

## THE WHITMAN MONUMENT.

---

The following statement regarding the deficiency on the Whitman monument, and the present effort to pay it, has been sent to all the Congregational churches in the State of Washington. It is hoped that those who love the history of the State and who are interested in the achievements, as well as the sufferings of the pioneers, will lend a hand toward this desirable result:

Inspired by a most pathetic appeal made by one of four Nez Perce Indians who had been sent across the western half of the continent to St. Louis to learn of the white man's God and the book of heaven, Dr. Marcus Whitman and Rev. H. H. Spaulding, with their wives, accompanied by a single man by the name of Wm. H. Gray, came in 1836 from the Atlantic Coast to what was then known as Oregon to teach the Indians the way of life.

Two years later a second delegation, consisting of Rev. Cushing Eells, Rev. Elkanah Walker and Rev. A. B. Smith, with their wives, also accompanied by Wm. H. Gray and his wife, who had gone East the previous year and married, made the same journey for the same purpose. Three mission stations were established, one at Walla Walla, occupied by Dr. Whitman and Mr. Gray; one among the Nez Perce Indians, where Mr. Spaulding and Mr. Smith labored, and the third among the Spokane Indians, where Messrs. Walker and Eells were located. By the year 1842 two families had dropped out. Mr. Smith, on account of ill health of himself or wife, returned East, and Mr. Gray moved to the Willamette Valley, where he settled. The other four families continued to labor faithfully, earnestly, and to a certain extent successfully for the good of the Indians, until the 29th of November, 1847, when Dr. Whitman and wife and a dozen others were ruthlessly murdered by the Cayuse Indians, among whom they were living.

Succeeding hostilities made it unsafe for the other missionaries to remain longer in the country, the mission was broken up, and the work abandoned. For twelve years it was considered unsafe for Americans to live east of the Cascade Mountains.

Of the results of their work, I would say in passing, that twenty-five years after they left their fields there were found to be five hundred Christian Indians living consistent and devoted lives, and a few years later a Bible school was established among the Nez Perce Indians from which scores of young men have been sent out to preach to their own people and other surrounding tribes.

In the year 1859 Rev. Cushing Eells conceived the idea of establishing a Christian school as a monument to the memory of the first Christian martyrs of the Northwest Coast. This has culminated in what is now Whitman College.

A few years later Wm. H. Gray conceived the idea of having a monument of granite erected to mark the spot where they fell.

During the seventies he collected various sums of money for this purpose, which were deposited in one of the banks in Portland. Some time in the eighties he died, leaving this object of his life only partially completed.

Early in the year 1897 a meeting was held in the First Presbyterian Church of Portland, Oregon, to take steps to hold a suitable celebration at the half century mark of their death, and also to have erected the monument contemplated by Mr. Gray. A joint committee was appointed, of three in Portland and three in Walla Walla, and the work of securing a title to the land, of purchasing the stone, and arranging for the celebration was apportioned among the several members of the committee. The land was secured, a contract for the stone was made, it was delivered and set up, and the services were held. The contract price for the stone work was \$2,250. What Mr. Gray had collected, with accrued interest, then amounted to about \$800; other collections were made, current expenses were met, but only enough was secured to make a payment of \$1,150 on the contract for the stone work, leaving a balance of \$1,100 still due.

Shortly after this, the chairman of the committee who made the contract, and who seems to have been its financier, died, leaving the \$1,100 still unpaid. The work of raising the money to pay this deficiency languished, and then died also.

The contract was so made that there could be no lien on the monument, the claim has been outlawed, and there is no legal obligation on the part of any one to pay this sum, but for ten years now this deficiency has existed, a debt of honor, but from whom?

A year ago, when this association met in Walla Walla, an excursion was taken to the grounds, suitable exercises were held, and the fact of the aforementioned deficiency became generally known and was freely discussed. The suggestion was made that the association invite the Presbyterians to unite with them in an effort to raise the money to wipe off this indebtedness. For what seemed good and sufficient reasons, however, it was thought better that the Presbyterians take the initiative, consequently no action was taken. I would here say by way of explanation, that at the time the mission existed it was supported by the American Board, which then comprised the Congregational, Presbyterian and Dutch Reformed denominations. Dr. Whitman being a Presbyterian, the obligation to do honor to the sainted dead was mutual.

