

The following is reproduced from "The Old Oregon Trail as told by the Trailers" compiled by W. W. Stevens, published in *The Baker Morning Democrat* from Oct. 1912 through April 1913. This copy is made from a typewritten draft corrected in ink which is stored in the Oregon Room of Baker County Library. Spelling, capitalization and punctuation of the original have been maintained, except in the case of a clear typographical error. In case of an editorial word choice, the editor selected the inked, handwritten correction. Following the text, the editor has also provided an index of historic people, events and places.

The Old Oregon Trail as told by the Trailers

While it is yet possible to get from first mouth some of the reliable history of the old Oregon Trail, the dangers encountered and the hardships endured by the early emigrants and adventurers that passed through and settled up this country, the writer hereof has recently interviewed several of the oldest citizens with the object in view of gleaning, collecting and preserving such reminiscences as seem to be of historical importance and perhaps of interest to those who are to come after us.

After the long and hazardous journey made by Hunt, Crooks & Co., across the continent in 1811-12 in the interests of John Jacob Astor, there were few excursions made through all these western wilds or deserts, as they were then termed, except by occasional hunters and trappers until about the year 1842, then the fame of the great Oregon country began to spread through the east or what was then the western borderland of civilization. At once the faces of the fortune hunters and emigrants were turned towards the fertile valleys along the lower Columbia and its tributaries.

At this date the great northwest was disputed territory between the United States and England and it was very uncertain which country would eventually own it. Upon the theory that possession is nine points in law, a great rush was made by the American people for the Oregon country, for it seemed sure that the first emigrants who established settlements and opened up this vast domain would be apt to hold and control it when the question of title was finally settled. There never was a people more loyal to their country or more anxious to see the course of empire spread to the Pacific Ocean than these western pioneers. Mexico held dominion over the entire western coast at that time up to the Oregon country, and it seemed that the only chance for the United States to get a foothold on the Pacific was to people Oregon and to hold on to it. The failure of Mr. Astor's fur company to establish trading posts in the northwest and the ascendancy of the Canadian fur company, gave English arms and influence the lead, and for a number of years held back the tide of emigration from the states. But when the battle cry of "Fifty-four or fight" was sounded, the "old Oregon Trail" was blazed out, and in 1843 emigrants by the hundreds took up their line of march for the Columbia. The surging tides of Goths, Huns and Vandals, going forth to conquer, was in a way similar to this move, yet their conquests did not mean a tenth part as much as this in advancing civilization and peopling the world. No people in conquest ever set upon a journey so long, so perilous or beset with so many dangers. But the trackless waste, the almost unbounded desert had little terror for them and they rushed madly in, without knowing what Fate had in store for them.

The first year or two the starting place for these west-bound hordes was Fort Leavenworth. To this rallying point all who had encountered the Oregon fever came, some thoroughly fitted out and equipped for the six months' journey, while others less thoughtful repaired to this "jumping off" place in civilization and purchased as best they could the necessary outfit for the perilous venture. Later on, the starting point was moved north to Omaha, this point being more convenient for the start up the valley of the Platte. There was a fort here and supplies of all kinds were boated up the Missouri River from St. Louis. A strong corral was built back a little distance

from the river, now a business part of the city, into which hundreds of cattle from the plains were gathered in about the time the trains were started out in the spring. This corral was made of poles 12 feet long and six inches in diameter, sunk in the ground about four feet and set up as close together as possible. These made a wall eight feet high that would hold securely any wild stock. These cattle were sold by the yoke, and ranged in price from \$100 to \$200, and if very scarce with a good demand, sometimes twice that amount was paid for a likely pair of steers. The buyer would point out the cattle he desired, price was paid and the animals were lassoed, yoked together and put right into the team without any "breaking." A trained yoke was required for leaders but more frequently the rest were all raw ones. From three to ten yoke of steers were hitched to the wagon, according to the load.

It was a grand rush, getting ready for the start, full of excitement and danger and not unfrequently fatal accident. It is impossible for us to tell of the stirring times second hand in such a way that readers who live in these less strenuous times may catch in full the spirit that prompted so many to venture forth into a boundless wilderness, among savage tribes of Indians, who were striving to stem the tide of civilization and to this end waging a continual war of extermination against the whites.

Chapter 2

Trains consisting of from 50 to 100 wagons were daily organized and the long trail was taken up, a trail which is yet plainly discernable in many places through this country and should be preserved. It will remain perhaps for ages at points across the mountain slopes where the track cut and wore deep into the earth and where the plow of the husbandman will never be able to obliterate it, but marked no more by the rotting headboards of its graves, by the bones of perished teams, skeletons of wagons or the marks of the deadly onslaught by savage hordes that ever infested the path of the early pioneer.

The Oregon Trail became a much traveled thoroughfare long before there was a trail across the mountains to California, for at this time it was still a part of Mexico and possessed no special attraction to the emigrant or home seeker. The only landmark that had been followed by these first pioneers in all this route, covering over 2000 miles of uninhabited country, was the trail that had been marked out by the early hunter, trapper and adventurer. The government had nothing to do in establishing its lines, no engineer or surveyor had mapped out its course and no appropriation had been made for its support. But, strange to say, the best and most advantageous route was marked out, one which the very best of civil engineers in later days chose for lines of railroads to span the continent.

In launching out across the desert plains, away from civilization, they carried with them most of the elements of civilized society, notwithstanding the fact that there was no law to control them but right, no one who could administer an oath, execute a legal document or sit in judgment over his fellows. Did any man offend against the unwritten creed of fair play and justice, did he shirk duty when that meant danger to the common good, he was summarily arraigned before a council of leaders, men of wisdom and fairness, selected to maintain order and decorum, and justice was meted unto him according to his deserts. There was not time for protracted trials and the accused soon knew what his fate would be. Councils were not averse to the infliction of capital punishment, when the enormity of the crime justified it.

Each party had its leader, chosen because he was fit to lead and he always felt the full sense of responsibility that rested upon him. Unless he proved unworthy to his trust or incompetent for the place, he ever had the staunch support of his associates. His orders were promptly obeyed and his suggestions met with little opposition. All recognized the fact that someone had to be commander in chief and that any sort of dissention would bring trouble and perhaps disaster upon the entire party.

Scouts were also chosen to skirt the flanks of the cavalcade and ward off danger. These were usually men who were familiar with the frontier life and not unfamiliar with the wiles of the Indians. Others skilled in hunting were detailed to keep up the supply of meat for each day and that usually rounded up about the time camp was pitched. Besides the men who made up the train and kept it moving, there were scores of women and children, together with gray-haired elders, bent with years, who had refused to be left behind, preferring to take their chances with their people. Sickness and death followed with the train and along this great thoroughfare were left graves here and there. When death occurred a halt was made to perform the last rites of interment for the deceased and on the grave a mound of sod or loose stones. Births occurred frequently en route, new life thus coming to renew the cycle.

There are men now living in Baker Valley who were born in wagons that were lined up in their train. Songs were sung around the camp fire and young people found society awhile quite as enjoyable as that abiding under permanent roof, and not infrequently weddings were celebrated to the great delight of all.

The people who made up these trains in the main expected to become husbandmen in their new home and to this end they carried along with them various flocks and herds. The wagons were loaded with swine and poultry, while sheep and cattle followed the train, picking up their living by the wayside. These small flocks and herds brought across the plains with so much labor and expense formed the foundation of the hundred of thousands of sheep and kine that have roamed the valleys and mountains of this country in years past, and have produced and are producing millions upon millions of dollars to the owners thereof.

Chapter 3

There was order and system in the movement of every well organized train. Usually the captain's wagon went in the lead, carrying the star spangled banner. The column was then divided into four platoons, each platoon taking the lead for a day, then falling behind to take the dust of those in advance. It was astonishing what immense clouds of dust would rise from a long wagon train as it trailed along through the dry lava soil. The old residents say they could tell the coming and going of large trains by the clouds of dust that rose up from behind the distant hills.

If the day was a windy one, man and beast almost suffocated, and not infrequently a halt had to be called till the worst was over. The route was divided into easy stages, the stopping places being regulated by the water supply. A stop was also made at the noon hour for rest and refreshment. When a halt was made for the night, the wagons were drawn into a barricade, circular in form, the leading wagon marking out the circle, the others dropping in behind, the tongue of each against the tail-gate of the wagon ahead, the last wagon closing up the gap. While the animals were turned loose to graze around the camp, the tongues were chained fast to the wagons ahead, forming a substantial enclosure, inside of which animals were corralled at night to prevent them from straying off or being stampeded by savages who were always on the lookout for a good opportunity to steal or plunder. Each man took his turn at picket duty at night so there would be no surprises and all could rest at ease. At the break of day, if no Indians were around, the stock was turned out to graze and breakfast was prepared and disposed of in a couple of hours. At the sound of the bugle, teams were harnessed up and the procession moved at the command of the captain of the host.

Travel over this dreary wasteland after awhile became somewhat monotonous, notwithstanding the fact that there was always some change of scene and new experiences constantly coming to the front. We tire now in making the trip west from Omaha in two or three days. How must it have been when it took from six to nine months to cover the ground, according to point of destination? As the train dragged its slow length along, there was little opportunity for social enjoyment or relaxation. But if all was well the evenings were quite enjoyable. The little

social circle gathered around the camp fires, young folks made love, old folks made plans, both for the present and the future, and talked of what they'd do at the end of the long journey. By the faint flicker of the dim light, a mother was to be seen here and there teaching her children as best she could some of the rudiments of an education. Music they had of various kinds, both vocal and instrumental, even while the wolves and coyotes were howling and barking on the plains around them. Sometimes it was a dance they indulged in or a chorus of voices chimed in on some of the old folk songs, reminding of the homes left far behind. So they marched and mingled, families from different states of the east and of most all nationalities, leaving behind homes and friends, never again to be seen by most of them. When a brave spirit decided to cross the plains for the Pacific slope, they were bidden an affectionate farewell by friends and relatives. The parting was a bitter one and they were mourned for as are the dead.

The route up the Platte was made through dust and heat by day, annoyed by clouds of mosquitoes by night. It was not a joy ride. Men that were of caliber to take up such a journey usually endured its hardships without comment. The women were never heard to complain, come what might.

When the South Pass of the Rockies was reached, they had hardly completed half their journey. Three mountain ranges were yet to cross, with hostile Indians striving to check their progress. Even when Fort Hall had been reached, there were still several hundred miles to go.

By this time several months' weary travel had wrought great changes in the train and its people. Far back on the trail many had been forced to leave some of their prized belongings, their looms, implements and conveniences. The trail might have been followed by discarded furniture, broken down wagons, newly marked graves and bones of beasts of burden. Footsore teams, gaunt and weakened, unable to proceed further, had to be abandoned. Wagons necessarily had to be left behind as motive power failed. Milch cows were put into the yoke, women and children were put into the drivers' seats, while the boys and men trudged on afoot. West of Fort Hall the heat and drought, together with rough roads, wrecked many of the wagons and still more would the trail be lined with the flotsam and jetsam cast off from the Prairie Schooner.

As the second range of mountains was approached and the sun-capped peaks hove in sight, then came dread of snow storms and suffering. But gaunt and brown as they were, hungry and grim, ragged, hatless, shoeless, they managed to move on. Some times Uncle Sam's soldiers would meet them, and administer to their needs and encourage them on their way, until finally they reached some fertile valley where they could build a new home, or pass over into the valley of the Walla Walla, or on down into the promised land of the lower Columbia.

Chapter 4

W. C. Miller

There are still to be found in Baker and Baker Valley a few of the 49ers who crossed over to California and who, in the early 60s, straggled into Eastern Oregon and have made it their home ever since. Quite a number are with us who came over the old trail in 1862-3 and the tales they tell of their coming are very interesting, and it is the object of these reminiscences to put some of them in form so they may be preserved for perusal by those who come after us and care to delve into the early history of this Oregon country.

W. C. Miller, a resident of Baker for the past 50 years, is a hale and hearty pioneer. He was born in Germany in 1836 and with his parents came to the United States when a small boy. He was raised in Illinois, but int getting the western fever started for the Pacific coast in the spring of 1862 over the old trail. At Omaha, he found employment with a train of freighters bound for Denver and was assigned to the care and management of a wagon train hauled by three yoke of oxen. There were some 50 wagons in the train loaded with most everything imaginable in the

way of supplies and necessaries to meet the demands of the frontier tour, for Denver was not then a city by any means. They carried along with them several extra yoke of oxen and there were a few men employed as scouts and hunters to go ahead and see that all was safe sailing and that the meat supply was kept up. The wagon boss was the owner of the entire train. Mr. Miller was an inexperienced cowpuncher, but managing to work into the good graces of the "boss," he was especially favored and got through in good shape. They traveled on an average about 15 miles a day and reached Denver in 41 days. They had no trouble with Indians for at this time the Pawnees had possession of the Platte Valley and were on friendly terms with the whites. Every day or two they would pass through a Pawnee village and the train had to come to a halt for a time while the boss exchanged goods with the chiefs. At one point a lot of buffalo robes were taken in a trade and were distributed among the drivers and a few days thereafter they were the lousiest set of fellows imaginable. The Indians had used them until they were literally alive with vermin. It was only a year afterwards that these Indians deserted their villages, retreated back into the country and started on the warpath.

One day in the week was devoted to rest for teams, at which time everybody took a hunt for antelope and buffalo. The choicest part of the animals taken were carried to camp and what was not needed for immediate use was cut up in strips and suspended to the wagon poles and when the driver felt the need of nourishment, all he had to do was reach up and pull down a chunk, which was relished no doubt with the accumulated dirt and dust collected thereon. Wagons were continually breaking down as rough roads were encountered, but a repair man was always at hand to quickly set things to rights and there was no delay in the train. They traveled faster than most emigrant trains, passing en route some of them every day.

Arriving at Denver, Mr. Miller had all the ox driving experience he cared for and he joined a train bond for California. Arriving at Salt Lake, it was learned that the Indians further west were numerous and on the warpath, so he decided to go in by stage, as government troops were stationed along the route to look after Indian desperadoes. It was then the hey-day of staging and it was with difficulty all travelers could find accommodations. The fare from Salt Lake to San Francisco was about \$150. On their route, they passed a station which the day previous the Indians had attacked, overpowered the detachment of guards and keepers, massacred every one of them and burned their bodies with the station. The charred remains of perhaps a dozen men were still smoldering in the ruins as they passed by and passengers expressed their thankfulness that they had not happened along a day sooner.

Not liking California and learning that new and rich gold mines had been discovered in Eastern Oregon and Idaho, Mr. Miller took the back trail in the spring of 1863 for El Dorado. He remained here for a couple of years, their camp all the time being annoyed by hostile Indians, who would occasionally kill a stragglng miner and steal his stock. Hearing of the Auburn mining district, he came over into Powder River Valley in the spring of 1867 in time to help build up the little village of Baker. They had an Indian scare shortly after his arrival, up the Powder River just above the Dan Shaw ranch. A band of redskins pounced upon some parties herding horses and shot one, J. T. Pollard, through the hips. Some of them drove away the horses while others waited and watched for Pollard to come out of the willows into which he had crawled for protection, and when he had laid the whole day in water up to his chin under cover of night he came forth and rescuers carried him to Baker, where he soon recovered.

