Register of the Small Oregon Collections, 1832-1921

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Collection number: Mss2

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Small Oregon Collections,
Date (inclusive): 1832-1921
Collection number: Mss2
Creator:
Extent: 0.5 linear ft.
Repository: University of the Pacific. Library. Holt-Atherton Department of Special Collections
Stockton, CA 95211
Shelf location: For current information on the location of these materials, please consult the library's online catalog.
Language: English.
Access
Collection is open for research.

Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], Small Oregon Collections, Mss2, Holt-Atherton Department of Special Collections, University of the Pacific Library

Biography
Holt Atherton's 19 Small Oregon Collections span that region's history from 1832 into the early twentieth century. They contain valuable information about early life in western Oregon and chronicle the activities of some the state's best-known pioneers, including those mentioned in subsequent paragraphs.
Nathaniel Jarvis Wyeth (1802-56), merchant and adventurer, arrived at Ft. Vancouver with eight men in October 1832. He returned to Boston the following year to arrange for supplies to be sent by ship. He then brought a second party, including Methodist missionary, Jason Lee, overland in 1834. Wyeth subsequently established a trading post and shipped lumber and salmon to Hawaii (1834-36). John Kirk Townsend (1809-1851), ornithologist and physician, came to Oregon with Wyeth's second expedition. He collected bird specimens during two years in Oregon that he later sold to John James Audubon. Townsend returned east via Hawaii in 1836. Elkanah Walker (1805-1877) and his wife, Mary, served as missionaries to the Spokane Indians (1838-1848). They later assisted in organization of Tualatin Academy [later Pacific University] (1849)
These individuals are represented by correspondence in the Risvold Collection of Oregon Pioneer Correspondence [Mss2.R597].

Medoreem Crawford (1819-1891) came overland to Oregon in 1842. He was a merchant/teamster for much of the 1840s, but, following his election to the Territorial Legislature (1847) Crawford devoted himself to Oregon politics for thirty years, serving successively as legislator, collector of internal revenue (1864-1870) and appraiser of customs (1871-1875). He also found time to farm in Yamhill County (1855-1891) and to lead emigrant parties across the plains (1861-1863). In his obituary the Morning Oregonian noted that, "he was known to every person in Oregon during many years...and as a pioneer he was among the most intelligent, far-seeing, and energetic." Crawford’s drayage ledger (1845-1846) constitutes a register of the most renowned citizens of Oregon Territory. Listed on its pages are the accounts of George Abernethy (1807-1877), Oregon’s first Governor, Francis Ermatinger (1798-1858), early day trapper (1820s) and Hudson's Bay Co. official (as well as first Treasurer of Oregon Territory) and Jason Lee (1803-1845), first Protestant missionary in the Northwest (1834) [Mss2.C899].

Henry H. Woodward (1826-1915) came to Oregon (1850) as part of the Umpqua Company. Their intention was to acquire, subdivide and exploit lands along the Umpqua River. Woodward was a volunteer in the Indian War of 1855-56 and it was supposedly on his initiative that Indians along the Coquille River were persuaded to cease hostilities and return to their reservation. He lived for awhile in Coos County (1857-67), where a tributary of the Coquille River is named for him. He began to write poetry during these years and by 1870 was a book dealer in Roseburg. He continued to publish poetry until his death (1915), much of which is said to be of considerable worth as a source of local values and interests during the 19th century.

The Oregon legislature created Umpqua County, north and west of Roseburg, in 1851. William Golden [Mss2.G618] was an early settler (1851) and one of the original County Commissioners. Because the regional population was so small and income from mining and other sources was so slight, Umpqua was soon absorbed by Douglas County (1862). Golden died before this merger, however, and his lands were sold to C.W. Baker of Scottsburg (1863) [Mss2.G618].

P.B. Marple recruited a band of forty men in the Umpqua Valley to blaze a trail to Coos Bay, it being their avowed intention to colonize that region. The group formed themselves into the Coos Bay Company, each paying $250 for membership (1853). Nineteen made the first trip. There they were discovered by William G. Hill and his companions, who had come independently to Coos Bay from Winchester, Douglas County, on a trip chronicled in Hill’s "A Trip to Coos Bay in 1853" [Mss2.H648].

