

YAMHILL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

DECEMBER 1975

KAY & TODD CLOTHIERS AND TAILORS
by
Ruth Stoller

Our March 1975 News Letter carried an old picture of the store front of the Kay & Todd Clothiers and Tailors. The store was located where the Westward Ho restaurant is today. It was a part of the same building that houses the Village Square and underneath the remodeled Westward Ho front should be the four upper windows that show on the old picture.

A little research on the background of the Kay & Todd store has uncovered some very interesting history. Two of the most famous names in the manufacture and sale of woolens in Oregon were the founders of the original firm shown in the picture. When the store was first opened (probably not in the location shown in the picture) it was owned and run by C.P. Bishop of Pendleton Woolen Mills fame.

Charles P. Bishop was born in 1854 in California and brought to Oregon two years later by his family. His father, who was a minister and a farmer, settled in Linn County. At the age of 20, C.P. clerked in a store in Brownsville and then became connected with the brownsville Woolen Mills as a salesman in their store. While there he married Fannie Kay, daughter of Thomas Kay, founder of the Kay Woolen Mills in Salem.

In 1884 C.P. Bishop came to McMinnville and founded the firm of Bishop & Kay, proprietors of a clothing store. In 1889 he sold his interest in the McMinnville business and joined Thomas Kay, Sr. in the building of the Thomas Kay Woolen Mills at Salem. In 1891 he purchased the Salem Woolen Mills store and developed a large mercantile establishment which became one of the most extensive retail clothing stores in Oregon.

The Bishops became a prominent family in Salem and the retail establishment developed into an exclusive men's clothing store. About 1909 they purchased the old Pendleton Woolen Mills and developed it into one of the foremost Woolen Mills in Oregon.

The Kay member of the McMinnville firm was a brother of Bishop's wife, Fannie, and only 21 years old at the time he came to McMinnville in 1885. He had come to Oregon as an infant in 1864. His father was a woolen manufacturer and managed the Brownsville Woolen Mills in Linn County, and later became the founder and owner of the Thomas Kay Woolen Mills at Salem. Both father and son were named Thomas.

Young Thomas Kay spent one year in Portland learning the mercantile business and then joined his brother-in-law in 1885 in McMinnville. On January 17, 1888 Kay married Cora M. Wallace, daughter of Collin A. and Eliza Shuck Wallace of Yamhill County. Cora's sister, Annie B., had married Joseph Todd in 1881. C.P. Bishop sold his interest in the store to Joseph Todd.

Thomas Kay (junior) moved to Salem in 1894 to become assistant manager and salesman for his father's woolen mill. He did not sell his interest in the McMinnville store until 1898. At the death of his father in 1900 he became president of the Kay woolen mills.

Young Kay was always interested in public affairs. While at McMinnville he was a councilman and on the school board. After he moved to Salem he served in the state legislature and was state treasurer for several terms. He died in 1931.

How long Joseph Todd stayed with the firm after Thomas Kay sold his interest is a matter of conjecture. He was in California by 1904 and in Salem by 1911. Evidently, he did not keep the store very long after Kay left.

CRAWFORD

The postoffice of Crawford was established on Apr. 22 1905 and was only in existence less than two years closing on March 30 1907, with mail delivery going to Dundee. Crawford was located about half way between Dundee and the Dayton station on the Southern Pacific line it was about where the road from Highway 99W to Riverwood golf course crosses the railroad.

Crawford was named after Medorem Crawford a member of the Elijah White party which left Missouri May 16, 1842 with eighteen wagons and numerous horses and cattle. Mr. Crawford left a journal of the trip which has been reprinted and gives a very graphic account of the trip. Later Crawford settled near the mouth of the Yamhill river. In 1864 he was appointed collector of Internal revenue for Oregon. The Morning Oregonian said of his passing on Dec. 27, 1891, "He was known to every person in Oregon during many years and remembered latterly by all who retained recollections of early days in Oregon. Medorem Crawford was a man to fix the impress of his individuality and character upon any community * * * as a pioneer he was among the most intelligent, far-seeing, and energetic, and as a State-builder, he bore a very important part.

Ray Albright

EVENT: December Meeting ¹⁹⁷⁵
When: Tuesday December 9, 7:00 P.M.
Where: 1st. Baptist Church McMinnville
PROGRAM: Play, written by Mrs. Nelson

The play written by Mrs. Nelson and presented by a group of Senior citizens will have as its theme "The first 4th of July Celebration. Those of you who saw last years play will be sure to want to see this years presentation. Come and bring a friend and plenty of food for the potluck at 7:00 P.M.

MUSEUM NOTES

The new furnace is being installed -- badly needed this cold weather. We had 403 adults 96 children at the Museum from July 1 to October 1.

There are scouts and Brownies on tour each month. Several adult clubs have scheduled tours after January 1.

We need the grade schools to visit for their centennial study. We help them all we can. News letters are sent all county grade schools. Call for appointment 472-7935. We will have a white elephant sale at the December meeting. Price your article as its brought in. Funds from the sale will be used for payment of the fireproof safe we have purchased.

We have a new case for our collection of Indian artifacts. Labor and glass and lumber donated.

Open Saturday and Sunday 1:00 to 4:30 P.M. for the winter months.

Roma Sitton

DON'T FORGET

WHITE ELEPHANT SALE

DECEMBER MEETING

BE SURE TO BRING SOMETHING!!!!!!

DUES WILL SOON BE DUE
send to:

Mrs. Florence M. Bridenstine, 1029 East 4th St. McMinnville Oregon 97128. Make all checks payable to: YAMHILL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.