In coming to Baker on horseback, Mr. Miller forded Burnt River 43 times and at a little station not far from Snake River paid \$1.50 for meals and \$4.40 for 10 pounds of corn for his horse. Mr. Miller relates that about the time of his coming to Baker, a man named W. H. Rockefeller rode pony express for the Wells Fargo Company from Walla Walla to Boise Basin, coming through Baker. In 1865, C. E. Pierce had opened a toll road from Baker up Sutton Creek and down the valley to Straw Ranch, 18 miles distant, but Rockefeller still stuck to the old trail, and chancing to stray a little ways from the trail, he found some fine specimens of float gold east of Baker. The then sheriff of the county, James W. Virtue, learned of the find and after some

prospecting, a valuable mine was discovered and named The Virtue. Mr. Miller served several years as the deputy while Virtue remained in office.

Chapter 5

George L. Freeman

A man of commanding appearance, about six feet three in his palmy days, broad shouldered and tipping the beam at near 250 pounds, and familiarly known as Big George all over this western country, was Geo. L. Freeman, now in his 77th year and settled down in Baker to spend, perchance, the remaining of his declining years. In the matter of varied experience and travel over the Old Oregon Trail, there is possibly no one living in Baker County who has seen more. Borne in Orange County, N.Y., raised in Michigan, he heeded the call for the great west as soon as he had reached his majority, and since the day he bade relatives, home and friends farewell, he has never seen one of his people. It seems strange, but it is nevertheless true, that all who break away from old associations and home ties back east and come west soon become inseparably attached to their new surroundings and nothing but conditions amounting almost to compulsion can induce them to return.

Big George struck the Old Trail at Omaha early in the spring of '57. He found a job as teamster with one of the first trains out that year and stuck to it faithfully. At that time the only established posts west of Omaha and along the trail were Forts Harney, Laramie and Hall. The plains were lined with buffalo, in many places so thick that a stampede was feared and scouts were sent forward to shoot and scare them off the trail. The party was made up of 35 families carrying over 40 wagons with from four to ten yoke of oxen to each. The extra teams and wagons were loaded with provisions and as soon as one was emptied it was left by the wayside, as it didn't pay to carry useless baggage. They had with them over 500 head of stock, horses and cattle, looked after by regular herders. This sort of train always attracted the attention of the Indians. They would do anything to impede the progress of emigrants but more particularly did they delight in running off any sort of stock. The loose animals were allowed to graze frequently along the way but as darkness approached, they were corralled near the camp and securely guarded.

They had passed Fort Laramie without mishap and pitched camp at a stream called Goose Creek. They had noticed during the day that an occasional Indian was skirting their flanks and suspicioned that danger was brewing. Extra precaution was taken to make everything secure that night, a strong force of guards being put on duty and all firearms being put in shape for ready use. Indians seldom attacked a train during the night, biding their time till the first peep of day when they could see what they were doing. The next morning about 4 o'clock, some 50 braves swooped down upon the camp, raising the war cry, yelling, shooting and rattling dry hides filled with pebbles, and in every possible way making noise to stampede the loose stock, rushing pell mell right in among them. They succeeded in stampeding over half of them, guiding them as best they could up a nearby canyon. A number of shots were exchanged and a girl in one of the wagons was severely wounded. As soon as all able bodied men could be armed and mounted, they gave the Indians pursuit a few miles up in the mountains. The savages were overtaken and after a brisk skirmish, in which several of the Indians were seen to fall, they beat a retreat and the stock was all recovered. A two days' rest was necessary to get everything in readiness for the onward march.

At a place called Castle Rock, a government surveying party of 50 was met on their way to Fort Laramie, and as they were to return in a few days and Indians were reported very dangerous and numerous ahead, a halt was called and they remained there until overtaken by the surveyors, when all pressed on together. The party was then so strong that they had little fear of trouble and had none. They were nine months to the day reaching Sacramento. None of their party died, but in crossing they passed other trains that were in distress and assisted in burying a half dozen who had died at different points.

A funeral was a very solemn affair conducted in these western wilds. To leave a member of one's family or a comrade along the desolate waste was a trial scarce to be endured. It seemed as if one's heart strings were being torn asunder. Mr. Freeman relates that one of the saddest funerals he ever attended was that of a young girl near Salmon Falls. She was the pride of the family and loved by everyone in the train. He assisted in digging the grave while others improvised a rude coffin, taking the sideboards of a wagon for the purpose. No minister seemed to be present, so an old-time hymn was chanted between sobs of the mourners, for there was not a dry eye in the crowd and the wails of the parents were pitiful indeed. The coffin was barely covered with dirt and the rest of the grave was filled with stones, so that wolves or coyotes could not rob it. A stone mound was rounded above the earth's level and a rude board was placed in the center of the mound, giving name and age of the deceased. This was the usual custom practiced when deaths and burials occurred en route. When there was a minister in the party, the burial ceremony was usually conducted by him. At this date, scarcely a day passed that a grave or graves were not passed, where someone's loved on had been left behind.

Chapter 6

When a train was ready to start out on its long journey it was usually provided with every conceivable convenience to meet all emergencies or mishaps. Among other things, very few started without provisions being made for boats to ferry their goods, chattels and provender across the streams that were not fordable. Usually some very strong, water-tight wagon bodies were made for this purpose. Big George's train carried three of these boats. On their way Green River was the first stream to be ferried over. They swam all the stock, then the women and children were taken across, the boats being pulled back and forth with ropes reaching from short to shore. Then all the wagons contained was put across the lastly the wagons. These were coupled together, three or four at a time, and by a long rope attached thereto, they were pulled across by the teams. It took about two days to ferry across a stream and get ready to move on. At these stopping places the women folks always improved the opportunity to get out a big washing and have a general cleanup of children.

The first settlement they reached was at Carson City. Reaching Sacramento, the party disbanded after a general handshake all round, each family or individual, as the case might be, going the way that seemed fullest of bright promise. Big George wandered down to Los Angeles and hired out to the Overland Stage Company, which was then operated between San Francisco and New Orleans. It was the practice for all drivers of stages to start out from their station and go on till a stage was met, when mail and passengers were transferred and the back track taken, going on again till another stage was met, when a similar transfer was made. From five to seven head of horses were hitched to the stages, according to the lay of the land and the roughness of the country. Drivers were well armed and arms and ammunition were provided at every station for use of passengers when deemed necessary. Relays were provided every 15 or 20 miles and when approaching a station the bugle was sounded so that everything would be in readiness for a quick change so that as little time as possible would be lost on the journey.

Tiring of staging, Big George moved north to Portland in 1860. Early in '61, he joined the U. S. Army and was stationed at Walla Walla. The regulars were sent back east to take part in the rebellion and raw recruits took their places in the various forts that were established here and there to keep an eye on bad Indians and highway robbers. His regiment was the First Oregon Cavalry and their duty was to guard the trail from Walla Walla to Salmon Falls. Usually 200 men were detailed at a time to traverse the trail and send such assistance to emigrants as they might stand in need of, either fresh teams or food supplies. For this purpose, they usually started out from the fort with 25 or 30 wagons and probably a hundred pack mules. His first trip over the Old Trail through this valley was made early in the spring of '62, moving east. Among other things, they had to provide convenient watering places for emigrants. In the fall of '62, on their return trip to Walla Walla, they dug a well some six miles north and east of Baker at the foot of the hill this side of the Flagstaff mine. The Auburn fever was then on and a great many emigrants switched

off here to try their luck. On their trip east in July, they met the first train at a point called Currant Creek. They had experienced a lot of hard luck and were almost ready to give up, but were soon equipped again and started on their way rejoicing. In their coming and during the summer of 1862, not a house was to be seen along the trail in either Baker or the Grande Ronde Valleys.

While guarding this portion of the trail, they had several encounters with the Indians. The first fight was at Watson's Springs, near the present site of Prineville. The Indians had annoyed the emigrants a good deal, occasionally shooting down a scout and stealing stock every chance they got. Hearing of their depredations they started out to locate the rascals. About 200 of them were found encamped on the banks of a small stream, which was reached about daylight. A charge was made and a hot fight ensued for a time but the renegades beat a hasty retreat and scattered back into the hills. Seventeen dead Indians were left behind and 200 head of stock recaptured that had been stolen from emigrant trains. Five government soldiers were killed and six wounded. Big George was among the disabled, receiving an arrow wound in the neck. The arrow point entered his neck through the front and lower part of the neck but was deflected to one side by striking the collar bone, thus saving his life. The flint remained in his neck for some six months, causing him no little trouble and suffering until removed by a surgeon at Vancouver.

Taking up the trail again, his division next encountered a band of 150 Indians at the forks of Malheur. The Indians attacked the camp and attempted to drive away their stock, but in this attempt they signally failed. One soldier was wounded, while several redskins were made to bite the dust and left unburied. Again taking up the line of march, a train was met a short distance this side of Salmon Falls. Each party corralled their stock and prepared for a fray, thinking the other a band of savages. After scouting around a while, the true situation of affairs was discovered and all rejoiced. Big George was discharged from the service in 1866. Since that time he has made his home at several points in Oregon and Washington, but for the past 12 years has made his home in Baker. The full text of his ups and downs in this western country would make a good sized book.

Chapter 7

Jeff Landers

There are very few people now living in Powder Valley who came over the old trail prior to 1862-63 who haven't a very interesting story to tell of their coming. In every instance the journey was full of incidents and experiences, some sad, some amusing and all interesting to the present generation.

Jeff Landers started out on the old trail in 1854. He is now one of Baker's oldest citizens, having been born in Kentucky in 1833. His father was one of the early pioneers in the Blue Grass State and from him, no doubt, the subject of this sketch inherited his natural inclination to roam. His first stop was in Missouri, but soon tiring of the tameness of that part of the country, decided to move on west with the then surging tide of immigration.

The Indians just at this time were peaceably inclined all along the route and it was not deemed necessary to make up larger teams for self protection. Landers started out with six men, one man having a family. They had two wagons, each drawn by four yoke of oxen and they carried along with them a few hundred head of cattle, expecting to realize handsome profits on same if a successful trip was made. Landers served in the capacity of spy most of the way.

The trail was then marked out very distinctly and it was not necessary to have a pilot to point out the way. They passed numerous Sioux villages on their way up the Platte River and were not even bothered by thieving Indians. As they neared the mountains, they were overtaken one evening by a band of Sioux warriors and were soon completely surrounded by the savages. They seemed very friendly but looked suspicious. They proposed to stand guard over the cattle that night and let the whites have a good night's rest. There was nothing to be done by the

whites but submit to their proposal, in the face of such odds. So a halt was called and campfires were lighted. Landers said they all of the opinion that they had seen the last of their cattle, and if they escaped with their lives they would be lucky. But, strange to say, the next morning the old chief rode up and asked if there was anything more he could do for them, and when informed that there was not, rode quietly away with his warriors, not taking a single hoof from the train.

Those who followed in their wake did not fare so well. As they approached Fort Laramie, they met a detachment of soldiers, a lieutenant and six men, going back to rescue some cattle that had given out but they had been cared for by some Indians, who refused to turn them back without remuneration for their trouble. There were some 30 Indians interested in the matter and when they were approached by the soldiers and ordered to surrender the cattle, a sharp altercation ensued, which ended in a battle. Several Indians were killed and all the soldiers were shot. This was the beginning of the Sioux war.

The train that followed some 15 miles behind Landers was met by these same mad Indians and everyone was massacred,, wagons were burned after being rifled of their contents, and stock driven away. Landers train pushed on as fast as possible, not even stopping for a rest at Fort Laramie, and it was well that they did, for it was only a few days later that a large band of Sioux laid siege to the fort and it was only by hard fighting that it was saved from capture.

A few days after passing Fort Laramie, a band of savages undertook to stampede their cattle and did get some of them a short distance away, but the men pursued and after a scrimmage succeeded in getting them all back. A bullet took off one of Landers' ear locks and he had a stiff encounter with a big, burly brave for the possession of his horse, in which the Indian got the worst of it, Landers taking from him his bow and quivers, which he proudly retained for a long time as a memento of his victory. The prowess displayed by this little band of whites saved them the day and their stock. While none of them were killed, they saw several of the braves fall from their horses but were picked up and hurried away.

Landers spent several years roaming over the western country, stopping for a time in California, Nevada and Montana. He came to Baker when there were but a few houses scattered around and has made it his home ever since. At the breaking out of the Bannock war in 1878, he volunteered as scout and was in several skirmishes with the Indians. His party got after a band of marauding savages over in Idaho and chased them into Oregon. While in Idaho, they succeeded in capturing a few Indians and taking them to General Howard's headquarters. They all promised to be good forever after and were paroled.

Landers and four others next pursued a band of Indians through Eastern Oregon, finally overtaking them about five miles northwest of Baker in the Blue Mountains. The Indians surrendered without resistance, 18 in number, with 21 ponies. They started with them for Fort McDermott and while passing through Baker, one of the number made his escape. A number of Baker people gave pursuit and some distance out, his horse, blanket and arms were found but the Indian was never seen again. It is hinted to this day that some of the pursuers could tell what became of the Indian if they were so minded. The soldiers in charge of the captives went into camp about six miles south of Baker, where Landers had some trouble with an incorrigible bronco, which resulted in his getting an arm and leg broken. He was brought back to Baker for treatment and this ended his career as scout and Indian trailer. He is now enjoying good health in his 80th year, and is full of reminiscences similar to those above related.

Chapter 8

Elizabeth Ann Turk

Not to the men alone is all credit due for this great northwest country being a part of Uncle Sam's domain, for women made it possible for men to emigrate thither, to open up and develop the country. They endured as many hardships and privations as did the sterner sex and when men were ready to falter and fall by the wayside, the counsel and encouragement they received

from the women nerved them on to greater success. There never was a man who, hearing the call of the wild, but could find some woman ready to stand by his side, share his fate or fortune, whatever it might be.

Elizabeth Ann Turk was born in England, February 12, 1832. While yet quite small her adopted parents emigrated to America and settled in Wisconsin, where she grew to womanhood and was married in 1853 to Royal A. Pierce, a young attorney. Tiring of Wisconsin, they decided to move to the far-famed Oregon country, and with their three children landed at Council Bluffs about May 10, 1862. Here they fitted themselves out with a four-horse team and wagon filled with household goods and provisions for the journey across the plains. There was a grand rush of emigrants for the far west this year and they started with a train of 200 wagons but soon found it necessary to divide up, putting about 50 wagons to the train. Some had horses, some mules and not a few ox teams. A man named Johnson was captain of their division and in making their four months' journey they became intimately acquainted with the Bowens, Halls and Tuckers and Miss O'Brien, afterward Mrs. Packwood, all of whom switched off the trail on reaching Powder Valley and went to Auburn, afterward settling in Baker.