James M. Arrington (1814-1891) came overland to Oregon in 1851. He early became a farmer in Happy Valley, Douglas County, and was also Indian Agent at Looking Glass (1853-55). Arrington fought in the Rogue Valley Indian uprisings (1854-55) and farmed until 1893. He was involved in the surveying and construction of wagon (1871-72) and rail (1881-82) roads to Coos Bay [Mss2.A775].

Benjamin Franklin Dowell settled in Jacksonville, Jackson County (1860) after working as a drover between Jacksonville and the Siskiyou mining camps for at least five years. Dowell had fought in the Rogue Valley Indian uprisings (1854-55), and, after becoming an attorney (ca. 1860), he petitioned the U.S. government (1867) for retroactive soldier's pay on behalf of all whites involved in this action. Dowell published the Oregon Sentinel from Jacksonville for over fourteen years (1864-1878). He was elected Judge in District 1 (1866) and was also active in fostering the establishment of the Ashland Woolen Mill (1867-1900). He later moved to Portland where he died in about 1890 [Mss2.D746].

Little is known of B.J. Drew save that, like B.F. Dowell, he followed the gold strikes that led to settlement of the Siskiyou mountains and the Rogue Valley. Drew's day book reveals him to have been a dealer in general merchandise and liquor first in Yreka (1852), then in Jacksonville (1853). The day book contains many entries for B.F. Dowell, Abel George, one of the first Jackson County Commissioners and a leader in the Rogue Valley Indian War, and Jesse Robinson, operator of the Robinson House in Jacksonville [Mss2.D776].

An association of Presbyterian and Congregational ministers established Tualatin Academy as the first secondary school in the Willamette Valley (1849). The institution became known as Pacific University when College courses were added in 1854. The town of Forest Grove grew up around the college. In this collection are items relating to the incorporation of the Academy as a college (1854) and to Pacific University's acquisition of lands (1860) [Mss2.P117].

Francis Good came to Oregon in 1853. After working as a blacksmith at Sterling, Jackson County, for two years (1857-58), evidence in Good's ledger suggests that he settled in Roseburg, where he continued blacksmithing until 1862, when he established the Cleveland Flour and Saw Mill at the convergence of the north and south forks of the Umpqua. Good served as first Postmaster of the settlement that grew up around his mill [Mss2.G646].

Phillip Johnson was an Astoria, Clatsop County, merchant from 1853. In 1865 he mortgaged two city lots there to Joel Wilson Munson (1818-1899), a carpenter who had lived in Astoria since 1852 and was active in the construction of many of
Astoria’s earliest buildings. Munson also farmed oysters for a few years and operated Cape Hancock lighthouse (1865-77) [Mss2.J68].

Jabez B. Knapp came to Portland in 1852. There he began shipping produce to San Francisco with W.C. Hull (1857). When Hull retired, Knapp was joined by his cousin, M.S. Burrell (1860), and the two added farm implements and leather to their product line, eventually dropping produce altogether. The firm of Knapp & Burrell grew until, by the end of the 19th century, it had offices in most Oregon and Washington cities [Mss2.K67].

Calvin Brookings West (1814-) came overland to Oregon in 1853. A Baptist preacher and teacher, West settled in the Roseburg area, where he acquired land and raised a family. His writings on Oregon pioneer life are characteristically detailed and insightful [Mss2.W516].

Binger Hermann (1843-1926) came to Oregon in 1859. There he taught school (1859-64), studied law (1864-65) and was elected to the Oregon legislature and State Senate from Douglas County (1866-70). Hermann served as U.S. Land Agent for the Roseburg area (1871-74), then practised law (1874-1884) before serving in the U.S. House of Representatives (1884-1892). He later developed the town of Myrtle Point and operated Coquille City Sawmills. Hermann is represented here by a letter replying to the attorney of constituents, W.R. Wells and Joseph Roberts, regarding an Indian depredation claim (1892) [Mss2.H552].