A few weeks later the Presbyterian Synod met in Walla Walla, at which time an informal meeting of the friends of the measure from both denominations was held, at which time a committee was appointed, composed of Rev. James C. Reid, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Walla Walla, chairman; Rev. Austin Rice, pastor of the First Congregation Church of Walla Walla, and President S. B. L. Penrose of Whitman College. To this committee the name of Edwin Eells of Tacoma was subsequently added.

This committee has had several meetings and conferences, the last being in Seattle last month, at which Dr. Matthews, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Seattle, was present. It was agreed to invite other leading and influential men in the principal cities of the State to assist, and also to refer the matter to the State organizations of the two denominations at their annual meeting this year.

At a later conference of the Executive Committee at Walla Walla, it was agreed to ask each denomination to try to raise the minimum sum of \$550.00 and to have this done before the Sixteenth Anniversary of the massacre, which will be next November, and then to hold commemorative exercises with the monument free from debt.

Messrs. Rice and Eells are here to present this matter to the association, and ask for endorsement and such other action as shall seem to them wise and best. Edwin Eells, of 1020 North J Street, Tacoma, has been selected as the treasurer of the committee, to whom any moneys may be sent to apply on this indebtedness.

We respectfully submit this matter to your careful consideration.

AUSTIN RICE,  
EDWIN EELLS,  
Committee.

The Congregational Association, which met at Bellingham, September 17 to 19, unanimously adopted the following resolution by a rising vote:

"We heartily commend the holding of an appropriate commemoration of the sixtieth anniversary of the Whitman Massacre at the scene of this event in our heroic past, on November 29 next.

"We believe this should have a more than local observance, and therefore recommend that Sunday, October 27, be observed in every Congregational Church in the State as Whitman Day, and that on that day every church in the State shall share in the privilege of clearing off the indebtedness remaining on the noble monument which marks this hallowed spot, and that every church be represented at this anniversary observance."

The following letter has been sent to all the Presbyterian churches in the State of Washington:

Walla Walla, Washington, Oct. 16, 1907.

Dear Sir and Brother:

At the recent meeting of the Synod of Washington, in the City of Tacoma, October 3-5, it was ordered that, in view of the fact that Marcus Whitman was a ruling elder in the Presbyterian Church, and as such was sent as a missionary to the Indians of the Northwest, and that there is now an indebtedness of \$1,100.00 on the monument erected to his memory about ten

years since; and in view of the further fact that the Congregational Association of the State of Washington has taken steps to raise one-half of the said indebtedness before the sixtieth anniversary of the massacre, November 29, 1907, the churches within the bounds of the said synod be requested to take an offering on Sabbath, October 27, or as soon thereafter as possible, to be applied toward liquidating the remainder of the said indebtedness. By further order of the synod, the undersigned was appointed to bring this matter before all of the ministers in charge of congregations within the bounds of the said synod.

To aid you in intelligently presenting the cause to your people, I enclose herewith a brief historical resume, which I believe to be in the main authentic.

In order to encourage your people in this matter and, at the same time, to awaken a more general interest in the work accomplished by Marcus Whitman, Spaulding and their associates, it has been arranged to send to each congregation taking an offering, however great or small, a 14 x 16 photo of the statue of Marcus Whitman, which stands in front of the Witherspoon Building, our general office building in Philadelphia; this will be a valuable acquisition to your collection of missionary exhibits and is large enough to be framed and hang in your church parlors or lecture-room.

Please forward all offerings, as soon as possible after taking same, to the treasurer, Mr. Edwin Eells, Tacoma, Washington, 1020 North J Street. Also please notify the undersigned as to the amount sent to Mr. Eells, that he may be able to know just where we stand.

While our action in this matter is not prompted by any sense of legal obligation, let us feel that our interest in this the first Presbyterian martyr of this great Northwest is such that we should not allow his memory to be longer clouded by this unfortunate indebtedness. If every congregation to which this obligation is presented will only do **something** we will be enabled ere the ides of November rolls round to wipe out the whole of this debt and to plan for a celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of the massacre of Marcus Whitman free from all embarrassment.

Praying that the Lord may bless you in the presentation of this cause to your people and them in making a generous offering that would be honoring to Him, I am, most sincerely,

Yours in His name,

JAMES C. REID.

We hope the Oregon churches of both denominations will likewise respond to this appeal and that the entire debt will surely be removed from the Whitman monument before the arrival of the sixtieth anniversary of his tragic death.

EDWIN EELLS.