At the time of their coming, the Indians were peaceably inclined. At any rate, they were not disposed to bother such a large train, traveling in sections not far apart. It was a rule of their train for each wagon to take its turn in lead for a day, then dropping back to the rear and working up gradually to the front again. At Fort Hall, it was decided that they would take what was known as the northern route, or what was known as the Tim Goodall trail-mucker's trail, which led through wilder country but was considered a shorter way to Oregon. They crossed the Snake River at Brownlee, near the mouth of Powder River, and then moved up the river along a not very well defined trail to Powder Valley. They camped on the west side of the river, just opposite to the present city park, where they rested a few days and then moved on to Auburn, which place they reached September 5th. There was then one little log cabin where Baker stands, on the river bank near the site of the present greenhouse. A Mr. Evans owned it and operated a sort of saloon and provision store.

An army at Auburn, everything was in an uproar. Some five or six thousand people had swooped down on the place and everyone wanted to get up a shack and begin hunting gold. Mrs. Pierce and family remained in Auburn until August, 1864, when the Idaho gold excitement broke loose and most everyone started for the new diggings. They decided to go to Baker, at which time the Evans, Campbells, Fishers and Places were about the only residents. The first general store was opened in 1865 on First Street and Valley Avenue by A. H. Brown. It was four or five years after they came to Auburn that people settled down on ranches and began to grow vegetables and raise surplus stock. They had to pay from \$10 to \$12 per hundred for potatoes and \$10 per barrel for flour, all supplies being freighted across the Blue Mountains from Umatilla Landing. Most emigrants arrived here with very little surplus money, but the prospect of finding rich mines had brought some men thither who had considerable capital, which they spent lavishly in prospecting and constructing canals for running placer mines, so there was plenty of work for all who had a mind and the necessary muscle to wield the pick and shovel.

A great many thousands of dollars were spent here in the early sixties which never profited the investors a single penny. But it wasn't long thereafter till stock raising and grain growing were taken up and the country began to develop. Oregon trailers had been going through this valley for most 25 years, bound for the Walla Walla country or the lower Columbia, before they realized that Powder Valley was one of the most fertile spots of the Oregon country and held so much in store for the husbandman.

Mrs. Pierce says that trains traveled very short distances on Sundays, just far enough to get fresh grass and plenty of it for their stock. The women were busy, nevertheless—in fact it was their busy day. While the men were out hunting or smoking around the camp fire, they had washing to do, children to clean up and an extra dinner to get, and in many ways get everything in readiness for another week's travel. The year following their arrival in the valley, a thriving

village sprang up at Pocahontas, but it, too, like Auburn, was doomed to short life and in a few years was absorbed by Baker.

Mrs. Pierce carried her four-score years quite lightly, runs her own house and steps around spryly as many people 20 years her junior. She says that it hardly seems possible as she looks back on the past half-century, for Baker and Powder Valley have arrived at their present high state of development and progress, all since she was a wife and mother of quite a large family. She thinks an active life and a fine climate have been the principal factors in thus prolonging her days.

Chapter 9

William H. Packwood

No man now living and possibly none that are dead have figured more prominently in the early settlement and development of Baker County than Wm. Henderson Packwood. He thinks his right name is Duncan. The name he bears originated back in Virginia some time before the days of the Revolution. An immense flood swept down the Potomac, destroying both property and people. A small boy, too young to know or tell his name, was rescued from a huge drift tree by some boatmen, who adopted him and cared for him. As he grew up his principal task was that of carrying wood. Being of stout robust build, he would carry immense loads. They called Billy and afterwards added thereto the distinction of "Packwood," which name he adopted ever thereafter.

The boy grew to manhood, married, and settled on James River. In all probability, all the Packwoods, in the whole country can trace their genealogy back to the Packwood plantation, about 12 miles out from Richmond, VA. A relative of the subject of this sketch, who lived in Washington, went back east about 1854 to visit his grandmother and found her hale and hearty at the age of over 100, well cared for on the old plantation by two old darkies.

Mr. Packwood's people left Virginia and went to Tennessee, thence to Kentucky and on to Illinois. His grandfather being a slave owner, moved into Ozark County, MO, when Illinois was admitted into the Union as a free state. From there he went to California in the early '40s. He says he paid the old gentleman a visit when he reached California in '49, and his chief theme of conversation seemed to be about George Washington. He would tell how George looked and acted and particularly how he sat upon a rail fence upon a certain occasion and talked to a lot of boys, of which number he was one, telling them how they should demean themselves to become useful men and patriotic citizens.

While the Packwoods were in Illinois, Wm. H's father married Elizabeth Stormut and settled in Jordan's Prairie, near Mt. Vernon. Here Wm. Henderson Packwood was born. They lived a few years at Sparta, and in 1842 moved to St. Louis and operated a diary on the Illinois side of the river until 1844, when they went to Collinsville, where his mother died. His father married a second time, locating in St. Louis, and for several years operated a peddling wagon into Southern Missouri. William usually accompanied him on these trips. They would buy all kinds of furs and pay for them in notions. William had one brother and four sisters. He was the eldest of them all and is not the only survivor of the family.

The country being new and sparsely settled, young Packwood had little opportunity to acquire an education. He only got a smattering of the three Rs, "Reading, riting and rithmetic." All the schools he ever attended were subscription schools and he says his mother taught him more than he ever got in school.

He said: "On the peddling trips with my father everywhere we stopped over night, I was called on to read and write for groups of old men and women, young men and girls, and they

thought me a wonder and a prodigy—a boy of 12 and knowing so much. I also remember their stories of bear, deer, and turkey hunting, which interested me very much. Between our peddling trips I would sell bread on the streets of St. Louis and do all sorts of odd jobs to earn a penny. My father was never content to remain in one place long at a time. He next took a contract to carry mail between Salem, Ill., and Nashville, a distance of 35 miles. I rode horseback and carried the pouch but it was never very heavily loaded. There would always be some letters but seldom a paper. The route of 35 miles was across a vast prairie with only two houses or stopping places on the way. At Salem, I remember seeing a doctor eating sliced tomatoes—and he was the talk of the town—everybody prophesying that he would kill his fool self.”

“The next move was to Springfield, Ill., where I found employment as a clerk in Glen’s grocery store. In going back and forth to my meals, I often met Abraham Lincoln on his way to and from the law office of Lincoln and Herndon. He nearly always had a pleasant word for a young man, and at times would stop and offer his (copy missing). I looked as if I needed it. He was anything but a good looking man, but had, for some reason, a commanding appearance, with his silk hat and black stock necktie. The cut and style of his clothes were not inclined to make him look like a dude and little did we know or think what the future had in store for him and what an active part he would take in shaping the destinies of our republic.”

“It was while I was with Mr. Glen that I read the life of Napoleon, and as he was always talking about the California and Oregon country, I contracted the western fever and decided that I would become a United States soldier. Just at this time, quite a number of soldiers were returning home from the Mexican war and were great heroes I saw was Col. E. D. Baker, afterwards senator from Oregon, and for whom this town and country were named. I could not stand the pressure so resigned my position as grocery clerk and sought the recruiting officer.”

Chapter 10

How he enlisted as a soldier, his detailed account of their crossing the plains, up to and including the part he took in establishing the first permanent settlement in Baker County, we will now give in words just as we received them from Mr. Packwood:

“In September 1848, Capt. Backenstos hung up the recruiting flag in Springfield to enlist men for the U.S. Mounted Rifle Regiment. As soon as I saw the flag, I felt it in my bones that I was going to enlist, become a soldier, and, as the regiment was bound for Oregon, it might give me a chance to see California, which was reported to be the coming garden spot of the universe. The United States had just acquired it and the tide of emigration was turning in that direction.”

“The notice at the recruiting station called for volunteers over 18 years of age and I was but 16 and not very large nor of robust build. But I concluded to try it out. So I wrote down ‘eighteen’ on a slip of paper and placed it in my shoes and called at headquarters intending to tell a white lie and say I was over 18. But when I met the recruiting officer, concluded it would not be worth while to try to deceive him, as he seemed able to see right through a fellow. In our preliminary talk, I told him the exact truth. He measured me five feet three inches, by stretching myself up as high as I could. He said I would have to procure a written consent from my father, which I speedily procured, and returning to the office, enlisted with the company September 23, 1848.

“The day after Christmas we were put in wagons and started for Jefferson Barracks, Missouri. Just before leaving Springfield, reports of the discovery of gold in California were received and my father came to see me and said that reports were that soldiers and sailors were deserting for the mines as fast as they landed in California, but he wanted me to promise never to be a deserter, and I did so and kept the promise faithfully, even in the face of the greatest temptation.

“Arriving at Jefferson barracks, we were subjected to a critical examination before the army surgeon as to our fitness for soldiering. He thumped my breast a few times and said I would not

live to be 22 years of age and rejected me. This was a great setback to my aspirations. As I passed out of the room almost brokenhearted, my dejected appearance, I suppose, attracted the attention of Col. W. W. Loring, commander of the regiment, who came up to me and in an undertone said: 'Do you wish to go west with our regiment?' I promptly said I did. I went. What it was that he saw in me I do not know, but whatever it was wrought a change in my life and gave me what I wished—to become a soldier and travel. The next morning a board of doctors was called together to pass on the rejected recruits. When I was called, Colonel Loring came up and after a few minutes conversation with the board, I was passed without any further delay.

"In passing, I will say that Colonel Loring then and there won my everlasting affection. He had lost an arm in Mexico and carried the regiment across the plains in 1849, wintering at Oregon City, and in 1850 established Fort Vancouver. I was often his orderly in 1850-51. In the Civil War, he was a colonel in the Confederate service. After the war, he took service and was general for the Khedive of Egypt. I shall always remember him as my best friend and patron.

"At Jefferson barracks we were horsed, armed and equipped for our long journey. In January and February we went overland to Fort Leavenworth. Missouri was then very sparsely settled. The weather was cold and the march a hard one. We were a month crossing the State of Missouri. It would be from 10 to 15 miles between houses. The coldest day's travel I ever experienced was on this trip, about the middle of February. As we pitched camp on this particular day, many of the men were so nearly frozen as to require assistance in dismounting from their horses.

"Colonel Loring, with some of his command, had proceeded to Fort Leavenworth by boat, a very difficult and dangerous journey to make up the Missouri through floating ice. But as soon as he had all his forces together again, he proceeded to form a camp about five miles up the river from the fort, on the west side of Salt Creek. Here he began to drill and perform the regular duties of soldier. Col. Edwin Sumner was the commandant at the post and our camp was named for him. Just before we left the fort, a grand ball was given and many of the officers and men who were there became famous in the Civil War and will live in history.

"Early in April the officers were busy getting ready supply trains, and it took over 200 six-mule teams to carry supplies and luggage. Everything being in readiness for the march, Colonel Loring broke camp on May 10, 1849. It was a bright, sunny morning and the panorama then viewed was novel to me and never to be forgotten. The regiment, all mounted, filed out by twos, their arms glistening in the sun, horses gay and prancing, sabers dangling by their sides, men anxious to be on their way, and officers riding here and there giving commands. As soon as the regiment was well underway, the quartermaster's commissary teams began to string out and in a short time everything and everybody was on the long journey to Oregon and Camp Sumner was no more."

Why Mr. Packwood was not in that long train will develop in the next communication.

Chapter 11

"However much I desired to accompany my regiment across the plains, fate decreed it otherwise. President Fillmore had appointed General Wilson commissioner of Indian affairs of the Pacific coast, and directed him to proceed at once to California. Colonel Loring was to give him an escort and the order was accordingly given to Captain Newton of my company, to give Captain Robert M. Morris, of the Rifles, 25 men for General Wilson's escort and I was one of the 25 selected, so we remained behind when the regiment moved west. From the 10th of May to the 5th of June, Captain Morris was arranging for teams and supplies for the journey. In the party we were escorting were General Wilson and family, Dr. Birdsall and daughter, and Milton S. Latham,

afterwards U.S. senator from California. We were also joined by Major Reynolds, the regimental paymaster, with two wagons. A man named M. P. Deady was guard for the same.

"Everything being ready, Captain Morris, with Lieut. Haynes second in command, broke camp June 5th for California. We were the late on the trail and our stock suffered fearfully. We started out with our 200 head of horses and mules and when we got across the Sierras on October 25 had only 19 head of stock and one light wagon. This was one of the years when there was vast emigration west, and it was also cholera year. In many places, whole trains had to lay up on account of sickness for weeks at a time. We passed a great many camps where numbers of people had died and were buried and their graves in many instances had been desecrated by the Indians. On account of the scarcity of grass, we frequently had to go from five to seven miles off the regular trail to find feed for our stock. On the little Blue River, a band of very suspicious Pawnee Indians visited our camp, but left without molesting anything.

"On our march next day, we came across an old man and his son sitting on their bedding by the trail, waiting to be picked up, and we were their last chance. The Indians had stolen all their horses and arms and left them there in the desert to make their way as best they could afoot. They might have been killed but the savages thought they would suffer more to be allowed to starve. They were indeed fortunate, for we were the last train on the trail that year. We carried them along with us to California. The old man was a preacher and gave us a number of good sermons at night while we gathered around our campfires.

"At Fort Laramie, a band of Sioux Indians were encamped and at many places Indians came to our camp. They bothered us quite frequently down the Humboldt River. At the sink of the Humboldt, the whole Piute tribe visited us and we had to keep a strong guard with our stock every night. They stampeded our stock twice very seriously, so much so that some animals were found and recovered 15 or more miles from the camp. The worst stampede was on South Platte. Things might have been worse, but we soldiers had been given a 30-foot rope and iron picket for tethering our horses out at nights. With the stampede, the pins would be jerked from the ground and go flying through the air and pins and ropes would soon become entangled so as to tie the horses in bunches, which stopped their mad career and were soon overhauled. This saved our stock to a great measure.

"We forded the South Platte early in July. The waters were high and we had to raise everything in the bottoms of the wagons to keep dry. In some places the horses had to swim and draw the wagons along the floating sand bottom. We had to keep on the move all the time—no stopping or standing—to keep from sinking in quicksands. It was a dangerous undertaking, as the river at this place, near Ash Hollow, was a mile or more wide. The only loss we sustained was the floating away of our supplies.

"Through this part of the country there were enormous herds of buffalo, and they all seemed to be making for the south to winter. One herd came down a long ridge a short distance in front of us from the north, swam the river without halting and passed south. Captain Morris rode out and killed all we wanted. It was estimated by some hunters in our train that there were fully 5000 or more coming down the slope to the river. It was a grand sight to us tenderfoots. Just take a look with your 'mind's' eye—the plains across in 1849—on the Platte River, not one house. From Kearney to Fort Laramie, not a house—From Laramie to Fort Bridger, not a single inhabitant, and so on to Salt Lake City—thence a good big jump to Webber River, where there was a small Mormon settlement; thence to 'Hangtown,' near Placerville, CA., and on to Sacramento. Not a bridge was there on the entire trail. We forded every stream except North Platte, which we ferried. Green River was a very dangerous crossing, several persons having drowned there a day or two before we crossed it. On the Humboldt River and desert, we found numerous wagons that had been driven out along the side trail and abandoned with their loads. The only thing I remember our boys taking was coffee. From a wagon full of coffee sacks, we laid in a supply and from then on had coffee to drink that I might say was strong enough to float an iron wedge. At

Sink of Humboldt, we ran out of meat, and lived on bread and coffee. After crossing the desert on forced march, we made a short stop at Carson River to rest and refresh ourselves and horses.

