

August 8, 1951

Mrs. Edna M. Howard
President, Columbia Society
Children of the American Revolution
3367 N.E. Holladay St.
Portland 13, Oregon

Dear Mrs. Howard:

I received your letter of July 24th, and I was exceedingly interested in the article you enclosed from the Children of the American Revolution National Magazine telling about the ceremony that was held in 1926 by the Columbia Society in connection with the placing of a marker on the site of the first public school in Oregon.

I, of course, knew that the property was presently owned by Aaron Frank, or at least by the Meier & Frank Corporation, and through accounts in the paper, I had learned, as others had, that they proposed to raze the hotel building and build another structure in its place on that same site. When I received your letter, I tried on several occasions to contact Mr. Frank by telephone and wasn't successful in catching him until yesterday. I discussed with him the text of your letter and the desire of the Columbia Society of the Children of the American Revolution to regain the marker and to then have it replaced on this site. Mr. Frank told me that he would be very happy to have the Columbia Society of the Children of the American Revolution take the marker and keep it safely and then, when a new structure is built there, he will see that it is placed in a suitable spot in the new structure on that same site.

I gathered from my conversation with Mr. Frank that probably you had also talked to him and had this same information but, in any event, apparently the thing for you to do is to make arrangements direct with Mr. Frank to procure the marker if you haven't already done so, and then to keep it in a safe place until they are ready to build a new structure. Mr. Frank has assured me that when they get to the point of building a new structure, he will see that the marker is put in a suitable place.

Very sincerely,

M A Y O R

DML.b



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HIST. 1st SCH Bldg

3367 N.E. Holladay St.,
Portland 13, Oregon,
July 24, 1951.

OREGON Honorable Dorothy McCullough Lee,
Mayor, City of Portland,
City Hall,
Portland 4, Oregon.

RECEIVED
AUG 1 1 1951
MAYOR'S OFFICE

Dear Mrs. Lee;

I sincerely thank you for your letter concerning the marker on the site of the first public school in Portland, placed in the courtyard of the Portland Hotel in 1926 by members of Columbia Society, Children of the American Revolution. I am pleased with your interest and that you have personally talked with Mr. Frank about replacing the marker as it is the hope of this organization to have it on the block always except during any reconstruction.

Mr. Frank replied immediately giving the children permission to remove the marker and he asked that he be informed when this is done and the place where it will be preserved so that he may, when the permanent structure is erected, make necessary arrangements for it to be replaced on the site and joins the society in its interest in preserving the landmarks of our fine city.

Arrangements have been made to remove the bronze tablet on Wednesday, August 15th at 11 o'clock and place it in the museum at the Oregon Historical Society in the Civic Auditorium building until it will again be placed on the site.

I made search and find that the first record of purchase of the property was the Donation Land Claim of Daniel H. Lownsdale in 1852 but the story about Elijah Hill reads "before 1849" and probably 1828 is an error and should be 1848 in the article that I copied and sent to you.

Perhaps you would enjoy the article in the Daily Oregonian dated February 19, 1883, entitled "The Central School Block" which includes a paragraph "Record of the school board - April 23, 1856." I also found that in 1857 that block 179 was partially covered with timber.

Another item of interest at the Oregon Historical Society in Scrapbook 108, page 85, about the \$30,000 addition to the school in 1873 reads, "two feet longer and two feet wider than any other public school building in the United States."

The marking of historic places is a splendid project for young people. May I express appreciation of your interest that they may have the privilege and experience of caring for the marking of the first public school for Oregon pioneer children. Hoping the arrangements that have been made will meet with your approval.

Very sincerely,

Mrs. Edna M. Howard,
Columbia Society,
Children of the American Revolution.

Use
You will recall that ~~to go~~
suggested a letter you know who
to Mrs. Howard - do you
it was mailed out - before
think she mailed this one. before
or after receiving ours? Probably
a phone call - saying we are happy
everything is working out so nicely -
+ assuming her of my interest etc -
would end this? -
DMF

TR 2670

Phoned Mrs
Howard + explained
mayor approval etc.



OREGON

RECEIVED
JUL 25 1951
MAYOR'S OFFICE

3367 N.E. Holladay St.,
Portland 13, Oregon,
July 24, 1951.

Honorable Dorothy McCullough Lee,
Mayor of City of Portland,
City Hall,
Portland 4, Oregon.

Dear Mrs. Lee;

The razing of the Portland Hotel has brought concern to the members of Children of the American Revolution about the marker placed in the courtyard by Columbia Society in 1926 to mark the site of the first public school in Oregon.

I am enclosing a copy of an article from the Children of the American Revolution National Magazine giving detail of the ceremony. You might also be interested in newspaper pictures and clippings in Columbia Society and the Oregon State Society scrapbooks which we will be happy to bring to you.

I have been advised, as president of Columbia Society, to ask Mr. Aaron Frank that the children have the privilege of removing and replacing the original marker and a place be provided for it on the block.

Since the marker was presented to the City of Portland, accepted by Mayor Baker, we will await your expression of preference.

