

January 3, 1923.

Miss Henrietta E. Failing.

201 Fifth Street,
Portland, Oregon.

Dear Miss Failing:

Nearly 20 years ago Mr. Theo. Gegoux, a talented artist, of French descent, but a citizen of the United States and for many years a resident of the State of New York, came to Portland for the benefit of his health. As he needed rest, he made no public effort to secure work, but conceived the idea of painting the Mayors of Portland. To that end he sought photographs and I was able to supply him with all but one from the beginning up to the year that Judge Williams was elected Mayor. (1851)

He proceeded with his work with the idea that when the entire set was completed there would not be any difficulty in selling the same to the City of Portland. But in this he has been ~~xxxxxx~~ disappointed. Not only has he painted excellent Portraits (bust, life-size), but has supplied good frames in each case.

About four years ago I suggested to him that possibly the representatives of descendants of the early mayors now living in Portland might be induced to buy their father's portraits. To suggestion he consented, and placed the price at \$100.00 each. Then I spoke to Mr. William H. Ladd and he bought his father's portrait. Then I spoke to your Uncle James and he bought your grandfather's portrait, and he asked me to speak to you about taking your father's portrait, as he pronounced it a very good one.

Mr. Gegoux

About ten years ago I told ~~imm~~ the story of the organization of the Provisional Government, and suggested that it might afford a subject of a great historical painting. After some deliberation he decided to undertake it. In order to do so, however, he decided that it would be necessary to give up a residence in Portland and find a place in the vicinity of the American place where the first civil government west of the Rocky mountains was organized. That took him to Champoeg. This change of base he thought would enable him to imbibe the spirit of that momentous event, and enable him to produce a much better painting than he could otherwise.

That work is now practically finished, and it is an unusually fine production, and I hope that eventually it will become the property of the State.

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Meanwhile he has little odd jobs here and there in the way of portraits and sketches and has existed after a fashion. And now he is in need of any thing he can get by the sale of his portraits of the Mayors. Hence this appeal to you.

It was the wish of Mr. Ladd and your Uncle James that the portraits they bought should remain with the others, as it was hoped by them that the entire number, 29 in all, would ultimately find a place in the City Hall.

I have had the care of them for eight years, with very slight expense, in order to save in large measure the storage charges that Mr. Gegoux would otherwise have had to pay.

All these portraits can be seen in an upper room of the Oregon Historical Society.

Sincerely,