Chapter 12

A number of interesting incidents occurred as this party slowly made their way over the trail. Mr. Packwood says they had a commissary sergeant named Jones. Captain Thompson, afterward a prominent man at Portland and Oregon City, was wagon master, and a one-armed man named Brown was his assistant. Major Reynolds with his two wagons was entirely independent from our command but kept with us for protection. M. P. Deady, afterward Judge Deady of Empire City, Ore., had no wagon but went along as a sort of outrider. He was a husky sort of fellow and quite bright. A man named Brown was assistant. Jones quite a bit and Deady, suspicioning that they were up to some sort of deviltry, chummed in with them and learned from them that they aimed to rob the paymaster's wagons when the right opportunity came, and they carried a lot of money. The plan was to delay the wagons in some way when they had reached the mountains and then rob and destroy them. Reaching Fort Laramie, we rested a day or two. Captain Rhett was in command of the fort. Learning of the plot, Captain Morris arrested Jones and Coulter and turned them over to Captain Rhett for punishment. We moved on, leaving Major Reynolds behind. In some manner, Jones and Coulter made their escape and, stealing a couple of horses, struck out for the west, picking up a lot of stock we had left behind which had recruited up so they could travel again. They made good their escape, but I never heard of them afterward.

I witnessed a striking instance of pluck and endurance after we had passed Fort Laramie. Two of the soldiers stationed at the fort concluded to desert. One was fine looking fellow who had done service in the English army and rated up to sergeant major. His name was Hesslip but the other fellow's name I do not remember. They stole a number of good horses and had about 15 hours start of their pursuers, Capt. Duncan and Sergeant Lawler, stationed at the fort. After four days pursuit, the deserters were overtaken at Green River, having traveled over 400 miles in four days. They were approached in camp unawares and caught asleep, and were soon chained together and marched back to the fort. The thieves were made to walk back. We met them when they had covered about 200 miles of their backward journey and furnished Captain Duncan with needed supplies. What punishment was meted out to them we never knew, but it was no doubt a plenty.

Considering the many miles these horses had traveled and had nothing to eat but grass and then carried their riders 400 miles in four days, was a wonderful test of endurance for both men and beasts. Col. Duncan was afterward in the Civil War, was severely wounded and finally settled on a ranch in Nebraska. I had this from his son, Sergeant Duncan, whom I met in the Bannock Indian war.

As we passed through Salt Lake, I can't remember seeing a single two-story house, no paved streets nor sidewalks. The foundations had been laid for the tabernacle and the walls built up some five or six feet high. The first corn and vegetables we had seen for months we came across at a little settlement on Webber River, of which we laid in a good supply. From Webber River, we followed the trail on to where it branched off for Oregon. Here Captain Morris left us for a time to convey a couple of men to Fort Hall to be punished for some sort of outlawry. He was gone ten days, leaving Lieut. Hayes in command, with only 19 men in the escort. At every camp we made notices were posted telling us of outrages committed by the Indians and warning us to be on our guard. On Goose Creek, we met Lieut. Hawkins with supplies for Fort Hall and sufficient to spare us some, which we were glad to get, being on very short rations. Captain Morris overtook us at Sink of Humboldt and Gene Palmer was employed to guide our train on to California.

As soon as Captain Morris returned, he was informed that the teamsters were on strike and refused to stand guard in their turns. This made it hard on us soldiers as we had to be up every other night. As soon as he had taken in the situation, Captain Morris called me and directed me to tell Captain Thompson to parade all his teamsters immediately in front of his tent. I did so and in a time the teamsters were all in line, 28 in number. Captain Morris stepped in front of them and said he had been informed that they had refused to obey orders given by Lieut. Haynes and that his men would not be able to continue the strain they had been under, and that he thought it unreasonable of them to refuse to share the guard work, and then concluded: 'All of you who refuse to stand guard and obey orders will step two paces to the front.'

Mrs. Gene Wilson's driver and 14 others stepped forward, 13 stood fast. The captain turned to Captain Thompson and told him to give the 15 their dunnage and for them to be outside the lines of camp in ten minutes. The next order to me was to call the sergeant and direct him to place four sentinels around the camp and not permit, but arrest, any of these men attempting to enter camp. My next order was to have the commissary issue ten days' rations for these 15 men and to give it to them over the lines. The orders were all given in as even a tone as he would have given if on parade or drill. You can imagine the haste to pack up and get outside the square formed. These 15 men went off about a quarter of a mile and made a fire in the sage brush, where they remained overnight and didn't have to stand guard.

Chapter 13

To the men who remained with the escort, the captain promised double wages from that day until discharged. I think they were already getting \$40 a month. Extra guard was placed on stock at night after the deserters left camp, thinking they might capture some of the horses and mules. Their situation was anything but encouraging to contemplate. On the west, Hangtown, across the Sierras, was the nearest point, and Fort Hall was the nearest on the north. In a hostile Indian country, with no means of transportation for bedding and supplies, and a 60 mile desert to face on the west as a starter. The horrors of the Donner party, perishing in the mountains five years before, was, to say the least, a very discouraging outlook. It was not getting well along in October and the nights were cold. They kept a blazing fire all night and were busy late and early preparing for their trip.

The next morning Captain Morris ordered several wagons to be abandoned so as to have teamsters to go around. It became necessary to have a carriage driver for Mrs. Wilson's team. An old German named Losch was directed to take charge of her carriage. As soon as she saw who had been detailed to take charge of her team the trouble began. She had been raised in Kentucky and so had the girls and knew that the German could not fill the bill, never having driven a team or carriage. He was willing to try but had not idea about harnessing up a four-mule team. She called the general. Their tent was still standing but ours were struck and everything was ready to move on. She told the general that Losch could not drive and they were not going to risk having their necks broken with him, and she wanted her old driver, McKibben, back. The general went to see Captain Morris. I don't know what passed between them but the result was the two with Lieut. Haynes went into the general's tent and the ultimatum of Captain Morris was: "General, you take your choice. Accept my driver or dispense with us as an escort and join the mutineers."

Mrs. Wilson decided in favor of the mutineers so as to have the old carriage driver. The escort being thus relieved, Captain Morris then abandoned all our wagons except one light one to have for Mrs. Birdsall in event of her being unable to ride muleback. We then packed everything so as to travel light and next morning were on our way. The mutineers were glad to join in with the general, as their rations were increased and ten of them were taken back on pay. General Palmer was given \$2000 to guide them to Sacramento and Captain Thompson, having no wagons to look after with us, joined them. They went the Lawson route, we by the way of Hangtown and beat them into California several weeks. They no doubt had the safer route from

snow. We crossed the summit about the 25th at night, and none too soon for safety. It was on this trip that Brown lost his arm by the accidental discharge of a gun.

A short time afterward we were overtaken by a young Swede who carried about 30 pounds of flour, a tin cup and a knife but no bedding. He was bound for California and had made his way across the plains so far alone. When he wanted a square meal, he would make a fire, mix some flour in his cup and the dough he would roll on the end of a stick and bake it by the fire. He remained with us only a day or two and went on. It was nery of him to strike out alone and I never heard whether he got through or not. If he did it was largely a matter of luck and because he had nothing the Indians wanted, unless it was his scalp, he not doubt felt pretty safe. The Piutes were not on the war path then—only watched for an opportunity to steal stock.

We stopped at Hangtown a day for rest. It consisted of a few miners' cabins along a dry gulch and the government had some supplies stored here for destitute emigrants. One of our men saw a quarter of venison hanging up in a tree and asked what it was worth. The owner said 75 cents a pound and would foot up about eleven dollars, so we had no venison that night. Not much venison for a soldier getting \$8 a month. Mining camps we run across now every day or two. We made camp at a place called Diamond Springs. Some men were throwing up the soil in bags and flats, intending to work it up when the rains set in. Others were doing what is called crevicing—had a sack, pick, knife and spoon, hunting and crevicing bare bedrock. They would pan it out at night and counted it a poor day's work when from a flour sack of dirt they did not get from fifty to a hundred dollars or more.

Around this camp were oak trees and an abundance of acorns. Having been living on flour and coffee for a number of days, we gathered a lot of acorns and carried them along with us, roasting the eating them as occasion demanded. The rest of the way we made without accident or startling event.

Chapter 14

When we reached Sacramento and made camp, I was worn out and sick. It had been a hard trip for a 16-year-old boy. Dr. Birdsall came to my tent and did what he could for me. I longed for some good old Illinois corn bread and it seemed to me that I never would get well without it. I had for my bunkmate a Jimmy McDermott, who had been a soldier in Florida in the Seminole Indian War. He had an extra pair of pants which he took into Sacramento and sold for \$11 to get money to buy me some meal. Had to pay 35 cents a pound for it, so it didn't take long for one to eat up a pair of pants. As soon as I got the corn meal gruel, I began to get better. The night after we went into camp several of my comrades came to me about 2 o'clock in the morning and inquired how I was. After a little talk, they hoped I would soon be well and took their departure. They didn't say good-bye, but I knew what was up, and next morning they were not to be found. They were off to the mines and I never saw any of them afterward.

Our escort of 25, which we started out with five months before, had not been reduced to McDermott, Clemens and myself. Clemens wanted me to go with him and then there would have been but one left and he, I think, would have gone with us had we so decided. But I had given a promise to my father never to desert and I would not think of breaking it. It was a great temptation. Our pay was only \$8 per month and men in the mines all about us were making fortunes in a short time. Common laborers were getting as much per days as we got in a month and wages in some instances ran up to \$16 a day. We had an old German with us on the trail who had scurvy very badly and we came near leaving him at Salt Lake springs to be cured, but he came through and I saw him on a job driving team for \$4 a day. I met a man that I had known back in Springfield, Ill., a butcher. He had got through in August with a six-mule team and was freighting to the mines, where he got 30 cents a pound for hauling 30 to 40 miles, and said that

as soon as the rains set in and the roads got bad he'd sell out, as he had a good stake to go home with and take it easy. Sailors left ships crewless, and when I saw San Francisco harbor in '50, it had the appearance of a burned over forest, to look at the naked masts. On several vessels it was difficult to even get caretakers. No effort seemed to be made to get back either sailors or soldiers. Such times will never be seen again in this or any other country.

We left Sacramento and crossed the valley. There were then only a few cabins here and there on the way. Along the route, we saw great cracks in the earth caused by the drought, and cattle running wild and feeding on wild oats. Wild geese and brants in countless numbers were all about us. The rain had just began to fall and this made traveling bad without good roads. When we reached Sonoma, we found quartered there a few of the Second Dragoons, who had come in from Mexico with Major Graham's command. We were quartered in an adobe building belonging to General Vallejo, and he lived in a part of it. The front of the building was on the plaza, was square and two stories high. It was enclosed by a huge adobe wall in the rear, which answered as a corral for our stock. The general was one time governor of California. He was fine old Castilian gentleman. His family were Catholics and I saw them going to mass quite frequently, and it seemed to me that the old Mission bells at Sonoma were the sweetest in tune I ever heard and I think so now.

Soon after our arrival at Sonoma, the general sent for me and said he wanted me to look after his quarters, a sort of body servant, and said I would be relieved of soldier duty. But I respectfully declined, saying that I had enlisted as a soldier and would serve my time. Instead of taking offense at my frankness, he complimented me for the stand I had taken and during the remainder of my stay there gave me marked attention, and seemed to be interested in my welfare. I wasn't ready to settle down anyway. I wanted to get back to my regiment in Oregon as soon as possible. Col. Joe Hooker was adjutant general of the post and Lieut. Alfred Pleasanton aide de camp. Col. Hooker was a very fine looking officer, especially so when mounted on horseback. Pleasanton was effeminate looking, but made a fine appearance on parade. He afterwards became a noted cavalry general in the Civil War. In March, 1850, he was court martialed for some alleged misconduct. General Mansfield presided. Of the members of the board, I remember Captain Lyons (afterwards rose to be General Lyons and was killed at the battle of Wilson Creek in Missouri), Captain Casey, Major Sewall and others—a notable array of officers who nearly all became men of note and rank in the Civil War, on one side or the other. General W. Halleck was judge advocate, prosecutor, afterward commander-in-chief of the U.S. Army. Lieut. George Derby, a topographical engineer, I believe, was the man who preferred the charges against General Hooker. I was detailed as orderly for General Halleck at the court martial. It lasted nearly two weeks and finally resulted in General Hooker tendering his resignation. Afterward in the Civil War, he became famous as the hero of Lookout Mountain.

Chapter 15

In April, 1850, those of use who had not deserted from the escort were ordered to join our regiment at Vancouver. Captain Morris was ordered back east to enlist new volunteers and I never heard of him afterward. We were in San Francisco on election day, April, 1850. There I saw Col. Jack Hayes, the noted Texas ranger, who was a candidate for sheriff. Here we boarded the revenue cutter Ewing, bound for Astoria, Oregon. We were out in a heavy storm ten days and I thought many times I would never see land again. When we finally reached the mouth of the Columbia River, it was nearly night and no pilot boat. In the face of a threatening storm, it was go to sea or pass over the bar. We had some 20 or more English man-of-war men in our crew, who had deserted and joined the Ewing. They were all good sailors and under the direction of Captain McAurthur, ship commander, a whole boat was manned, and by hard work the ship was carried over the bar and anchored at Astoria. There I saw the timber for the keel of the first steamboat ever built on the Columbia River. It was built by James Frost, a brother of Lieut. Frost,

quartermaster of the Rioes. She was completed and called the Columbia, and I saw her many times puffing up and down the river.

From Astoria we pulled a whale boat up to St. Helens and next day went on to Fort Vancouver. Here I was assigned to Company A, Captain Van Buren. In May, 1851, the officers of the regiment were ordered east on recruiting services and the men were sent on board the steamer Massachusetts for Benicia, California, where I served as escort for Colonel McKee, Indian commissioner. We were out five months, when I was assigned to Company C.U.S. Dragoons, and went aboard the schooner Lincoln, bound for Port Orford, Oregon. Lieut. H. W. Stanton was in command. We were again in a fearful storm and were driven out of our course past Port Orford.

On January 3, 1852, about 4 a.m. were driven ashore on the beach near what is now Empire City, on Coos Bay. The vessel was a total wreck but strange to say, no lives were lost. We remained there until May, when we went overland to Port Orford. The summer of '52 was spent in the Coquille and Rogue River mountains, chasing Indians. The Shasta Costa Indians stole some of our horses. We pursued them to Big Bend on the Rogue River, attacked their village and routed them, securing our horses. These Indians had only bows and arrows and were not formidable. It did not take long to route them and then retreated down the river in canoes and to the brush on the mountain side. Some 15 or 20 of them were killed.

We returned to Port Orford. Captain A. J. Smith, who afterward rose to rank of general, was in command, with Lieut. Stanton quartermaster of the post. George W. Stineman was 2nd lieutenant and became a noted general in the Civil War. I was promoted to corporal by Stanton, who told me I would be advanced the first vacancy that occurred, and I was soon thereafter made quartermaster sergeant of the post. Stanton was directly ordered to Texas, where he was killed in a fight with the Comanche Indians. I remained quartermaster of the post until Sept. 23, '53, when my term of five full years had expired.