Lucius Chandler Rice (1829-1899?) came to Oregon from California, where he had worked as for eight years as a drover (1861). Rice settled in Linn County where he farmed, operated a sash and door factory and was ultimately elected Sheriff and Tax Collector (1874-1878) [Mss2.B887].

-MS 2 A 646 APPERSON, J T Correspondence, 1873. Grandmaster, I.O.O.F. Grand Lodge of Oregon. Letters from Grand Secretary C.N. Terry relating to Odd Fellows’ activities and accounts. 2 Items.

-Mss2.A775: ARRINGTON FAMILY PAPERS, 1851-1893 [n.b.—all correspondence is 1 pg. typescript copy unless otherwise indicated]

1) James M. Arrington’s Overland journal (1851) [35 pp. transcript; 2nd copy, 12 pp. typescript]

2) “Unsigned statement by James M. Arrington” (n.d.) [description of building road to Coos Bay; 3 pp. transcript]

3) “From the Arrington account book” (Dec. 1851-Aug. 1854; Dec. 1865-Jul. 1873) [56 pp. transcript]

4) “Arrington’s orders on company & payroll” (1871) [1 pg. transcript]

5) ’J.M. Arrington---Bot of Flint & Morgan” (1871) [dry goods & food supplies] [4 pp. typescript copy]

6) S. Hamilton to JMA (7-14-71) [re Coos Bay Wagon Road route;2 pp. typescript copy]

7) Do. (8-3-71)

8) A. Rose & S. Hamilton to JMA (9-23-71) [2 pp. typescript copy]
9) "Kitty Ann," Roseburg to “Dear Sister” (7-24-72)

10) Laura Arrington, Civil Bend to “Dear Cousin Martha” (10-19-75) [2 pp. typescript copy]

11) L.F. Mosher, Scty. Roseburg & Port Orford RR to JMA (8-15-77)

12) James M. Arrington, Jr. “Ma Belle Marie” (1878) [song text; 2 pp. typescript copy]

13) Kitty Rose (?), Randolph to “Dear Mother & all the others” (8-21-79) [2 pp. typescript copy]

14) H.G. Hurlburt, Chief Engineer, Umpqua & Coos Bay RR to Binger Herman, President (n.d.; ca 1-80) [2 pp. typescript copy]

15) S. Hamilton, Roseburg to JMA (4-14-80)

16) "Kitty Rose," Randolph [Coos County] to “My dear granpa” [JMA] (5-2-81)

17) W.I. Friedlander, Scty. Coos Bay & Roseburg RR to JMA (6-20-81)

18) L. Marksole, S. Marks & Co., Roseburg to JMA (1-6-82)

19) Do. (1-6-82)

20) JMA, Roseburg to W.I. Friedlander (3-5-82) [2 pp. typescript copy]

21) "Allen," Marshfield to “Dear Father” (11-18-82)

22) JMA, Jr., Coos City to JMA (1-15-83)

23) "Allen," Marshfield to “Dear Father” (3-1-83)

24) Allen," Marshfield to “Dear Father” (4-2-83)
25) S. Hamilton to JMA (4-4-83)

26) "Jim," Coos City to JMA (6-13-83)

27) "Allen," Marshfield to JMA (6-19-83)

28) S. Hamilton, Roseburg to JMA (11-13-83) [2 pp. typescript copy]

29) "Allen," Marshfield to "Dear Mother" (2-10-84) [2 pp. typescript copy]

30) Rose Arrington, Marshfield to "Dear Mother" (2-10-84) [2 pp. typescript copy]

31) Rose Arrington, Marshfield [now Coos Bay] to "My Dear Mother" (2-29-84) [3 pp. typescript copy]

32) Rose Arrington, Marshfield to "My Dear Mother" (3-18-84) [2 pp. typescript copy]

33) "Jim," North Bend [Coos County] to "Dr Mother" (10-10-85) [2 pp. typescript copy]

34) Allen Arrington, Marshfield to "Dear Mother" (10-11-85)

