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The history of Pacific University begins with the story of Sydney Harper Marsh, the founder and first president of the College. President from 1854 to 1879, Marsh moved from the bustling cities of the East Coast to the wilderness of the Oregon Territory. The infant university needed a young and energetic President who would be willing to put in the rigorous work needed to create a flourishing academic facility. That man was found in Marsh. A Congregationalist, he believed that the University should remain Christian, but not restricted to any one denomination.¹

The Marsh's association with Pacific was made possible by both his religious affiliation and the Reverend George Atkinson. Rev. Atkinson secured the presidency of the University for Marsh. He is mentioned in the following letters in reference to the University. Atkinson was sent to Oregon by the Home Missionary Society of the Congregational Church Association to begin turning the already existing school for orphans into a full fledged University.² To fulfill this ambition, he recruited Sydney Harper Marsh to be the first President of the University and take the dream of Pacific University from mere idea to fruition.³

Due to the Christian foundation of the university, Reverends across the nation joined forces with Marsh to create a strong standard for education, religion, and finances in the new western territories. One of these men, Theron Baldwin, became Marsh's personal link to the Society for the Promotion of Collegiate and Theological Education. This society was founded in 1844 to promote the success of Christian Universities throughout the United States. Acting as a moneylender of sorts, the Board provided advice and funds for young and struggling colleges. Baldwin, as the acting secretary of the Society, was an important advisor to Marsh due to Baldwin's powerful connections with the organization that provided the majority of the finances needed to establish the university. Thus acting as a middleman and mentor, Baldwin can be credited with the initial financial success of Pacific University.⁴

¹ James R. Robertson, "Origin of Pacific University," *The Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society*, vol. 6 (1905): 123 – 126. Google Books

http://books.google.com/books?id=870UAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA123&lpg=PA123&dq=%22Sidney+Harper+Marsh%22&source=bl&ots=wmkv5Yab&sig=4ftnPAY4GF3xHxj967WhhHgZ0q8&hl=en&ei=M5AZS_riOpT8tQOm8s2HBw&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=6&ved=0CBYQ6AEwBQ#v=onepage&q=%22Atkinson%22&f=true, (accessed December 4, 2009).

² "Pacific University: Pioneer Beginnings, Modern Impact," <http://www.pacificu.edu/about/history/full.cfm>, (accessed December 4, 2009).

Donald Severson, "George Atkinson (1819-1889)," *The Oregon Encyclopedia* (Portland State University: 2008-2009). http://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/entry/view/atkinson_george_1819_1889/

³ Robertson, 123 (accessed December 4, 2009).

⁴ Allen Johnson, ed., *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928), 574.

Another major player in the financial wellbeing of the establishment was David Hoadley, President of the Panama Railroad Company. Hoadley provided Marsh with numerous monetary subscriptions that allowed the President to advance the University. As can be inferred from the involvement of the key players in this group of correspondence, the majority of these letters are concerned with the finances of the University.

The documents here represent four folders of the correspondence between Theron Baldwin and Sidney Harper Marsh. The first letter in the string from Baldwin to Marsh, the dire status of the University finances is illuminated. As indicated by Baldwin “the amount lacking at the time of Pacific University was \$1,200 – of which the sum of \$100 has since been paid” (TSHM-01). This particular communication continues on to suggest that Marsh begin procuring “subscriptions” to begin to not only repay the debt to the society but also to secure the future of Pacific University. The next group of letters indicates that the university is indeed succeeding in its efforts. Marsh had not only received numerous amounts from subscribers but also had received a free passage to New York from David Hoadley (one of the early beneficiaries of the University), the president of the Panama railroad company, which allowed him to have a face-to-face meeting with the Board of the Society. The rest of the letters continue to advocate for the building of a strong donation group as well as praise Marsh for his efforts. Seeing this grouping of letters provides the transition from the struggles Marsh faced in establishing a University to successfully creating a stable institution.

The second folder consists of eight letters. The first letter dated August 8th written by Marsh to Baldwin seems very formal for it includes letterhead and titles of both writer and recipient. This letter addresses the lack of communication in the last year because of a matter happening at Pacific University and hints at some sources of mistrust Baldwin may have had with Marsh and Pacific. But Marsh is elusive and he does not really come out and say what these matters might have been. They could have been about the finding of students for Pacific and whether they would be acceptable to the standards of the University. He goes on to talk about some of the students already attending Pacific University.

