

Did Dr. M. Whitman Save Oregon?

AS this subject has been somewhat widely discussed, and entirely opposite opinions reached by different individuals, the writer has gathered all the evidence in regard to the subject that he has been able to obtain, and herewith gives it. The witnesses are eleven in number, and consist mainly of those who were most intimate with Dr. Whitman. Much of this evidence is dated within a few years, because the writer has only become thoroughly interested in the subject since 1879.

(1.) WILLIAM GEIGER, JR., M. D.

The writer has known Dr. Geiger for thirty-four years. About 1880 he learned through Rev. G. H. Atkinson, D. D., that Dr. Geiger knew considerable on the subject, and in 1881, while on a visit to Forest Grove, he had a conversation with Dr. Geiger and took down the most of the following statement. Thinking, however, that it would be best to have the doctor's own signature to it, in 1883 he obtained it as follows:

FOREST GROVE, Oregon, June 5, 1883.

REV. M. EELLS:

Sir—In answer to your inquiries about Dr. M. Whitman I will say that I came to this country in 1839, and was at Dr. Whitman's request in charge of his station in 1842-3, while he went East, and remained there after his return about three weeks, and had many conversations with him on the object of his going, after his return. I was there again in 1845 and 1846.

His main object in going East was to save the country to the United States, as he believed there was great danger of its falling into the hands of England. Incidentally he intended to obtain more missionary help, and for this object I sent provisions to Fort Hall for them in 1843. The immigration of 1842, especially Mr. A. L. Lovejoy, brought word that there was danger that the English would obtain Oregon, hence Dr. Whitman went East. When he reached Missouri he heard that the danger was very great of losing this country, hence he hurried on without taking time to get a clean shirt or pair of pants. Either himself or brother had been a classmate of the secretary of war, and Dr. Whitman went to him and through him obtained an intro-

167783