Very truly yours,

Edna M. Howard

Mrs. Edna M. Howard,
President, Columbia Society,
Children of the American Revolution.

Copied from the National Magazine of the Children of the American Revolution.

IMPRESSIVE CEREMONY

A bronze tablet, placed in the court yard of the Portland Hotel, Portland, Oregon, by the Columbia Society, Children of the American Revolution, was unveiled June 17, the tenth anniversary of the organization of the society. The tablet is approximately ten by eighteen inches and is of beautiful bronze with the C.A.R. insignia in slightly colored effect at the top. It reads:

This Is The Site Of
THE FIRST PUBLIC SCHOOL
BUILDING
Erected by Taxation in Portland
1858
Marked by
COLUMBIA SOCIETY
Children of the American Revolution
1926

The unveiling was marked with a special ceremony. Among the special guests present were representatives from both D.A.R. chapters, the S.A.R., Colonial Dames, Daughters of 1812, Daughters of Founders and Patriots, Sons and Daughters of the Republic, Society of Mayflower Descendants, school and civic organizations.

The program opened with the singing of America, the Salute to the Flag, Invocation and the Society's song, "Columbia the Gem of the Ocean." An interesting history of the First Public School Building was given by Miss Margaret Moss, past senior group president. It is so interesting we are giving it in full:

CENTRAL SCHOOL (1857-1883)

"Previous to 1857, the only schools in and near Portland were private schools financed by only the parents of the pupils. There had been talk of levying a school tax, but in that early day the proportion of bachelors was so great that nothing could be accomplished. None of the bachelors wished to pay in such large measure for the children of the comparatively few married men to go to school.

When the School Bill was advocated in the 1856 election, Benjamin Stark, a bachelor, objected on the grounds that a new jail was needed, and that both taxes would be too heavy. Colonel J.N. Keeler replied that undoubtedly they wouldn't be needing a new jail if there had been enough schools.

Colonel Keeler's argument won out. The School Tax was levied, — and Benjamin Stark voted for it.

In the spring of 1857, \$5,500 were appropriated for the building, and this property was purchased from James Field for \$1,000. It is interesting to know that the earliest record of the sale of the land is that noting the purchase of it in 1828, from Elijah Hill, for twenty-five dollars in cash and a pair of miner's boots.

The new "Central School" which opened May 17, 1858, was a two-story wooden building with a cupola on the top.

This school was divided in three parts. L.L. Terwilliger, the principal, was superintendent of the higher department. O.C. Connely was superintendent

of the intermediate department and Mrs. Mary Hennell had charge of the primary department. One hundred and seventy children enrolled during the first three days, and by July 23, two hundred and eighty names were on the lists. Practically all the pupils came from homes on First, Second, Third, or Fourth Streets, although a few come from the new "Couch Addition."

According to the old rules the boys and girls occupied different sides of the school-rooms, and separate playgrounds, with a fence between them. A favorite game with the boys was trying to throw a ball over the rooster on the cupola. The janitor work was done entirely by the boys, and the water had to be carried from a nearby cistern.

The "Central School" continued to grow until in 1872-'73 a \$30,000 addition was placed in front of the old structure.

Nothing more was recorded as important until 1883. On February 29, the block was sold to the north Pacific Terminal Railway Company for \$75,000. The city accepted Mr. P.A. Marquam's offer to remove the building and allow the district free use of it until other arrangements should be made. The building was moved to Sixth and Alder Streets where it was used as a school until July 3, 1885. It remained there until the Selling Building was erected in 1910."

The silken flag presented to Columbia Society by Mrs. Esther Allen Jobs, on the day the society was organized ten years ago, was used to cover the tablet until the last moment, when her small granddaughter, Esther Allen Jobs, Jr., pulled it to one side by a silken ribbon.

Mrs. F. Louis Stoeckle, president of Columbia Society, presented the marker to the city, saying in part: "It is a noble faculty of our natures which enables us to connect our thoughts, our sympathies, and our happiness with what is distant in place and time; and looking before and after to hold communion with our ancestors and our posterity and commemorate their achievements.

We live in the past by a knowledge of its history; we associate with our ancestors, by studying their characters, and rejoicing in their successes and triumphs; we mingle our own existence with theirs and seem for the time to belong to their age.

Today, on the tenth anniversary of the organization of Columbia Society, we are gathered here to commemorate an important event of sixty-eight years ago, when history was in the making in Oregon.

What is more fitting than that the children of today, should mark the site where the children of yesterday, their parents and grand-parents, received their early education and training?

Mayor Baker, in behalf of Columbia Society, Children of the American Revolution, I take great pleasure in presenting to the City of Portland this bronze tablet which marks the site of the First Public School Building, built by taxation in Portland. May it ever stand as a perpetual reminder and memorial to our far-sighted pioneer fathers and mothers who knew that an education to both rich and poor alike was necessary to the upbuilding of our beautiful State and City."

Mayor George L. Baker, in a few well chosen words, accepted the tablet in behalf of the City.

The American's Creed was fitting climax to the ceremonies.