



c.1865

Willamette Heritage Center | Salem, Oregon
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George L. Curry (1820-1878)

George L. Curry was born in Philadelphia. He did not have a formal education and was largely self-taught. Curry worked as a jeweler and then a journalist, publishing newspapers in Boston and St. Louis. He arrived in Oregon in 1846 and edited the *Oregon Spectator*. Curry resigned in 1848 due to censorship from owner, George Abernathy, who believed politics should be kept out of the newspaper. Curry established the *Oregon Free Press* as a competitor to the *Oregon Spectator*, but it failed because the 1849 California Gold Rush hurt circulation and sales.¹

Curry was appointed Territorial Secretary and the last Territorial Governor. His term as governor lasted until Oregon statehood in 1859 and his administration had challenges with Oregon Tribes.² He was a member of the Salem Clique, and was criticized for raising 2,500 volunteers for the Yakima War of 1855.²

His wife, Chloe Donnelly Boone, was daughter of Alphonso Boone, operator of Boones Ferry and was the great-granddaughter of Daniel Boone. Curry also edited the *Portland Advertiser* in 1861 and 1862. He also edited the *Evening Journal* in 1876.³ When he retired from politics, Curry returned to the jewelry business. He died in Portland.

Letters to Bush from 1853 to 1860

Curry wrote Asahel Bush concerning the progress of Joseph Lane's campaign and election in 1853, the division of the Democratic Party, locally and nationally, as well as general politics and political rumors.

¹ Malcom Clark, Jr., *Eden Seekers: The Settlement of Oregon, 1818-1862* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1982), 189-90.

² Philip Cogswell, Jr., *Capitol Names: Individuals Woven into Oregon's History* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1977), 85.

³ Malcom Clark, Jr., *Eden Seekers: The Settlement of Oregon, 1818-1862* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1982), 281.

⁴ Howard M. Corning, *Dictionary of Oregon History* (Hillsboro: Binford & Mort Publishing, 1989), 68.