All this time I had seen service on the frontier and nearly all the time had trouble with the Indians and we were almost constantly on guard to protect ourselves and stock from the savages. I was always lucky in having good officers over me and was never imposed upon by any of them—in fact, in all the five years never received a harsh word from any of them. I do not think there is now a man living and very few dead who met with and served under more men to afterward rose to high rank and prominence in the army than myself. I never picked up a paper during the Civil War but what I read of army leaders on one side or the other, prominent in battle, whom I had not know intimately or had seen many times. And in retiring from the army, I felt proud that I had never deserted the flag, had kept through all temptation the promise made to my father when I left the old home.

I was now but 21 years old and had saved up about \$800, even if my pay had been small. The question was now up to me whether I should go to West Point on recommendation of Captain Smith and other officers and complete a military education or try the mines. It was a momentous question for me to solve. If I had foreseen the coming of the Civil War, my chance for promotion and advancement in the ranks would not doubt have influenced me to have been a trained soldier. But mines and money had so tempted me and I had seen so many people rise from poverty to riches in a few days, that I decided to become a gold hunter, seeking fortune rather than fame. Besides, I never have cared to go back east since the day I first put foot on western soil, and I think very few people who come west nowadays suffer much from homesickness or pine very long for the old home and friends back in the states.

Chapter 16

Before leaving Port Orford, I formed a partnership with an old friend and chum of my company, George H. Abbott, to invest our means in suitable outfits and go back to the mines. We

bought some horses, supplies, etc., and packed out to Randolph mines where a good deal of gold was being picked up at that time. We located claims and did fairly well but were always having trouble with the Indians. They became so bothersome and dangerous in '54 that our camp and people in the surrounding country decided to beat them back. A company of rangers was formed with Abbott for captain. I was selected as lieutenant. We found them encamped at the mouth of the Coquille River and a fight followed, in which a number of Indians were killed and the rest scattered and driven back into the interior. One that I captured was held prisoner and was afterward tried and hanged in May, having been one of the band that took part in the killing of Venable and Burton at Dead Man's Slough on Coquille River in the previous March. He was convicted on the evidence of his own people.

Early in the spring of '54, Abbott and I located land on Roland Prairie, intending to go into cattle raising, but shortly after the Johnson mines were discovered and we went and opened up a store and mines in addition, but they were soon worked out and we had to seek a new location. Abbott went to California and I back to the ranch. But I soon sold out and took up a place lower down on the Coquille River with Alexander Jones. In the summer of '55 General Palmer visited western Oregon and made treaties with the Indians but they soon got restless again and with the Rogue River Indians decided that they would kill off all the settlers in that part of the country. There were quite a number who had come in during the summer and opened up homesteads. In November the settlers found it necessary to make a fort and prepare for the worst. I was elected captain of the company we organized and commissioned as such by Governor Curry. By this time the Rogue Rivers were on the warpath in earnest, doing all the deviltry they could. The Indians round about us saw it was useless to try to carry on their scheme as we had anticipated their movement and were in shape to defend ourselves. Realizing the folly of trying to war against us, they finally came in and surrendered, three tribes in all. I placed them on a reservation across the river from Myrtle Point and kept them there until they were turned over to Indian Agent Wright, who was gathering all bands of Indians at Port Orford. I then discharged my company after 53 days' service. Chas. Settler was the last member of my company alive a short time since.

The settlers all sustained a loss of considerable time and money on the outbreak. I next went to Empire City and found here more Indian trouble. Joined Capt. Harris' company and was elected first sergeant. We put in most of our time scouting the running down bad Indians, and most of them were that kind if the opportunity presented itself. At Empire City we constructed a rude fort for families to retreat to in case of necessity. We were informed that "Indian Pete," one of the Burton and Venable murderers, was hiding at an Indian rancho back a ways in the mountains and I was ordered to take a squad of men and get him. I did so and very quietly came in on him unawares and had him in our clutches before he was aware of our presence. He was taken to Empire City and tried before a jury, convicted and hanged. The hanging took place just below the town. Five Indians were implicated in this murder. Two were hanged at Randolph, one at Port Orford, one at Empire City, but the fifth made good his escape.

I served with Harris' company over 100 days. After being discharged, I was employed to make out the quartermaster and commissary reports—80 days time at \$16 a day. I then started down the coast, stopped for a time at Lounts on Elk River, and while there word came in that rich mines had been located on Sixes River. M.H.W. Sanford and I pushed forward and located a good mine. This was in 1856. In the summer of '57 an election was held to select delegates to the constitutional convention. Oregon was to become a state. I never knew how I happened to become a candidate. I never lost a day from work and was elected without opposition. I was personally acquainted with almost every man, woman and child in Coos County and had taken part in many miners' meetings where our rude laws were made and enforced, often acting as chairman of these meetings.

The laws of the Medes and Persians were not in it when compared with miners' laws. I recall one instance. A young lady had been outraged and murdered. A halt in mining operations was called and a council was called and every man and Indian had to give an account of himself

during the time the act was committed. Two days were spent in investigation and everybody gave a satisfactory account as to their whereabouts excepting one fellow, and after all the evidence in the case was sifted down, he was by unanimous vote found guilty. A gallows was erected at the place where the crime had been committed and on it he was hanged. Later on the miners of this county found it necessary to inflict capital punishment on some men who had been guilty of murder. In due time I received my certificate of election to be held at Salem. I left my partner in charge of our claims and went forth to do my part in framing a constitution for our state.

Chapter 17

Of the 60 delegates elected to the Oregon Constitutional Conventions, only one is now living and that is Wm. H. Packwood of Baker. This convention was held at Salem and was composed of a lot of strong men, many of whom afterward became prominent, not only in the state but all over the nation. Several of the members had emigrated from Iowa and the constitution of that state was taken as the groundwork for Oregon's first constitution, adapting it to western conditions and the wants and desires of her people.

Mr. Packwood had known very few of the members prior to their meeting at Salem but formed many friendships that in after years were close and faithful to the end. As he looks back over the past, he says he more feels that he was associated with the most distinguished body of men ever convened together in Oregon and can scarcely realize that he is the last of all that number and only one to answer to the roll call. The state, of course, had no public buildings; in fact, had no established capital. They met in the second story of a frame building, there being no brick buildings in the town at that time. One session lasted for 60 days and a vast amount of work was accomplished. Every one was busy from day to day on the work assigned to the various committees.

Mr. Packwood takes great pride in pointing to the fact that one of his committees was that of selecting a coat of arms and state seal and that at his suggestion the elk's head, sea view, etc., were adopted. The work of the convention being completed, Mr. Packwood paid a visit to his old friend Abbott, who was Indian agent at Yaquina Bay. He next found employment with R. B. Metcalf, Indian agent at Siletz, making up agency reports for '57. While here they had some trying times with the Indians. Metcalf was disarming them and it was not an easy task as they rejected the order to yield up the arms they had secured from different sources. There were some 2500 of them around Siletz. One morning, "Cutter Jim," old John Rogue River, the chief's son, rode by in a sort of threatening attitude without making any motion toward giving up his gun. Metcalf took his Dragoon pistol and walked out, directing Packwood to not allow the Indians to take the office, while he took Jim's gun. The Indian had gone to Tamnatissa, Mackanotin chief's house and left his horse on the outside while he sat in the doorway. Metcalf came up behind and put his hand on the Indian's shoulder, requesting him to surrender his arms.

The Indian did not propose to yield and jumped around behind his horse and got first shot at Metcalf. The Indian's aim was not good, for he missed Metcalf, who rushed around on the other side of the horse and shot the Indian in the back, the latter falling near the horse's head. He was trying to get another shot at Metcalf when a sergeant rushed up and shot him dead. Mr. Packwood says he was witness to the whole transaction, standing in the office door less than 100 yards distant.

This aroused the ire of the whole tribe and the post was besieged by the Indians for nearly a day. There were about a thousand of them to eight or nine whites fortified in the office, a sort of log cabin. A wagon road run about 50 yards in front of the office. The whites gathered on the porch with pistols in both hands and called out to the Indians that the first Indian that crossed the road would be killed. They could only attack the post in front and time and again they would charge up to the road and then stop. They kept up their threats of attack all day long, but with all the urging from the squaws, they invariably balked at the road for the pistols and rifles aimed at

them from the porch they knew would bring death and destruction to many of their number if they crossed over the dead line. About dusk they drew back and, strange to say, made no night attack, notwithstanding their great preponderance of numbers.

Mr. Packwood says he has been in a great many closer places in his time but none so protracted or threatening as this. The anxiety and dread was not over til morning came, as they were expecting any moment during the night for the entire horde to move upon them and massacre the whole bunch. It was quite a relief next morning to find that the Indians had all fallen back, without any blood shed or even a gun being fired. But one crack of the rifle any time during that entire day would have brought on the fight, the result of which would easily have been foretold as there were 100 to 1 in favor of the savages. The work of disarming the Indians in that quarter was suspended for a time, until the post was strengthened by a large force of U.S. rifles.

Chapter 18

While the gold fields of this western country continued to yield bountifully and men found small fortunes in a few days, the desire to gamble raged among most all classes of people. Those especially who had not been successful in the diggings as they had hoped for, were inclined to try their luck in the gambling dens, which were to be found in every mining town or camp, while most of those who had struck it rich had a desire to increase their fortunes at the gambling table. So there were few who did not take part in the game of chance, sooner or later. Very few miners were ever satisfied to let well enough alone. The experience of Mr. Packwood, as he relates it, was similar to that of hundreds of thousands of others, only that by the intercession of a friend he was prevented from staking his all, and one lesson lasted him a lifetime.

While at the agency of Siletz, the long winter evenings were usually spent at card games of different kinds. A Mexican game called "Monte" seemed to be the most popular. A man named Williams had come in from the Willamette Valley with two packs of cards for Monte. "His brother-in-law, who was our beef contractor," said Mr. Packwood, "privately told me that I could rely on cards and opened a bank. I put in almost twelve hundred dollars. The game went on for a time with varied success, sometimes winning and sometimes losing. When I rung in the French pack of cards, I usually lost. Williams was among the light betters. After about three hours' dealing, I noticed the entire crowd was following William's bet on some card. I should have closed the bank then, but believing that everything was straight, I continued on. Finally on a layout Williams asked if I would take a turn-down. We had been playing with no limit except money in sight. I said yes, so he turned his card. I then pulled the card and he won. The bank was Williams' now. I went into an adjoining room where there was a safe in which I had some land warrants worth 200 each, intending to continue the game at any hazard. While I was out, Williams picked up the cards and gave a layout. A man named Metcalf, who had been a looker on, continued to try his luck and made two fifty-dollar bets and lost. He grabbed both packs of cards and threw them into the log fireplace, being mad and excited. As soon as I returned with my land warrants, he said to me: 'no more cards. I lost in this skin game since you stepped out and the packs are in the ashes.' That closed the game and Williams was \$1300 ahead. After the crowd had left, Metcalf told me he had been watching the game and felt sure there had been a pack of marked cards run in to rob me, and when he took a hand in it, he knew his suspicions were correct, so to save me further loss he burned the cards. I thanked him for his kindness and right then and there resolved never again would I engage in gambling of any kind. I have witnessed many similar games on Baker county soil, and always some fellow with a pocket full of money would be sure to come out penniless and disheartened.

"In the spring of '58, I was in charge of the agency at Yaquina Bay and while there had some exciting times. We kept a good sized boat locked down at the shore so that in case of necessity or attack by Indians we could put out to sea. One morning an Indian named Umatata was given leave by me to go to Alsea, about 12 miles down the coast. Soon afterward, he, with a

band of Indians, came rushing back, giving the most hideous yells. They all ran for the boats and I ran to protect ours, which they were trying to tear loose. I drove them back and kept it until an old Indian in whom I could rely said if I would let them use it to cross the bay, he would see that it was brought back. The cause of the excitement was that Umatata had found a huge whale ashore near the Alsea Indians' line and wanted our Indians to capture it first, which they succeeded in doing, but the Alseans were allowed the privilege of having as much of the whale as two of the men could cut. The whale was about 70 feet long and it took several days for them all to cut and pack it.

Chapter 19

While it was not a very difficult matter to earn and make money in the early days, there were, nevertheless, thieves, cut-throats, assassins, stage robbers all over this western country, who preferred to play their vocations as opportunity offered in preference to earning an honest living by the sweat of their brows. When a miner was known to have made a rich strike or a stockman to have disposed of his flocks and herds, the rascals were on their trails waiting and seeing opportunity to rob them of their hard-earned accumulations. Mr. Packwood relates an experience he had with one of these fellows, making a hair-breadth escape from his clutches in a miraculous manner, a dream being a warning and salvation. While he was serving Uncle Sam, Mr. Packwood had a chum named Barney Castle, who, while on sentry duty at Fort Leavenworth, killed a man who was trying to escape. After this the killing seemed to prey upon the mind of Castle and he would quite frequently get on a spree and there was no one in the company he would allow to arrest him but Packwood. Castle was finally killed in a massacre at the mouth of the Rogue River, February 22, 1856.

In November, '56, Packwood had collected together about \$1200 and started for Enchanted Prairie, on the Coquille River, to start a stock ranch. He had dreamed of Barney quite often after he had been killed and he seemed always to be in trouble on Packwood's account. He was making the journey alone and on horseback and the first night out stopped at a deserted cabin. It was raining and chilly, so he made a fire on the dirt floor and after making himself as comfortable as possible rolled up in his blanket, but he had scarcely laid down when he heard a strange noise, a rattling of some loose boards in a little outhouse some 20 feet distant from the cabin. He suspected at once that some one was waylaying him and quickly extinguished his fire. He knew no attempt would be made to rob him till daylight as he would start to leave the cabin. He had no arms, nothing to defend himself with but the hatchet to cut brush, if necessary. He laid down to rest and plan how he might slip away from his would-be assassin and says he dozed off in a short nap long enough to dream of Barney Castle again, who seemed to be in a fearful fight with one who was trying to get to Packwood. As he awoke, he thought the dream meant for him to get away at once or he would be a dead man.

In the end of the shack as an opening just large enough for a small man to crawl through, and it happened to be on the opposite side of the shed from where the man was concealed. By reaching out of the window and taking hold of a rafter he pulled himself up and down on the ground without making any alarm or noise to attract the attention of a fellow who was after his money. After leaving the cabin, for some distance he made a sort of circuit around through the timber and hid a few hundred yards from the house among some rocks, where he could see and be sure that the man he suspected was trailing him. But as daylight came on it was foggy and he could not see the cabin but he heard his man battering down the door, and when the fellow discovered that the bird had flown, he fired off his gun and Packwood knew its report as well as he would have known the man's voice, as he had heard it hundreds of times before.

Knowing that the fellow would try to get on his track, Packwood made a long detour through the brush, crossing the regular trail at Sugar Loaf mountain. Here he saw the fellow's tracks and knew them. He then left the trail and made a beeline for a ranch he knew was not many miles distant on the river, owned by a man named Huffman. This same fellow had stolen Huffman's

canoe to get on home after he had given up his hunt for Packwood. He told his neighbors that he had been out elk hunting for a day or two but had no game to pay for his trouble.

