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"THE PIONEER"

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ADDRESS DELIVERED BY JOSEPH N. TEAL AT
EUGENE, OREGON, MAY 22, 1919, ON THE
OCCASION OF THE UNVEILING OF
THE PIONEER

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen :

More than two years have passed since I wrote Judge Robert S. Bean, President of the Board of Regents, of my desire to erect a memorial to the Oregon pioneers and to have it placed on the grounds of the University of Oregon. The letter I then wrote expresses my sentiments and thought so accurately that I can do no better than read it to you today. It is as follows :

“It has long been my earnest desire to express my admiration and respect for the Oregon pioneer. Having given the subject much serious thought, I am now addressing you for the purpose of laying before you and the Board of Regents of the University the plan I have formulated, and to obtain your consent and approval for the carrying out of my idea.

The pioneer represents all that is noblest and best in our history. The men and women who saved the west for this country were animated by the highest motives. They made untold sacrifices and endured hardships of every kind in order that their children might enjoy the fruits of their labor. Their courage, foresight, endurance and industry should ever be an inspiration to the youth of the country.

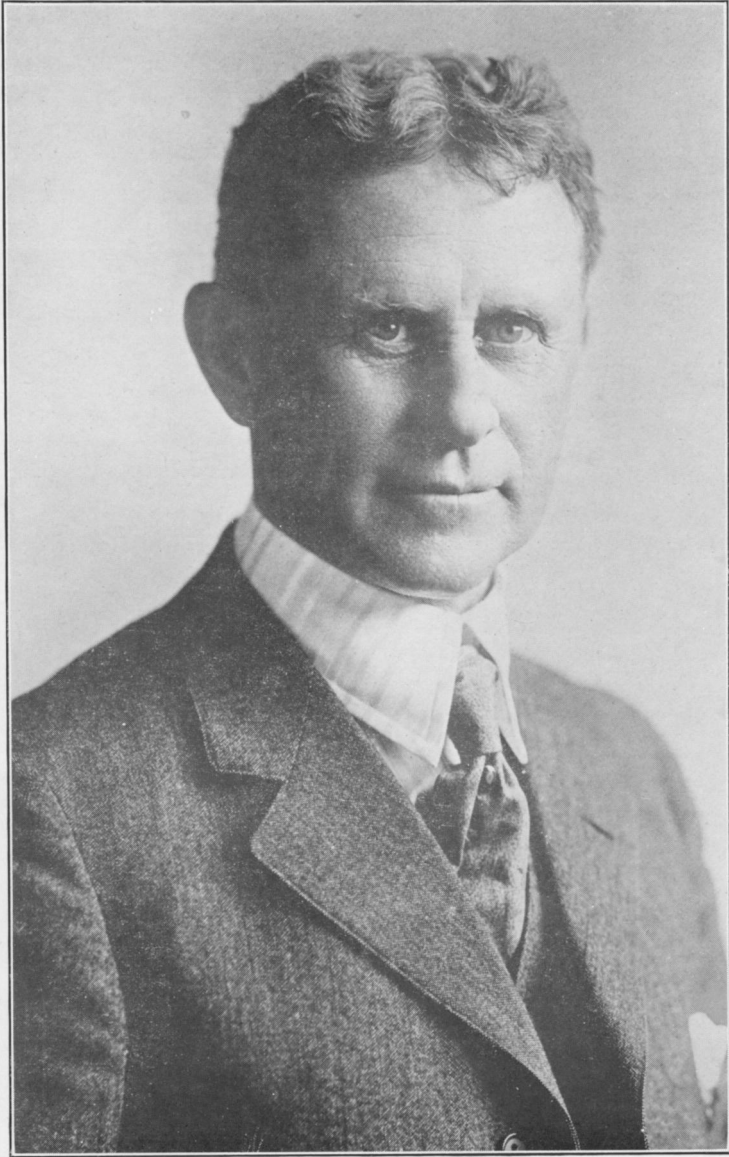
I therefore propose to erect a memorial, which it seems to me should stand on the campus of our great institution of learning, the University of Oregon, where for years to come the rising generation of Oregon will have before them a reminder of those to whom they owe every opportunity they enjoy.

Accordingly I have commissioned Mr. A. Phimister Proctor, the distinguished American sculptor, to model a statue typifying the real pioneer of the West. It is my sincere desire and hope that, as the genius of Saint Gaudens has typified in imperishable bronze The Puritan, the genius of Proctor will in like degree typify The Pioneer. Should my plan meet with the approval of yourself and the Board of Regents of the University, I would request that at the proper time and in concurrence with Mr. Proctor, a place be designated on the University grounds upon which the monument may be erected."