In the letter dated August 9th 1859, there appears to be confusion in regards to an earlier correspondence. This confusion caused a delay for Marsh to write Baldwin back until Marsh fully understood the letter that was communicated to him. The letter also suggests that a public discussion at that current time would not be good for the Society and that it might injure the Society. Mr. Marsh also states that he is secure in his stance and beliefs about the needs of the Society. In the closing of this letter Mr. Marsh shows praise for the work efforts of those involved with the current action of the Trust as well as the Society and the work that Mr. Baldwin is doing. In the letter dated August 15th, 1859, also written by Marsh to Baldwin, also elusively deals with issues that the Society members are having, specifically involving finances. It appears that there is a differing opinion on how the Society needs to be run.

A letter on October 27th, 1859, this time from Baldwin to Marsh, is the beginning of a string of letters that begin the concern with the proper paperwork and constant communication with Marsh. This letter seems to be one of regret in regards to the fact that Mr. Marsh could not be present at the meeting of the Board. We should remember that travel between western Oregon and the Northeast was expensive and time-consuming. The letter also shows Baldwin’s

concern that he had not received the right financial paperwork from Marsh. He states that the treasurer didn't receive a report from Marsh and therefore had to secure his account in a way that was not preferred by the treasurer. However, Baldwin doesn't seem to worry too much about the issue and assured himself that Marsh will get the proper paperwork in by the time the annual meeting starts in October. At the end of the letter, Baldwin concludes with a note that a gentleman was willing to make a \$3,000 donation after hearing a presentation by Marsh.

The letter dated October 29th, 1859, from Baldwin to Marsh, speaks of a certain amount of money given to the trust. As evident in the last letter, the treasury has no record to show how much money was given to the trust. Baldwin at this point seems to be frustrated, as indicated in the repetitive underlining to stress his point. The letter also mentions other donations that have been made but since Marsh was not present at the meeting, there is some confusion as to whom it is from, how it is to be used, and into which fund it should be placed.

The next letter in this folder dated December 1st was written by Baldwin to Marsh. This letter makes mention of a group of gentlemen who are meeting in a Bible house in New York City to discuss Pacific University. In the letter dated December 10th, Baldwin writes to Marsh about an upcoming meeting for the Consulting Committee from College Society and makes note that Marsh needs to attend this meeting. There is also mention of a speech Marsh gave in Albany, New York, concerning Oregon. The last letter in this folder was written by Baldwin to Marsh and dated December 14; it discusses the fact that Marsh missed a committee meeting. This is talk about how important it is that Marsh attends the next meeting. Baldwin suggests that Marsh meet him before this meeting in Baldwin's office.

The third folder contained nine letters. These letters primarily focus on contributions made to Pacific University. The bulk of the Theron Baldwin letters focus on contributors and possible contributors to the financial state of Pacific University. In all of the letters, Mr. Baldwin speaks of the financial situation of Pacific University. This is extremely important when examining the source of Pacific University's contributors. When examining the past contributors of Pacific University, one can see the kinds of people that were interested in the University. This would have played a factor in the academic and financial direction of the University. The academic direction of the University could have been dictated by the contributors due to financial need.

All of these letters come from the year 1860. Pacific University was founded a mere eleven years before this as Tualatin Academy, and only began to develop a collegiate program with Marsh's arrival a few years later. This would mean that there were not a lot of past contributors, due to the young age of the University. The purpose of Baldwin's letters was to provide a financial backbone to a young University. In each letter, Mr. Baldwin discusses possible contributors and commends current ones. A few of the letters force Mr. Baldwin to almost beg for a contribution to the University. Mr. Baldwin knew the future of Pacific University relied on his persuasive writing to possible contributors.

Four letters to note within this folder are as follows. In his four letters to Rev. S. H. Marsh, dated May 9th, Oct 2nd, Nov 13th, and Nov 16th 1860, Theron Baldwin speaks mainly in regards to the financial provisions of Pacific University. He also mentions a number of

benefactors, and others whose influence and opinion at least potentially have impact on the wellbeing of the school. The first letter, dated May 9th 1860, gives very short and condensed directional information. It tells of a meeting of the Consulting Committee of the College Society. It tells when and where the meeting is to be held. Although the letter does not specify, based upon future reference to the Society and the Board of Directors, it is probably safe to assume that the meeting is to be held in New York. The second letter, dated October 2nd 1860, has a great deal more in it. It makes reference to at least six different people: Mr. Haines, the Morses, Dr. Prince, Rev. F. A. Adams, Rev. James Means, and Dr. Storrs. The main point of this letter addresses the need to find teachers. There is also concern whether or not Marsh would be in New York for these meetings, Baldwin's expectations revealed by his writing, "Let me see you when you are here." In this letter, Baldwin also makes reference to Western Reserve College, Oberlin, and Yale College.