35) "Allen A.,” Marshfield to "Dear Mother" (10-26-85)

36) "Jim," North Bend to "My Dear Mother" (11-12-85)

37) "Allen," Marshfield to "Dear Mother & all" (11-12-85) [2 pp. typescript copy]

38) Obituary & related materials on Aaron Arrington (n.d.; ca. 11-85) [3 pp. typescript copy]

39) "Allen," Phoenix, Arizona Terr. to "Dear Mother & all" (12-12-85)

40) Rose Arrington, Marshfield to "My Dear Mother" (12-27-85) [2 pp. typescript copy]

41) "Allen," San Diego to "Dear Sister" (2-11-86)
42) “Allen,” San Diego to “Dear Mother” (2-11-86)

43) E.B. Watson, Atty., Portland to S. Hamilton (3-30-86)

44) S. Hamilton to JMA (4-2-86)

45) Do. (12-15-86)

46) Will C. Walls, St. Louis MO to “Uncle Jim & Family” (12-16-86)

47) S. Hamilton to JMA (2-9-87)

48) Do. (2-10-87) [2 pp. typescript copy]

49) M.A. Walls, St. Louis MO to “Dear Aunt Kittie & family” (5-26-89) [2 pp. typescript copy]

50) K.A. Arrington contract for JMA headstone w/ E.W. Atchison, Roseburg (5-12-93)

51) S. Hamilton to William Glover, Supt. Coos Bay Wagon Road (n.d.)

52) Thomas P. Sheridan to JMA (Sep., no year) [typescript copy]

53) “Mary Rose,” Randolph [Coos County] to “Dear Mother” (Dec. 8, no yr.) [2 pp. typescript copy]

54) “Mary Rose,” Randolph to “Dear Father” (Sep. 2, no yr. [2 pp. typescript copy]

55) Poem in “Charlie’s writing”

56) Unidentified accounts (n.d.) [1 pg. typescript copy]


1) HFC, Portland to Mrs. Orr (2-1-16)

2) "Will," Portland to "My dear Mother" (10-4, no yr.)

3) "Will," Vancouver B.C. to "My dear Mother" (Oct. 18, same yr. as preceding)

4) "Carolyn" to "Dear Aunt Hana" (n.d.)

5) "Alfred," Peking, China to Mr. & Mrs. James Irving Crabbe (1-27-21)

-Mss2.C899: MEDOREM CRAWFORD BUSINESS LEDGERS, 1845-1865

1) Ledger of freighting business, 1845-1846

2) Internal revenue collection ledger, 1864-1865

-Mss2.D746: BENJAMIN FRANKLIN DOWELL PAPERS, 1855-1885

1) Dowell's Diary (1855) [incl. account of Indian troubles in Rogue Valley [14 pp. typescript copy]

2) Legal complaint: Jacob A. Brunner, plaintiff; B.F. Dowell, atty. (1861)

3) W.W. Upton to BFD (1885)

-Mss2.D776: B.J. DREW DAY BOOK, 1852-1853 [incl. accounts for stores in Yreka, Calif. (1852) and Jacksonville (1853); 78 pp. ledger]

-MS 2 E 43 ELKHORN MOUNTAIN GOLD MINING COMPANY, PORTLAND, OREGON Stock certificates, 1892. Ms. (on printed form) Issued to L.W. Nelson, trustee.

Mss2.G162: GARDINER, OREGON Handwritten article of living and working conditions of Gardiner, Oregon from 1879-1899. [4 pp]
-Mss.G618: WILLIAM GOLDEN UMPQUA COUNTY LAND PAPERS, 1858-1863

1) Deed transferring title of William Golden land purchase to C.W. Baker (4-7-63)

2) U.S. General Land Office certificate affirming William Golden homestead [1851] (2-24-68)

-Mss.G646: FRANCIS M. GOOD LEDGER, 1857-1862 [incl. work done in Sterling (1857-58) and Roseburg; about 50 pp.; many missing or torn]

-Mss.H552: CONGRESSMAN BINGER HERMANN LETTER (August 14, 1892)