Mr. Packwood says he was in company with the fellow a number of times afterward and he always had a guilty look and shunned him on every occasion possible. The curious part of it all is, he says, that he has never dreamed of Barney Castle from that day to this, now over 55 years. When asked about the name of this would-be murderer, Mr. Packwood said he would not reveal it as his widow was still living and they had several children, who were good citizens and well respected. He said that a few years since he had helped to get a pension, her husband having been in the U.S. service along with Packwood in some of the Indian wars.

Instead of going into the stock business, he next went to Coos Bay and bought a load of flour, bacon, tobacco, gum boots, etc., and started for Sixes mines. The boat capsized in a storm and the crew of three came near losing their lives. After the boat turned over and dumped its cargo, they managed to cling to its sides until the wind subsided, when they drifted ashore. A portion of their stores were rescued and they got on to the mines. From there Packwood went to Salem as a delegate to the first constitutional convention.

Before leaving the mines his cabin was the stopping place for no less a personage than Joaquin Miller and his wife, with whom he became well acquainted.

Chapter 20

Mr. Packwood served his country in the capacity of assessor, and in 1860 was candidate for the legislature on the Democratic ticket. The old time way of making a canvass was for the two candidates to go around together to see the people and make their speeches. His opponent was for the legislature was Capt. Tichnor. It was the custom after all speakings for one of the candidates to treat the crowd, and usually this was determined by shooting at a mark. Drinks were 25 cents each. Packwood was the better marksman and never failed to win in shooting. While his competitor won out by a dozen votes, he did it at a cost of some fourteen hundred dollars.

Griffin, Stafford, Schriver and Littlefield discovered gold in what was afterward called Griffin Gulch, up the canyon back of what is now the county poor farm, the latter part of October, 1861. They concluded to remain and test out their find, so a cabin was erected for them to winter in, the first one in the county. With about \$100 in nuggets taken from Griffin's mine, Littlefield and Schriver started for Walla Walla to buy gum boots and winter supplies. They spread the news of the new mines and it went like wild fire. Thus the early spring of 1862 found hundreds of people from all parts of the country steering their way for Powder River. The news reached Packwood very early in the spring of 1862, his old friend and partner, Abbott, writing him to hurry on to the new gold fields and they would open a store. He rented his ranch and stock for two years and with a saddle horse and enough money for traveling expenses, he rode to Portland and took a stock boat for The Dalles. Not having sufficient means to purchase a complete stock of goods suitable for a booming mining camp, he applied to Isaac Kaufman, a merchant, for assistance and was given all the credit he desired. Coming up on the boat he fell in with a man who had ridden a mule from California, bound for the Salmon River mines, and they journeyed on to Umatilla together. From there he struck out on the old trail and reached the Blue Canyon district June 12, 1862. People were pouring into the place from every direction. His partner, Abbott, had preceded him a few days and had pitched his tent and opened up a small stock of goods.

On June 13th, a miners' meeting was called and it was decided to proceed at once to laying out a town site called Auburn. The diggings round about were called the Auburn mines. As soon as a lot could be secured, the firm of Knight, Packwood & Abbott was formed and the work of erecting a long storeroom was begun. The building was about 30 by 50 feet. On June 29th

another meeting was called to elect a recorder. When the miners were all gathered, the spokesman, I. M. Kirkpatrick, announced that the two men whose names had been mentioned for the place were Wm. H. Packwood and E.C. Brainard. The Packwood men were to line up on one side of a log and the Brainard men on the other. Nearly everyone was a stranger to the others, and, to start the ball rolling, a loud-mouthed frontiersman bellowed out, "All you Webfooters come over to Packwood," when a Californian replied, "And all you Tarheads line up with Brainard."

On counting noses, Brainard was declared elected by a small majority. Wagneider's party of about 75 men had ridden into camp a few days before from California and their votes decided the contest. By the Fourth of July, Knight, Abbott and Packwood's store room was completed and a good stock of goods opened out. Packwood had charge of the store, while his partners looked after the other business of the firm. They carried on a large business while the boom lasted, running regular pack trains and ox teams to Umatilla.

The first cook stove every brought to Baker County was imported by them. A Mrs. Langbaugh and a Mrs. Love were on hand when the train arrived to the stove. Mrs. Love secured it for \$100 because she had the largest family to look after and care for. She was the first woman in the town. Ira Ward opened a store at Griffin's Gulch. Both concerns had many thousands of dollars credited out that would be lost unless water could be procured to operate the mines and year round. Packwood and Ward talked up the scheme of organizing a good strong company, the former being the prime mover. A. C. Goodrich, a civil engineer of considerable experience, was employed to make a preliminary survey around the valley side of the mountains, crossing Salmon, Marble, Mill and Goodrich creeks and on to Pine Creek. On August 30, 1862, Packwood called a meeting to organize the company, which was then and there named the "Auburn Water Company," with a capital stock of \$50,000. The stockholders were Henry Fuller, Ira Ward, G. M. Abbott, J. J. Williams, A. C. Goodrich, Isaac Smith, George Berry, Benj. Chotean and W. H. Packwood. Fuller was elected president, Packwood, secretary, Williams, treasurer, Goodrich, superintendent, and Fuller, Abbott and Ward trustees.

Chapter 21

Construction of the Auburn Canal.

Immediately after the organization of the company, work on permanent location and survey was begun and contracts let for the work in sections, and everything was pushed along as fast as men and money could do it at the time. By the 15th of November several miles were under contract and partly finished. W. D. Crane, representing Portland capital, came to Auburn and went over the line and inspected the mines with a view of buying same and asked for a price to be made. A special meeting of the stockholders was called on November 17, 1862, and Crane was told that he could have the plant by paying all expenses to date, and, in addition thereto, pay stockholders 25 percent profit on all moneys paid out. Crane accepted and the name of the company was changed to "Auburn Canal Co.," and they completed the work at a coast of about \$225,000.

It would be impossible to overestimate the value of this enterprise in causing Baker County to settle up with miners, merchants and enterprising ranchers. All these rights are now owned by Baker, furnishing a never-failing and invaluable supply of the purest mountain water, not excelled by any city in the United States, and all at a nominal cost. The city would hardly have been able to construct such a complete system of water works as we now enjoy if the old Auburn canal had never been built.

On Sept. 10, 1862, the town of Auburn was shocked by the announcement that two men had been poisoned and were dying. They had recently come in from Colorado and were tented with a Frenchman named Lucien Garnier. While the three were eating breakfast one of them named Tessier, was suddenly seized with violent pains. The other ran to summon Dr. Rackerby and on his way back stopped at the spring to take a drink of water and he, too, was taken with

convulsions and was carried to the tent, where antidotes were administered to both, but Tessier died. After considerable doctoring the other man recovered.

A piece of bread was taken from the table and given to a dog and soon after eating it the dog died with convulsions. The doctor found some crystals of strychnine in some flour and it was a plain case of poisoning. Suspicion at once fell on Garnier, as it was known that he had some time before threatened vengeance upon the two men in a quarrel.

Auburn was not then a legally organized seat of justice, but it was decided that Garnier should be tried then and there, for to send him off to The Dalles would mean that he would probably go free. Wm. H. Packwood, James R. McBride and S. Able were selected as judges and a jury was duly impaneled with Geo. C. Robbins as foreman. Geo. Hall was appointed sheriff. Attorneys Shaw and Kelley were appointed to prosecute and Pierce and Gray to defend the prisoner. After the regular form of trial was gone through with, the jury found Garnier guilty of murder in the first degree, and Judge Packwood sentenced him to be hung on the following Friday, hangman's day. On Thursday he appealed to Judge Packwood for permission to have dinner with his friends and to dispose of his property as he desired, which was granted.

It was suspected that an effort might be made to rescue him from his impending doom, as there was at the time a large element of roughs in the camp, so the judge directed Sheriff Hall to organize a guard of four men armed with rifles to see that justice was meted out to the prisoner, and this prevented any trouble. The scaffold was completed Friday morning and Garnier was brought forth by the guard. About 2000 people were present to witness the hanging. Packwood and a minister named Crawford went on the scaffold with him and the sheriff. Being a Catholic, he refused to have anything to do with the preacher and there was not a priest at the time in Auburn. He then very deliberately and kindly shook hands with the judge and sheriff, the hood was adjusted and in a few minutes he was dropped into eternity. This was the second man that Mr. Packwood, in the capacity of judge, had pronounced the sentence of death upon, the first having been Indian Pete in 1856. Packwood says that he has always felt grateful that both seemed to die with a kind and friendly feeling toward him in their last moments. Both were as calm and collected as they would have been on their way to a miners' meeting, instead of entering upon an eternal sleep.

Early in November, 1862, the Auburn people were again startled by the report that two men had been fatally stabbed by a man called Spanish Tom. Their names were Edmund and Larabie. All three had been gambling in a saloon and got into a fracas and Tom was shot but not seriously injured. They all went out on the street when the fight was renewed and Tom succeeded in killing them both with a dagger. He made his escape but there being snow on the ground, he could be easily tracked. He was found in Mormon Basin, arrested and brought back to Auburn and turned over to the sheriff, who put him in a cabin and stationed guards around him for safe keeping. But Tom's case never reached trial, as a mob was gotten together by Capt. Johnson and the prisoner was taken from the sheriff's custody, a rope was tied around the prisoner's neck and he was dragged down the canyon to a tree and hanged. A full description of this event is given in Hiatt's history of Baker County. It was a lesson for the roughs of Auburn and one that never had to be repeated.

Chapter 22

The Organization of Baker County

On the 22nd day of October, 1862, Mr. Packwood was married to Miss Joanna A. O'Brien, who had started teaching the first school in Baker County. The marriage ceremony was performed by the Rev. Father Mesplie, a Catholic priest then stationed at Auburn. There was no place then to get a marriage license and none was necessary when a priest officiated. They put up a cabin on the side of the hill and started housekeeping October 23, 1862.

After the organization of the county and appointment of county officers, the first session of the county court was opened on November 3, 1862, at which time Mr. Packwood was appointed county superintendent of schools. His first official act was the issuing of a certificate for teaching to a Mrs. Stafford, who succeeded Miss O'Brien in the Auburn school, and was the second teacher in Eastern Oregon. She died early in the spring of 1863 and was buried at Auburn. The years '63 and '64 were prosperous ones for most everybody in Eastern Oregon. Gold mines were found and opened up in many places that yielded small fortunes.

Concluding that he could do better elsewhere, he sold his interest in the store to his partners and in the fall of '64 drove his cattle from the coast across the mountains and for a time herded them up on Beaver Creek, selling the herd for \$19,980. He then bought an interest in the Clark Creek mines with Rufus Perkins and others. He built the Clark ditch and opened up the first hydraulic claim in the county. In 1865, he incorporated a company and established ferries across Snake River at Farewell Bend, Center and Washoe, three ferrying points. R. P. Olds was president of the company and W. H. Packwood secretary and treasurer. This was about March 1st, 1865. The first nine months they booked \$102,000 for ferry fees and of this amount collected over \$100,000.

On one day, July 4, 1867, the ferry fees at Olds' amounted to over \$1000. The charges were for a four horse team, \$3; two horse team, \$2.50; single horse or cow, 50cents. Their boats were from 50 to 60 feet long and about 16 feet wide. They were at first operated with six men at the oars but later wire cables were stretched across the river to which the boats were anchored and by means of which they were pulled across the channel in from seven to eight minutes. In 1867 a steamboat was built and plied between Olds and Glens ferries, a distance of 135 miles.

In the fall of 1868, Packwood sold his interest in the ferry company and went to the Eldorado mines, which were very promising at that time. His first work was to build the Eldorado ditch. Eldorado was a thriving camp for a few years and was located two miles from Malheur, but, like a great many mining camps, went to the bad, and after gold mining ceased to pay was entirely deserted. In the fall of 1870, Packwood removed to Baker, bought and built upon a lot where the Packwood hotel now stands and has made Baker his home ever since. In 1870 he was employed to build the Eagle canal or Sparta ditch, at a cost of \$90,000. The Eldorado ditch, when finally completed, cost over a million dollars and was 135 miles in length. Very few of the canals and ditches that were built for mining purposes half a century ago are used for that purpose now, having been changed to irrigating canals, for which purpose they are of inestimable value. For a time, after the placer mines were exhausted, it looked as if millions of dollars had been spent to little purpose, but today they are worth many times their original cost to the ranchers of the country, whose lands would not have been opened up and developed had not a bounteous water supply been available. One occasionally comes across an unused ditch along some of the mountain sides representing a vast expenditure of money and labor, and one cannot help reflecting upon the misguided efforts of the over-confident miners and capitalists of early days, who were so certain that untold fortunes would be the reward for the efforts and labors they were putting forth. A few fortunate ones saw their fondest hopes realized, but hundreds of miners and prospectors of that early day not lie in unmarked and forgotten graves, lost forever to the relatives and friends that were left behind, back in civilized centers of the east, when they took up their line of march on the Old Oregon Trail.

Chapter 23

W. C. Hindman

Probably the oldest trailer now living in Baker County is W. C. Hindman, born in Kittaning, Pa., April 30, 1821, now in his 92nd year, his parents moved to Youngstown, O., in 1828 and here he spent his boyhood days, when he arrived at his majority he made two or three excursions through the west and finally settled in Iowa, not far from Council Bluffs. Here he operated a large farm for several years very successfully, up to the time of the Civil War. He was a strong

Douglass Democrat and was nominated for the legislature but refused to make the race, as his sympathies were with the South and he could not become a candidate without publishing his honest convictions, and that would mean trouble for himself and party.

He said that if forced to take sides he would have to go to the South, so to keep out of trouble his wife persuaded him to trail to Oregon. Early in May, 1863, he fitted up a three-horse team for the family and an ox team for four yoke and went to Omaha to joint the first train out. He had also three milk cows, so their supply of good milk and butter would not be stinted, and his foresight proved instrumental in maintaining the health of the family. Nearly everyone else in the train suffered more or less from scurvy, mountain fever and kindred troubles. Pastures were excellent that season and quite frequently they had to milk their cows three times a day so they could keep along with the train. The milk was placed in tin cans and a day's travel would always churn it thoroughly and always kept them in an ample supply of fresh butter.

Their route lay up the north branch of the Platte River and they journeyed several hundred miles before any Indians were seen except an occasional scout. As they neared the Black Hills, Indians were frequently sighted and many visited their camp. One day, as Mr. Hindman had to drop behind the train to repair a wagon, a big brave with several followers rode up and with yells tried to stampede his horses and cattle, but he had them well in and kept them secure. The chief then walked to Hindman's wife and waved a tomahawk overhead in a threatening manner. She was not in the least daunted by his threats but gave him a push back and stepped back to the wagon. After trying to intimidate Hindman, they rode away, giving the war whoop as they had done in swooping down upon them.