In the third letter, dated Nov 13th 1860, Baldwin talks mainly about money, though two more people are mentioned: Maj. Williams and Mr. J. C. Baldwin. Something of the Board of Directors, a part of the aforementioned Society, can be learned, in that it has a Treasurer and they have an annual meeting in Lowell, Massachusetts. We can also learn that Marsh, through Baldwin, has to report to them regarding monies for the University. A part of this reporting includes sending in receipts, which Baldwin requests Marsh to do as soon as possible. We can also learn a bit about how money might have been transferred/donated at the time: Maj. Williams gave cash and Mr. J. C. Baldwin gave Rail Road Bonds. We also find that Marsh didn't make it to New York, foiling Baldwin's expectations articulated in the Oct 2nd letter. The fourth letter, dated Nov 16th 1860, is considerably longer than the others and deals mostly with money matters as well as the Board of Directors. In the first paragraph of this one we find why Marsh didn't make it to New York: he was sick. Evidently Marsh sent in the Receipts but they were incomplete in that some lacked his signature and others had previously been submitted. According to this letter, Marsh hasn't told them how the funds for the college are doing. Baldwin reminds Marsh of the nature of the men on the Board of Directors, specifically that "a large part of them are rigid business men." In this, he also reminds Marsh that he needs to have everything covered and accounted for. As a last reminder, he says that Marsh needs to send in the minutes to which Marsh had alluded in a previous note.

The last folder of correspondence between Baldwin and Marsh contains five letters. The letters by Theron Baldwin focus on the monetary transactions that were happening between New York in the east, and Pacific University in the west. It appears that Pacific University was receiving the funds from Baldwin's company, which was named A. Baldwin & Co. Four out of the five letters are written to President Marsh, and one is written to the treasurer of Pacific University, Mr. Horace Lyman. Although we do not learn much about Marsh and Lyman in these letters, we do get a general idea about Theron Baldwin. He seems very eager to forward the money (\$1500) to President Marsh, even though complications exist that may have prevented the transaction from being completed. For example, from one of the letters to Mr. Lyman that President Marsh was ill, and could not make the trip east to accept the money from Baldwin. Therefore, Baldwin inquired to Mr. Lyman if he could make the trip to New York and accept the money on behalf of Pacific University.

Based on the issues raised in the letters, it seems that there were many problems that could happen to financial transactions in the 1800s. In one letter dated Jan 5, 1866, Baldwin remarks that the College Society overpaid Pacific University by \$50, and requested confirmation by Marsh of the mistake. In the same letter, Baldwin states that he does not expect Marsh to make it out to New York to accept the payment for Pacific University any time soon, and plans to defer this to next fall. Both of these problems were exasperated by the transportation of that era; there was no UPS or FedEx; mail was taken by train by horse and by steamer, and often times, these modes of transportation could take a long time to complete the journey.

While the letters in this series of documents were brief, there was one letter that was significantly longer in length than the others. This letter concerned with the University's funding, addressed from Theron Baldwin to Sidney Harper Marsh. A. Baldwin & Co. is providing the funding, and the first agenda of the letter is to give Pacific's treasurer (Mr. Corbet) power over the transaction, rather than Mr. Hurlbut, who is apparently only devoting a limited amount of time and effort at the company. Baldwin recommends that Marsh explain where the funds will be specifically allocated to avoid confusion when the transaction is made. Baldwin then addresses Marsh's goal of raising an additional \$50,000. This money, Baldwin explains, will be hard to come by, since other institutions back east have lobbied for a great deal of funding, totaling over a million dollars. He suggests that Pacific focus on its enrollment and local funding in Oregon in the meantime. Likewise, the churches at Burlington (most likely in Massachusetts or Vermont – every northeastern state has a Burlington) claim to be occupied constructing churches.

Through this collection of letters, the financial beginnings of Pacific University are illuminated. Marsh, while the leader of the efforts for finances, also had aid from key figures of the time. Baldwin, Hoadley, and Atkinson all attributed to the success of the early years of Pacific and will be remembered as some of the University's brightest minds. This narrative of the birth and infant stages of the university provides detailed and essential information for creating the history of our beloved college.

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