

SEATTLE'S FIRST NEED OF A POST OFFICE

I have just unearthed a letter that ought to interest the people of Seattle. It is probably well known that the little colony at Alki Point first took upon itself the name of New York. The schooner *Exact* which landed the colony there took D. R. Bigelow and others on to Olympia. A few weeks later Mr. Bigelow wrote the letter I have just found. It is addressed to the Delegate to Congress from Oregon Territory. Mr. Bigelow was an eloquent man and well educated, a graduate of Union College and of Harvard Law School. On July 4, 1852, he delivered the oration at Olympia. So highly esteemed was that oration that it was published in full in the *Columbian's* first issue on September 11, 1852. With James K. Kelly and Reuben P. Boise, Mr. Bigelow was made a member of the Code Commission of Oregon Territory. As a youth, I looked up to Mr. Bigelow and wondered why he did not practice his profession. I was repeatedly told that he had become a Christian early in 1853 and promptly concluded that he could not continue the practice of law and live up to his conception of what the life of a Christian ought to be. With this introduction I now append the old letter mentioed above.

GEORGE H. HIMES.

Olympia, Puget Sound, O. T.

Dec. 21st, 1851.

Hon. Joseph Lane,
Sir,

There is great anxiety in Oregon that something should be done to protect immigrants crossing the plains against the Indians. The Indians have killed several this year, and stolen much stock. I crossed this season. The Pawnees were very insolent and thievish, and as I have been informed robbed some of the late trains, so that they were compelled to return to the States. But the Snakes have been the worst, they have killed women and children and men also, when they had opportunity, and had several battles with whole trains. Many here that have friends in the States wishing to come here have been compelled to write them that they do not consider it safe for them to cross the plains on account of Indians, and many more will be compelled to write the same unless government does something to protect immigrants. Some

troops at Fort Hall and Boise would do much good, as it is this side of Fort Hall that most of the disturbance has taken place. Twelve hundred wagons came into Oregon this season. This part of the country has received a fair portion of this year's immigration, and is improving fast. There is great need of more Post Offices along the Sound, some have to come 60 miles to this office, this being the only one on the Sound, and many neglect to take papers on account of being so far from an office. There ought to be an Office as low down as New York, that place is fifty miles below this, at the mouth of the Dewamps river, and that part of the country is settling fast. It would be a great benefit to this section if the mail was brought round by a steamer. If you could get that done for us you would do us much good. The mail is now brought across by land, and is frequently wet by high water, so as to damage it materially.

Your Obed Servt,

D. R. BIGELOW