A few days later they laid up for a couple of days, coupling up and repairing wagons for the trip on through the Black Hills. Hindman was not the captain of the train, the first man selected having proved to be in competent and a coward. The day before they were to take up their march again they were visited by Big Bear, the acknowledged head of all the Sioux tribes and warriors. He asked for the white chief and Hindman was pointed out to him. He marched up very boldly, placed his hand on the captain's shoulder, silently stared into his face for a few moments and then inquired if he had been sent out into that country by the Big white Chief, the president. Captain Hindman informed him that he was there by order of the president and that it would be fatal to his people if any of the whites under his command were molested or mistreated. Knowing that an Indian is always ready for a square meal, he invited him to a seat, while Mrs. Hindman was instructed to prepare as good a feast as their larder would allow.

The two men sat down to the table and it seemed to him that Big Bear would get his fill, but once he was filled he seemed amiably inclined and promised for the president's sake he would see that his party had safe passage through the Sioux country. He inquired of Hindman how many squaws he had and being informed that he had but one, he boastfully said that he had two and would bring them to camp and introduce them. So away he galloped and in a short time returned with two squaws, decked in their best and showiest attire. The captain the meantime and gotten together several presents for the big chief and his squaws, which pleased them very much, and the white chief was invited to come to the Indian camp that night and take part in their dance.

Knowing it would not do to refuse the invitation, several of the whites went to their camp and performed as best they could in the dance, amusing each other with their awkward motions as much as they did the Indians. A few more presents were made, including some plug tobacco, the pipe of peace was passed around and the next day they were on the trail rejoicing. True to his promise, Big Bear sent word ahead of the train, and not only were they not molested on the way but were extended many favors by the various bands of warriors they came upon almost every day. Two days later they came across Little Bear and were treated with every courtesy that an Indian friendly to a white man could extend. So their fears of trouble with the Indians gradually subsided, as they saw that Big Bear had made his promise good.

Chapter 24

Little Bear journeyed with them for a day or two, showed them where to camp and even helped them get wood and water. The trophy he seemed to be most fond of and which he carried on his person all the while were the scalps of 11 Snake Indians he had killed in hand-to-hand combats, which to the whites seemed rather a cruel thing to have done and boast of. But the Indians' likes and dislikes are very strong and he never has any sympathy or fellow feeling for an enemy or even a fallen foe.

All the train now felt very secure so far as Indian trouble was concerned and having nothing else to trouble them, some of the women of the train one night got to quarreling over the politics and the war. There was a mixture of all parties in the train. Presently the men took part in the fuss and things were pretty warm for a time. Knives and pistols were drawn and it seemed that blood would be shed freely, but reason prevailed and at the command of some of the cooler heads peace was restored and all were admonished not to bring the matter up again.

As they started through Wind River Mountains, a terrible fire could be seen raging two or three days ahead, and it was conjectured that hostile Indians were burning the prairies to cut off all feed for their stock and then starve or kill them. As they reached the place where the fire had been raging, it took a whole day's hard travel to get across the burned area and some of the party had very narrow escapes as they passed on through the flames in places that seemed like veritable fiery furnaces. The only stampede of stock they had was the night after they had crossed the burned prairie. A fellow dressed himself up in a buffalo robe and, rushing amid the camp, scared the stock and started them on a stampede, and it took the greater part of the next day to bring them all in again and get started on their way.

After passing Fort Laramie, the Indians were more hostile and shunned them. One day, numerous bands were sighted some distance away from the trail and from their maneuvers they felt that the train would be attacked that night. So everything was put in shape, extra guards were kept on duty and all slept on their arms. Two men who were arrant cowards crawled off under the wagons and pretended to be sick, but their wives took their guns and places bravely and were ready to do their duty. Mr. Hindman says he never saw a woman who was not equal to any emergency when the crucial test was made.

Seeing the whites were prepared to give them a warm reception, the Indians passed them by and allowed them to continue on their journey unmolested. Considerable sickness prevailed in the train but they had but one death. Hardly a day passed that they didn't see the marks of newly made graves alongside the trail, with dry goods box coffins lying around, where wolves had robbed graves of their contents, leaving bare human bones scattered about on the ground.

An elderly lady was taken quite ill and seemed doomed to die. Of course everything that could be done for her relief was tendered but she gradually grew worse from day to day and she longed to be spared till they reached Fort Hall, where she could be given a decent burial without danger of having her remains devoured by wolves. She, no doubt, says Mr. Hindman, lived several days longer than she would have done had she not had that horrible dread of being eaten by the wolves. She died about 2 o'clock one afternoon at a point where the train could be halted. Here a grave was dug, a rough coffin was made out of dry goods boxes and early the following morning she was laid to rest and a mound of rock was piled over her remains.

It was rather a sad burial, not a song was sung, not a prayer offered, not a word said by anyone. As the train again took up the line of march, the husband was seen to mournfully and distractedly take his seat on the grave and it was late in the day when he overtook the wagons again.

The train reached Powder Valley Sept. 13, 1863. Most of them crossed over to Auburn. Hindman only remained there a week when he came back into the valley and located a homestead near where the James School House now stands, on what is now called the Adams ranch. The lands in the valley had not been surveyed. He got up a cabin by midwinter and then lived very comfortably on the dirt floor. There were then but five or six other ranchers located in the valley. He moved to Baker in 1883 to educate his children, built the house he now lives in, which was then the farthest out on the north side of town and right in the sage brush. Mr. Hindman has always been a prominent man in the development of Baker County and served one term in the legislature.

Chapter 25

James Little

We have been favored with a sort of diary and manuscript written by one James Little, who first came over the old trail in 1854 as a teamster or ox driver in a government freight train, carrying supplies for the forts and army posts that had been established at various points along the trail to protect and give aid to emigrant trains, and through stage lines that were then being operated between the frontier settlements and the Pacific coast. Little had been raised in Indiana but naturally took to a roaming life, traveling all over this western country for several years and finally settling in the John Day country, where he died a few years since at an advanced age.

In 1862 or '63, he stopped for a time in this valley, but it did not seem far enough away from civilization to suit him so he moved over to John Day, where it seems he found a country and its surroundings wild enough to suit his fancy. Anyway, there he finally settled, raised a large family and died.

Mr. Little came west in the early spring of 1854, landing at Independence, Mo., the latter part of March. It was then a Mormon town and the starting point for many emigrant trains, as well as government freighters bound for different points in the west. Kansas City was then simply a boat landing with two or three government warehouses. Many people from back in the states would then come to Independence in the fall and winter there so as to be ready to join a train for California or Oregon as soon as there was grass enough to feed teams. This would usually be about the latter part of April. The Indians were reported to be on the warpath most everywhere in the far west, but no one seemed frightened at reports of outrages being committed by savage bands of redskins, at least none turned back when they reached the jumping off place of civilization.

Little engaged with a train that was to carry supplies to different points along the trail, the trip to terminate at Fort Laramie and to start the first of May. There were ten old wagons and 30 new ones in the train, each carrying a load averaging about three tons. They started out with about 600 oxen. There were six yokes to each wagon, the rest being carried along as extras or recruits when other should give out or die. Most of these oxen had never been yoked and were not very gentle. A few pairs had seen service in former trips across the plains, so if a driver could get a pair of wheelers and a pair of leaders, he could fill in the four middle yoke with unbroken oxen, and they would have to keep in line.

Most of the drivers had seen service on the plains, many having made the trip clear to the coast and back. The cattle were all driven up and corralled the day before the start was to be made. At the command, "Get ready," it was a race among the drivers to get the best oxen. Little was a very tender tenderfoot. The old drivers could pick out the oxen they wanted at a glance. Those that had been broken to the yoke had scratches on their horns and mates kept together. Every man had his pick and had to keep his first selection, but, on the way, could exchange for any of the unselected cattle. The inexperienced fellows had little chance to get a good team.

When the word was given to yoke up, each driver grabbed a yoke and rushed in among the herd, and it looked as if every fellow in the corral would be trodden under foot. Cattle rushed from side to side of the corral and piled up against the fences. Experienced men seemed to have no fear and seemed to get their teams together without much trouble.

Little finally got a yoke on an old steer but he tore around and got loose; another kicked him, and, when a burly fellow shook his head at him and showed fight, he got out of the way. While the other teamsters all had their teams lined up, Little had only succeeded in yoking up one old fellow with a runt that seemed docile. They did not match but he thought perhaps they would gait up together. He found that he had been left in the race and that his six yoke would all be wild and inexperienced animals. The other fellows, seeing the trouble he was having, came to his rescue and helped him yoke up his team and get it fastened to the wagon. A vast prairie lay before them with no obstructions. As they took up the line of march there was all sorts of bucking and plunging of teams. They couldn't run away because they couldn't get in the same notion at once. Here again, Little was left behind, but he finally got his team to follow the other wagons by running from one side to the other, like driving up the cows. After the first day they followed without much trouble.

All freight for the teamsters was taken on at Kansas City and army supplies at Fort Leavenworth. This train was loaded with sugar and coffee, bacon and spices. One wagon in the train was loaded with provisions to supply the men in the train. It was well that the start was made with empty wagons, as raw teams could hardly have been moved off had they been heavily loaded for the first day out. When Indians were very hostile at detachment of soldiers usually accompanied trains, but none were with this train as it was not thought that there would be any trouble with the redskins.

Chapter 26

The train made slow progress at first as it was several days before the oxen would take hold of a heavy load as if they meant to pull it through, and frequent rains made the trail soft and heavy. The wheels would sink in places to the hub and tams had to be doubled and trebled to pull out. Sometimes a wagon would stick fast and had to be unloaded and it was a stiff pull to get it out empty. On one occasion it took a yoke of 32 oxen to get the wagons over a swampy part of the trail. These long teams would be twisted around like a whip lash by an experienced river and when they were swung out in line the weight of the oxen would either bring out the load or break the cleavus, quite frequently the latter.

On account of the heavy spring rains there were many streams to cross that later in the season became dry. The third or fourth day out they came to a crossing where the banks were steep and water was three or four feet deep. All the wagons got across without any mishap, excepting Little's. His right wheel struck a boulder of considerable size and over went the wagon into the river. He miraculously made his escape in the mix up with his floundering cattle. The train was stopped and all hands came to his rescue. The wagon was loaded with sugar, much of which was piled into the river. After the sugar had been carried ashore the wagon was dragged out and reloaded and it dripped molasses for a week. Little seemed to be continually in bad luck and everybody was poking fun at him.

At the next camp the wagon master told him he could go back to the states, as he had hired a man to take his place. Little was ready to obey orders but told the wagon master that he knew the fellow to be an outlaw and that he would be sorry if he employed him. The following morning as Little was getting ready to take the back trail, the wagon master came up and told him to hitch up his team and go on with the train. During the night the fellow had stolen the best mule in the train and skipped. Neither man nor mule was ever heard of.

The train was divided into six messes. Nearly all of the men were rough fellows and some of them afterward became border ruffians. Little, of course, got into the worst mess and they imposed upon him in every possible manner. All the hard work at camping places was put upon him. A fellow in another mess had observed the fact and, being of a sympathetic nature, he told Little that he'd never get his rights until he fought for them. So that evening, he was ordered to make a fire, which he had not sooner started than one of the men came along and kicked it over. Little told him that he would make another and if he touched it he'd lick him. As soon as the fire was started again the burly fellow came up to scatter it and as he stooped over, Little caught him by the hair and commenced kicking him. A hot fight ensued but Little finally grabbed up a wagon lever and was about to brain him when the fellow begged for quarter. After that Little dared to assert his rights and had friends to back him.

When about halfway up the Platte River, several hundred Sioux came down upon them from the north and showed signs of hostility. They were armed with bows and arrows and had on their war paint. While they were circling around the train the wagon master, acting as captain, ordered every man to get into line with guns and pistols, for a fight seemed unavoidable. As the Indians started to close in on the train, they were motioned to halt and come no nearer. After a parley among the braves, the old chief came riding in, giving signs of friendship, and only asked permission to beg something to eat and drink. They were allowed to come in and every fellow set up a cry for "whisk, shug and bac." Orders were to give them nothing. The captain made some presents to the chief and after detaining the train the greater part of the day, they moved away. It was learned that they were truly on the warpath but were after a band of Indians who had been trespassing on their hunting grounds.

Large gray wolves were continually following the train, as they seemed to know that animals would be left behind that give out, and they became easy prey to those savage beasts. Frequently they would watch among the cattle at night, so guards were posted to keep a sharp lookout for thieving Indians and prowling wolves. Cattle always fed on the grass till about 10 o'clock at night, then they would lie down and rest until 2, when they would again be up and graze till driven in for the start. Guards would usually take a nap while the cattle were quietly resting. It required close watching to keep them from straying towards morning and if the night was very dark, some of the oxen would get a mile or more from the main herd. They would not venture so far if wolves were howling close around.

Chapter 27

Trains were made up of all kinds of people, away from home and friends on sundry and diverse missions bent. Two young men had joined the train after it was out a few days, going west for their health, both having contracted tuberculosis. They carried along their own outfit, one riding a pacing mule, the other a pony. They could not ride much in the saddle at first, but each secured a place to rest in a wagon. By degrees they grew stronger and before the train was out a month, they were on their mounts all day long and brought in all the game needed by the several messes. A buffalo or antelope ham was usually swung from the wagon bows and from it the drivers would chip off a piece when hungry. By the time Fort Laramie was reached these men were practically well, from which point they found a train of emigrants going to California.

Most all the camping places had a name that was known to those who made a business of crossing the plains regularly for years in succession. Little had frequently heard the boys talking about things that had happened at Pine Butte and had an idea that it was a noted place but when it was reached found that it was only a small knob with a little patch of pines on it. Another camping place was called Mule Head because of the fact that there was here a monument built of skulls of mules, a mule train having been overtaken here late in the season by a terrific snow storm and starved to death. Devil's Den was the name of an immense canyon on the north side of the trail, so named because it looked as if it was impossible for anything but his Satanic

Majesty to descend to its depths, from which clouds of steam would roll up, the evaporation from hot springs.

Reaching Fort Laramie, the train was stopped, the freight was all housed and preparations made for the return trip. It was a difficult matter to find drivers going back, as most of the men were bound for the west coast. In hiring drivers on the Missouri, contracts were always made for the round trip if possible, but there were not enough men to be had who cared to tie themselves up as ox drivers indefinitely. Little made regular trips across the plains and on to California for several years. Becoming familiar with the mountain country, he was employed for a year or so as a stage driver and in that capacity made several narrow escapes from thieving bands of Indians.

Upon one occasion, on the head waters of the Platte, they were attacked by a band of 25 redskins. There were six passengers on the stage, all well armed, as people generally were in crossing the plains. Besides, there were several rifles carried along with the coach. The passengers all realized that unless they showed fight, all would be massacred. For a few minutes shots were exchanged rapidly and three Indians were seen to fall from their horses, but they were hurriedly picked up and carried away. Two whites were slightly wounded and two of the horse hitched to the stage were killed. Government troops were always informed of these attacks as soon as possible and detachments sent out to run down the thieving bands or run them out of the country. In most instances white renegades were leaders of these gangs, being outlaws from the states, and, but for them, the Indians would never have been so bloodthirsty and dangerous.