-Mss.H648: WILLIAM G. HILL. “TRIP TO COOS BAY IN 1853” [3 pp. typescript copy]

-Mss.J68: PHILLIP JOHNSON ASTORIA MORTGAGE CONVEYANCE, 1865 [1 pg. mortgage conveyance to J.W. Munson, 1-1-65]

  Mss.K52: KINNEY, ALFRED COLEMAN Typescript of biography by Fred Lockley on Kinney family, including overland travel and life in McMinnville, Oregon. [11 pp]

-Mss.K67: KNAPP & BURRELL CO. BUSINESS LETTER, 1866 [letter to a Mr. S. Bretscher of San Francisco, 3-28-66]

-Mss.O66: OREGON FAMILY. LETTER, 1959 [“Annie & Ray” of Waldport discuss family & community affairs]

-Mss.P117: PACIFIC UNIVERSITY BUSINESS RECORDS, 1854-1861

1) Bill of Incorporation of Pacific University (1854)

2) Mortgage Deed for Pacific University lands (1860)

3) Certification of Deed for Pacific University lands (1861)


1) Nathaniel Wyeth to Charles Wyeth (7-14-32)
2) Jacob Wyeth to Charles Wyeth (6-27-34)

3) John K. Townsend, Ft. Vancouver to Lydia A. Sharpless (12-36)

4) Joseph Richardson, Baldwin Me. to Elkanah & Mary Walker (3-19-38)


1) Reginald R. & Grace D. Stuart. "Calvin B. West of the Umpqua" (n.d.) [6 pp. typescript intro to longer essay]

2) [Reginald R. & Grace D. Stuart.] "C.B. West & his Oregon experiences" (n.d.) [describes CBW background in Ohio; incl. excerpts from CBW letters, all predating overland trek; 48 pp. typescript]

3) "Calvin B. West" [recounts the genesis of the Stuart's essay on West; 4 pp. ms.]

4) "The First Diary" (1853) [West recounts overland trek & first days in Oregon; 22 p., typescript w/ notes in ink]

5) CBW, St. Louis to "My very dear Wife" (4-19-53) [typescript copy]

6) ["Letter no. 14"] CBW, Steamboat Saranak to "My dear Brother" (4-23-53) [2 pp. typescript copy]

7) [CBW to family, betw. St. Louis & St. Joseph; fragment; 2 pp. typescript copy]

8) CBW, St. Joseph to "My dear Brother" (4-29-53)

9) CBW, Platte River to "My very dear daughter, Anna" (5-22-53) [3 pp. typescript copy]

10) CBW, Ft. Laramie to "My dear Lizy" (5-31-53)

11) CBW to "My dear little boys, Davy & Cally" (5-24-53)

12) CBW to "My dearest Anna" (6-14-53)

13) CBW, Yoncalla, Ore. to "My very dear Wife" (9-6-53) [2 pp. typescript copy]
14) CBW, Winchester, Ore. to “My dear lovely Anna”

15) [“Letter no. 1”] E.L. West, Winchester, Ore. to “My dear sister Minerva” (6-23-57) [3 pp. typescript copy]

16) [“Letter no. 12”] E.L. West to “My dear sister Minerva” (4-4-58)

17) Lists of early Baptist missionaries to Oregon from back of diary [3 pp. typescript]

18) Expense accounts for household items from back of diary [2 pp. typescript]

-Mss2.W582: WHITE & JACOBS CO. LEDGER, 1897-1906 [155 pp.; contains general store records (1897-98) and City Treasurer records kept by Lee L. Jacobs (1906)]

-Mss2.W822: WITHER, HILDEGARDE P. LETTER, n.d. [to M.J. Frey of The Oregonian protesting renaming of Marquam Hill Road, Multnomah Falls]

-Mss2.W899: HENRY W. WOODWARD PAPERS, 1843-1855

1) Seaman’s Indenture Papers, Henry Woodward (1843)

2) Certificate of membership in Indian War Veterans of North Pacific Coast

3) Reminiscence of Oregon pioneer life [6 pp. ms. copy; 2nd typescript copy]