This day evidences the fulfillment of this desire, and we have gathered together in honor of those to perpetuate whose memory this statue was designed. While it is a matter of greater satisfaction to me than I can express to have the opportunity of testifying in this way to my affection for the pioneers of Oregon, it is the genius of the artist which makes it possible to express in enduring bronze not only the sentiment, but the man. I wish to express not only my sincere admiration for Mr. Proctor's genius, but the thankfulness I feel for his unselfish devotion to the task and for the zeal and spirit which from the inception of the idea to this dedication have animated his work. The sculptor, not only an artist of rare genius, but a man of nature, of the mountains and plains, knowing at first hand the pioneer and his life, his real worth and what he endured and sought, has created a type true to life—the *real pioneer* as we have known him.

This statue is erected and dedicated to the memory of all Oregon pioneers. It is in no sense personal or individual and it is my earnest wish and hope that this fact may ever be kept in mind.

The reasons for selecting the University of Oregon as the

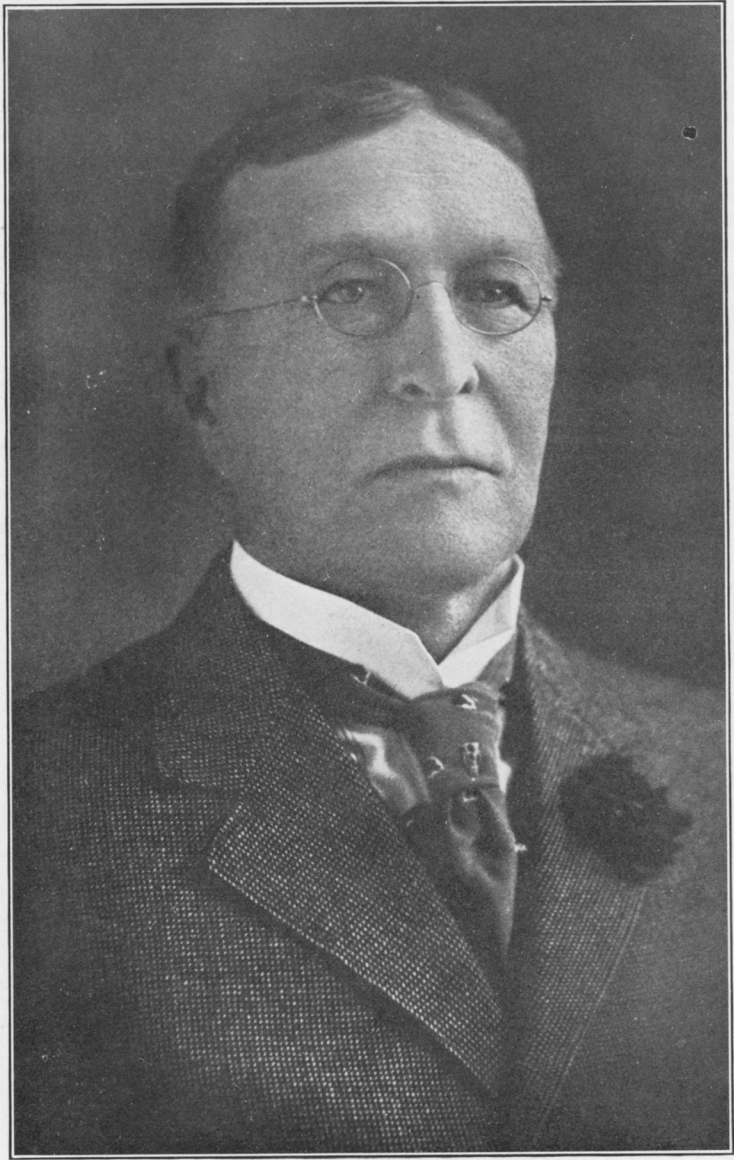


A. PHIMISTER PROCTOR

home of this memorial are many. It is sufficient to say that here the Willamette and Mackenzie Rivers join their waters into one grand channel and create this beautiful valley, the paradise to which the pioneer struggled over great mountains and across desert plains, to which he first came in numbers, and in which he first made his home. Here, too, the state which he created has founded its great institution to train its young men and women. No more fitting place than the campus of the University of Oregon could be found for the memorial. Here amid these beautiful surroundings, in this institution of learning, acting as an inspiration to Oregon's young manhood and womanhood, this pioneer in bronze will find a hospitable home in the land he loved so well. I am happy in the thought that I have had the opportunity thus to show my love and admiration for those whose life was largely spent in a work whose greatness and value will be better understood when viewed down the perspective of time. The greatest honor I have is in honoring them. Joaquin Miller thus painted the pioneers:

“I only know that when that land
Lay thick with peril, and lay far
It seemed as some sea-fallen star,
The weak men never reached a hand
Or sought us out that primal day,
And cowards did not come that way.”

Mr. President, my share in this very satisfactory enterprise is ended; with this memorial, there goes every good wish for this University, coupled with the sincere hope that those who seek guidance and aid within its classic walls will never lose sight of what they owe the pioneer.



JOSEPH N. TEAL