In 1862-63, the Eastern Oregon and Idaho country was the goal of a great majority of emigrants. While they had started out to find homes and fortunes in this great Northwest country, the old excitement caused most of them to switch off and try their luck in the mines. Some took up ranches that in the end proved the most profitable thing they could have done. Little finally tired of a rambling life and came into Powder Valley in 1863, but not being suited with the conditions here, crossed over into the then sparsely settled valley of the John Day, located a ranch and proceeded to stock it with cattle, which proved a very profitable venture. For a good many years that part of the country was cut off from the rest of the world, there being no means of regular communication with civilized centers, not even an overland mail. Frequent efforts were made to find and establish an emigrant route through Central Oregon to the coast, but mountains and canyons stood in the way in every direction and up to the time of building railroads through this part of the country the Old Oregon Trail was the only practical route for emigrants who desired to push on to the country near the coast to try their luck. Whole trains that ventured into these wilds were abandoned at impassable points and emigrants rode out on horseback and in some instances had to complete their journey on foot, enduring many trials and hardships on the way.

Chapter 28

David S. Littlefield

The rush and excitement incident to the early settlement and opening up of a new country, especially a mining country like Eastern Oregon, leaves little time for its busy, excited people to pay much attention to the history they are making to record the particulars of their early trials and hardships and the various incidents that had so much to do with the development of the country. The result is that much of what would be interesting history to future generations is lost forever in the passing of the advance pioneers.

A little more than half a century has gone by since the white man made his first permanent settlement in this Eastern Oregon country, but where still remain among us a few of the sturdy characters who figured prominently in establishing the first settlements, and it has been the aim of this series of reminiscences to get from first hand such facts and incidents as future posterity may be interested in before it is everlastingly too late.

Luckily, just a few days before his death, which occurred January 19, 1913, the venerable David S. Littlefield was interviewed at considerable length and from him were obtained many important items not previously recorded that could not now be obtained from any other source. He played an important part in the early settlement of this part of the state and was always a well known character and influential citizen. His whole life was full of adventure and the entire story of his ups and downs would fill a large volume. He was born in Waldo County, Maine, September 27, 1829. Early in life he developed the roving habit and while yet in his teens put out to sea. For three or four years he was before the mast on a vessel that plied between Cuban and U.S. ports in the sugar and molasses trade. Having acquired considerable knowledge as a sailor and tiring of frequent trips up and down the Atlantic coast, he decided to get into other parts of the world.

In the fall of 1849, while his vessel was lying in New York harbor, he noticed a placard on a vessel near by offering special inducements for sailors for San Francisco. Three years previous to this date his elder brother had gone to the Pacific coast and had sent back home several hundred dollars in gold and had written about the fabulous gold fields that were being unearthed in that far away country. The sight of the glittering nuggets had given him the California fever badly and he embraced the first opportunity offered to work his way west. He soon signed up with this vessel and was started on his arduous journey. His route took him across the isthmus, which at that time was beset with many dangers.

The overland journey across the isthmus proved fatal to many of his companions, as they had to make it on foot over a rough trail, through almost impassable swamps, contracting disease on every hand, and in the mad rush there was no help for those who dropped by the wayside. Altogether, he was more than six months reaching California, landing at San Francisco on the first day of August, 1850. Being a young stranger in a strange land and without funds, his first effort was to find work of some kind and it did not take him long to strike a job, for laborers were then in great demand. Some experienced men got \$25 a day for their services, but the cost of living was correspondingly high. These were indeed times when people had the right to complain about the extravagance of living.

The first man he struck for a job was a merchant who was engaged in furnishing supplies of all kinds to miners in the interior, and he got a place immediately at \$8 a day. He slept nights in the warehouse on piles of old bags and plunder as he was best able to provide from night to night. His meals were very irregular and made up mostly of bread, meat and coffee, but were rather expensive nevertheless. Saleratus was \$15 a pound, flour \$25 a sack, meat \$1 a pound. The price of boots and shoes ranged from \$50 to \$100, and even common shoe tacks were \$5 a box, that sell now for 5 cents. When you perchance got a potato, you paid \$1 per tuber, and everything else accordingly. But at the wages he was getting he soon managed to lay by a few hundred dollars and started out to find his brother, and after wandering about from camp to camp for quite awhile, finally located him in Calaveras County working in a mine making \$200 a day. He, too, went to mining and was quite successful, but as fast as he made money in one place, he tried for larger stakes in some other camp, and thus from time to time most of his funds were used in prospecting and development.

He said, though not complainingly, that he might as well have been a California millionaire in his old age as an Eastern Oregon rancher, if he had in his palmist days learned to let well enough alone and had husbanded his earnings. For about eight years, he shifted about through California and when the Frazier River gold excitement broke out, he hit the trail for new diggings. But he had poor luck and returned to California, poor in purse but riper in experience.

Chapter 29

In the spring of 1861, Littlefield and 20 other Californians started north for the Oro Fino mines, recently discovered in Washington territory. Arriving in Portland, the news from newly discovered mines was not very encouraging and the party, bent on adventure, was ready to engage in any sort of mining enterprise that presented itself. Littlefield and some other members of the party ran across a man named Adams who told some remarkable stories about being with a party of emigrants in 1845 that took an old trail up the Malheur River and over the Cascades and here they picked up nuggets of gold along some of the streams in blue buckets in immense quantities, but at the time were not sure it was gold. The entire party soon became interested in Adams' stories of the lost diggings and they employed him to conduct them thither.

His statements were corroborated by some other parties and the company increased in numbers to about 60 men. Some doubted the veracity of Adams but the entire party soon armed and equipped for the perilous journey and started out with Adams for guide. In addition to a pony to ride, each man had a pack horse loaded down with provisions, picks, shovels, axes and other necessary utensils for camp life. Journeying into the interior of Oregon they endured many hardships and for two months they wandered around, not knowing where they were. Adams all the while asserted he knew his bearings and would finally land them in the desired spot. The majority of the party, including Littlefield, still had faith in Adams as he had cast his lot among them and was trusting to fate the same as the others. He was finally given a week's time to find the diggings or get them out on a familiar trail that would lead them back to the starting point.

The time of probation having arrived and no diggings having been found, a halt was called and a number of the party favored the immediate execution of Adams. Wiser counsel, however, prevailed and it was agreed that Adams should be allowed a trial for his life. A jury was selected and the trial, which lasted all day, had some of the formalities of law. Evidence was adduced for and against, speeches were made on both sides and the jury took the case. This was the first jury trial ever held in central Oregon. But they failed to agree on a verdict until next morning, when they reported that instead of inflicting capital punishment upon Adams he should be deprived of his horse, arms, provisions—in fact, everything but the clothes he had on and be driven from the camp, all imagining that sure death from starvation would be his fate. This trial took place someplace near the head waters of Burnt River. But, notwithstanding the jury's decision, Adams still had some friends in the party who believed that he had been a man more sinned against than sinning and they resolved to see him safe in civilization again if possible.

Littlefield was one of this number. So, after Adams was sent adrift he kept in sight of the camp fires as they journeyed on and was furnished with food every day by his friends. After a few days more of adventures, the party divided, the larger number striking east for the old trail leading to Portland, while a dozen or more continued prospecting in a northerly direction. They, nearly all being friends of Adams, called him into camp on equal footing with the rest of the party. He always persisted in asserting that he had seen the lost diggings but acknowledged that he had become bewildered and was unable to locate them.

In the party that remained in the Burnt River country to prospect were the four men who had started out together from California, viz: David Littlefield, Wm. Stafford, Henry Griffin and G. W. Schriver. Stafford was selected as captain of the party and was so called in referring to or addressing him. They were all well armed, as the country at that time was full of Indians on the warpath and they were constantly on the lookout for the redskins for they knew not at what moment they might happen upon some roving band bent upon their annihilation. They wandered south from the Burnt River mountains and finally reached Harney Valley, when the party again divided up into squads, each one steering in the direction they thought would be most apt to bring them out to a trail that would lead back to civilization. They knew the Oregon Trail was not far distant and each squad started out to find it. Littlefield, Stafford, Griffin and Schriver still hung together and their course lay up through Harney Valley, which they then pronounced the finest valley in all this Oregon country. They continued prospecting as they journeyed northward, still having some hopes that the lost diggings might be found.

Chapter 30

Taking up a northerly course, the Littlefield party of four prospected China Creek and most all of the head branches of Burnt River, but found little to encourage them. Occasionally a small particle of gold was picked up in some of the arroyos but not enough to cause any excitement. Continuing on their course they crossed the divide between Burnt and Powder Rivers every once in a while, getting colors but finding no pay dirt. Reaching Powder River, they journeyed up it a short distance and on October 23 crossed over Blue Canyon, near where Auburn was afterwards located. Thence they crossed the ridge to Elk Creek and concluded to camp there a few days and prospect. This camp was located up the canyon now known as Griffin's Gulch, about six miles back of the present site of the county poor farm.

While Stafford and Schriver tethered the horses and arranged for meals in camp, Littlefield and Griffin started out prospecting. A few hundred yards out, Griffin sunk a prospect hole about three feet deep and struck bedrock. After shoveling around a little while, he found some small nuggets which he considered a good prospect, if they proved to be gold. He called Littlefield, who was a short distance farther up the gulch, and he too was very much elated over the prospect. They returned to camp and after testing and metal as best they could, all pronounced it gold and felt that their fortunes were made.

A light shift of snow had fallen that day and as they hovered around their camp fire cooking and eating their evening meal, all were jubilant over their final good luck and, as the first preliminary step to take, Littlefield suggested that the camp be named in honor of the lucky man and it was accordingly called Griffin's Gulch. The next morning all were up bright and early and they at once proceeded to stake off their respective claims. Griffin was allowed to locate one claim as discoverer and another by pre-emption and then 22 other claims of 200 feet each were staked off, lots being cast for choice of location. After prospecting up and down the gulch for several days and continuing to find pay dirt, they next decided to hunt up a water supply to operate the mine. It was decided that the waters of Elk Creek, then an unnamed stream, would be sufficient. The ditch was surveyed and, after consideration, it was decided they would break camp and go to Walla Walla for winter supplies.

While they were busily engaged prospecting their horses strayed down into Powder Valley. They were followed by Littlefield, who, upon returning, reported that he had found the finest valley in all this western country and the old Oregon Trail besides. As winter was approaching it was decided to leave at once for Walla Walla, which they accordingly did, and they lost no time in getting there. They reported what they had discovered and thus started the first Eastern Oregon gold excitement. All the necessary supplies having been procured, they journeyed back to Griffin's Gulch, and arrived there safely about November 12 and at once began to make preparations for the winter. Knowing that hostile Indians were around about them, they decided to build a cabin, not only to protect them from the inclemency of the weather but a place to which they could retreat in case of Indian trouble.

On the hillside above the camp were nice straight pines two feet in diameter. These were felled and cut in 20-foot lengths and rolled down the slope to the cabin site. These logs were notched down closely together and port holes, two on each side, were cut in to admit light and to shoot out of in case of attack by the Indians. A huge fireplace was built of boulders and mud in one end of the cabin about eight feet wide, and in the other end a door was cut and provided with a heavy shutter made of puncheons four inches thick. The cabin was covered with shakes, trimmed out of a huge pine with flattened picks made something like a frow. It took them about three weeks to finish their cabin and fix themselves bough beds for the winter, and after all was complete they had provided very comfortable quarters. They spent some time prospecting and had fairly good luck. Littlefield, being a good marksman, was detailed to gather some game in some manner and succeeded in bringing down a few deer and mountain sheep. Of the latter, the ewes made fine eating, but the bucks were never brought into camp. After their hides had been

dried before the fireplace, they helped to make their beds more comfortable when laid upon the boughs. The latter part of November, it snowed three feet deep and then rained for five days, and the whole of Powder Valley was inundated.

Chapter 31

They tried to work their claims despite the snow and rain, but soon found that little progress could be made without rubber boots and Walla Walla was the nearest point where they could be procured. It was a perilous journey to be made in mid-winter and no one was keen to make the trip. But as nothing could be done at working the mines until late spring unless the boots were procured, it was decided by a full house that two of the party should proceed at once to get them, together with some other supplies. They had but little ready cash, but they scraped up among them about \$100 in gold which they had taken from the several mines. Lots were cast to determine who should go and it fell upon Littlefield and Schriver. They started about December 20th afoot, with one pack horse to carry their blankets and provisions. The trip was made by slow stages as the trail was unbroken and snow from one to four feet deep. They were bothered of nights quite frequently by bands of grey wolves, when they would have to sit up and build huge fires to protect themselves and horse. A shot among them would usually drive them away. If a wolf was wounded he was immediately devoured by the rest of the band.

The only place on the route where they found any white people was in Grande Ronde Valley, where a few persons had taken up claims the previous summer. They spent Christmas day with these settlers.

Arriving at Walla Walla, they had considerable trouble in disposing of the gold dust they had collected, dealers suspicious that it was not the pure stuff. Finally they offered it to a Mr. Humason of Dalles, who bought it and sent it to Portland, where it was placed on exhibition to exploit the wonderful gold discovery that had been made on Powder River. All sorts of fabulous reports were circulated about the new mines, which started the grand rush to this locality in the spring of 1862.

Having disposed of their gold and secured their boots and some other supplies, they started out in a severe snow storm for the gulch. As they came back across the Blue Mountains the snow was so deep that for several days their horse could find nothing to eat, and when he was no longer able to continue on the journey, they turned him loose to soon become food for ravenous wolves, no doubt, while they shouldered their goods and continued on their way across the divide. After abandoning their horse they had not gone but a little way until he overtook them and lived on buds and twigs until they reached the valley. It was the latter part of January when they arrived at Griffin's Gulch.

Earlier in the season, when the four prospectors returned from Walla Walla with their winter supplies, they had 13 head of horses. They were turned loose down on Powder River to care for themselves as there was no hay gathered for them, and, strange to say, they came through the winter in good shape, excepting what they had suffered from attacks by gray wolves, which captured seven of the number. This loss was sustained before the animals learned how to protect themselves. They learned from sad experience that it was necessary for one of the number to be on guard constantly and when the wolves would swoop down upon them they would rush together and form themselves into a circle with their tails together. The wolves would circle about them, and when within reach the horses would strike and bite them, frequently killing one.

The winter was a long and severe one but the earth froze but little under the deep snow and it was possible to do quite a little work in the mines. As well as they could keep account, about 14 feet of snow fell during the winter.

The first white people to find them in the spring, about the first of April, were two trappers, both Canadians. The head man named Palmadore, who rode a mule, the other man riding a horse. Arriving at the camp, they concluded to remain there until winter broke. They decided to take their mule and horse down to the river and turn them loose with the bunch of horses, but Littlefield told them the wolves would get them inside of 24 hours. Palmadore was positive that his mule would take care of himself and kick the daylights out of every wolf that came within his reach. A day or so after the Canadian turned his animals loose, he went down the valley to see how many wolves his mule had killed, but both were missing and after hunting around for a while he found two bloody spots on the snow and a few bones, all that remained of the inexperienced mule and horse.

The latter part of the winter was spent in comfort and quiet at Griffin's Gulch. Of course they were entirely cut off from all communication with the outside world and they did not even have a book or paper to read. The long evenings were spent cracking jokes by the fireside or in relating to each other boyhood experiences and happenings back in the states. Quite frequently they would discuss the progress of the Civil War and wonder what the final outcome would be, as well as what the fates had in store for them when they busy mining season opened up in the spring

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