. Eells established a mission among the Spokane Indians, at what is now Walker's Prairie, near Spokane, and there they lived for nine years. The boy went to school in 1845-46 at Whitman's, and his teacher was the kindly and gentle Andrew Rodgers, whose serviceable life came to an end in the bloody Whitman massacre, November 29, 1847. That fearful slaughter caused a discontinuance of the missions; the Walkers and Eells were taken to old Fort Colville, on the Columbia, where they enjoyed the hospitality of John Lewes, the famous chief factor of the Hudson Bay company.

In June, 1848, a company of Oregon mounted volunteers was formed, under Major Joseph Magone, who had made a record in the Cayuse Indian war, and escorted the preachers and their families to the Willamette valley. They reached Oregon City on June 20, 1848.

Some of the volunteers "shot" the cascades—the women and the children traveled by trail down the north bank of the Columbia. For over a year the Walkers lived in Oregon City, and then moved to Forest Grove, where Cyrus attended Tualatin academy and Pacific university. In 1859 he became a farmer, and in the spring of 1863, with a partner, went to Umatilla county, and settled on the headwaters of the west fork of Birch creek. Forest Grove's attractions proved irresistible after a time, and he returned in time to enlist in the First Oregon volunteers, and was made first lieutenant of company B. The regiment was encamped at Camp Russell, near Salem, for a time. Then company B was moved to Fort Hoskins, and later was moved east of the Cascades and was quartered at Fort Boise, in Idaho. Lieutenant Walker, with 40 men, guarded the immigrant road between Fort Boise and Gibson's Ferry, on the Snake river. In 1866 the detachment was moved home and was mustered out on July 21 at Fort Vancouver, Washington.

In 1867 Walker had charge of the Dayton warehouse, where he often met Captain J. T. Apperson of the steamer Dayton, and they were among the honored people at the state Grange in Albany last month.

Mr. Walker was superintendent of the Warm Springs Indian agency boarding school, and while there, in 1886, married Miss Mary F. Wheeler, daughter of Indian Agent Jason Wheeler. In the summer of 1892 they moved to Albany, where they live in the enjoyment of prosperity and the love of a large circle of friends.

Domestic Infelicity.

From the Chicago Record-Herald. "I see," said Mr. Lamplack, looking up from his paper, "that there's a boycott in China."

"Do tell!" replied his wife, with an air of scorn, as she arranged the dishes on the table, and proceeded with an important flourish to cut the bread. "Come on and eat your breakfast, Mose, and don't you concern yourself about that



SWORD, BELT, AND GLOVES OF CYRUS H. WALKER IN HISTORIC SOCIETY'S MUSEUM

boy what's caught in China. There's been boys caught nearer home that I never heard tell of you mentioning, and why you should do so now is more than I know."

"You don't understand," said Mr. Lamplack, "I have been reading in the paper on the boycott on American goods, and—"

"Taint a mite of difference to me whether the boy was on American goods or the American goods was on him. And as for your fling at my understanding, I'd have you know, Mose Lamplack, that it is as good as your'n, if

I ain't been edikated up to the same notch that you be. Shet up, Mandy, and you, Zeke; your two's dad will help yer plates when he gits done reading about that 'ar boy what's been caught in China, like's if thar's never been one caught nearer home before nor since."

Figures of Speech.

A deaf and dumb person who is fairly expert at finger language can speak about 43 words per minute. In the same space of time a person in possession of his speech will probably speak 150 words