

COLUMBIAN, the first newspaper published in the northern half of the old Oregon Territory, issued its first number on September 11, 1852. The people north of the Columbia River were agitating the organization of a new Territory to be known as the Territory of Columbia. That was one reason for establishing the paper and was also the reason for choosing the name Columbian. The equipment for the paper was brought from Portland in the schooner Mary Taylor in the summer of 1852. The press was an old Ramage, so called because it was constructed by Adam Ramage, who went to Philadelphia in 1790 and is believed to have been the first builder of presses in America. This particular press has had a remarkable history. It was used in Mexico for the printing of pronuncimientos until 1834, when it was moved to Monterey, California, for a similar service. In 1846, it was moved to San Francisco, where the Star and, later, the Alta California were printed on it. When Thomas J. Dryer established the Portland, Oregonian, this same old press printed the first issue on December 4, 1850. After serving the Columbian, it printed the first paper in Seattle and pioneered in other towns. It is now a prized relic in the University of Washington museum. (George H. Himes, in the Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society, Volume IV, page 375, note; and Clinton A. Snowden: History of Washington, Volume III, page 147.) The men who established the Columbian were James W. Wiley and Thornton F. McElroy. The first issue announced that it would be published every Saturday at "\$5 per year by mail or taken at the office." Another announcement declared: "Neutral in Politics. Devoted to the interests of Oregon, and the Territory north of the Columbia river in particular." Agents for the paper were announced as follows: "Isaac N. Ebey, Whidby's Island; Henry C. Wilson, Port Townsend; Balch & Palmer, Steilacoom; W. W. Miller, Nisqually; E. D. Warbass, Cowlitz Farms; S. S. Ford, Sen., Chickeeles; Chas. C. Terry & Co., New York (first name of Seattle); D. F. Brownfield, New Dungeness; F. S. Holland, Oregon City." The reading matter in that first issue includes: an article of two columns by W. D. Porter, taken from the National Intelligencer; an adventure story entitled "Misfortunes of Jack Beckler"; "The Battle of Platsburg," one column; and five columns were devoted to the printing of the oration by D. R. Bigelow, delivered in Olympia on the previous Fourth of July. There were forty-two advertisements in the issue and several of them were illustrated with symbols such as house, tree, cow, ship, shoe, horse and steamboat. In the third issue there is an article headed, "To the Residents of Northern Oregon," advocating the election of delegates to a convention to petition for the organization of the proposed new Territory of

Columbia. This cause was followed up vigorously in the following issues. In March, 1853, Mr. Wiley retired from the paper. Of course, it could not have been known in Olympia that on the second day of that very month the new Territory had been created, but with the name changed from Columbia to Washington. Mr. Wiley was succeeded by J. J. Beebe, who remained in the firm for four months, retiring on July 13. On September 17, Mr. McElroy retired and Matt. K. Smith took charge of the paper. On December 3, J. W. Wiley and A. M. Berry appear as publishers with Mr. Wiley as editor. The name of the paper was then changed to Washington Pioneer and soon afterwards to Pioneer and Democrat. (H. H. Bancroft, Works, Volume XXXI, pages 77 and 377.) The subsequent record will be traced under the title of Pioneer and Democrat. Complete files of the Columbian are in the possession of Harry B. McElroy, of Olympia; the University of Washington Library, and the State Library at Olympia.