

LOST WAGON TRAIN OF 1853

(EMIGRANT PASS, WILLAMETTE)

ACCOUNTS OF SURVIVORS:

ANDREW S. MCCLURE
AGNES STEWART
ESTHER BRAKEMAN LYMAN
JOSEPH LEONARD FAMILY

OREGON CENTRAL
MILITARY WAGON ROAD

This is the approximate location of the Oregon Central Military Wagon Road which was constructed in 1853-54. This road extended from Eugene to the Owyhee County in Eastern Oregon. It was relicensed in the 1930s to accommodate auto traffic and further improved in the 1950s. Beyond this point identifiable portions of the Old Wagon Road are marked with smaller signs. In 1853 the Lost Wagon Train followed approximately the same course as the Wagon Road.

THE McCLURE FAMILY

Vincent Scott McClure was born Knox Co. Indiana, Aug. 30, 1815. He and James F. McClure both signed the articles of the "McClure Clan" 1853 before starting west. They had married sisters, daughters of Major William Bruce of Bruceville, Indiana, who was the father of 25 children by his two wives.

Vincent S. McClure married Sarah Bruce, who died in 1858, after reaching Oregon. They had a daughter, Hetty, already married in 1853 to Isaac Wm. Bond, and these accompanied the train to Oregon. Hetty was born Aug. 19, 1835 in Knox County, Indiana. Isaac Wm. Bond was the son of Joseph Bond and Mary Ashelman. Joseph Bond was born January 2, 1790 and died December 31, 1838. He was the son of Samuel and Mary Bond, of Virginia. Mary Ashelman was born Feb. 7, 1793 and died July 30, 1846.

Other children of Vincent and Sarah McClure were Jane, born Aug. 3, 1837 and William Henry Harrison McClure, born October 6, 1840. Died June 29, 1898. Sarah McClure dying in 1858, Vincent McClure remarried the following year, Sarah Tandy Benson, widow. They had a son who died in infancy.

McClure family (2)

James F. McClure, younger brother of Vincent McClure, married Nancy Ann Bruce. He died Sept 5. 1862 and she remarried, James Kirk.

James McClure and Nancy Ann Bruce had a daughter Jane Curry McClure who came with them to Oregon and later married Benjamin Franklin Owen, who had joined the McClure train, en route, being impressed by the discipline of its members and the character of the people in the group. Their other children were John, Alice, Ella and Samuel Ellis, Robert, Margaret and Albert.

James F. McClure died Sept 5, 1862 aged 41 yrs. 8mo. and 10 ds. He is buried at the Irving, Oregon, cemetery, not far from Eugene, Oregon.

Andrew S. McClure was born May 5, 1829 at Darwin, Indiana. He started west in 1853 with his relatives Vincent and James McClure and their families. At Fort Boise, together with other groups totaling over one thousand persons, the McClure Train turned west over a new route, which was said to be many miles shorter than the Oregon Trail. Becoming confused in the great Central Oregon desert, these groups wandered away from their western route and wasted nearly three weeks of precious time, food and wore out their already weary draft animals.

Andrew McClure left the McClure train together with other young men, attempting to reach the Willamette Valley and send back aid to the struggling emigrants. Confusing the Three Sisters with Diamond Peak, they wandered in the wilderness of the Oregon Cascades, with great suffering to all the men. They reached the "high Banks" of the McKenzie river, near the present town of Springfield, Oregon in mid-October, after the main emigrant train they had left in Central Oregon, had managed to make its way over the Diamond Peak pass and had been rescued by settlers already in the Willamette Valley.

A.S. McClure died at his home on east Nineth st. at 9:10 this morning from the effects of the paralytic stroke he received a few days ago. Walter McClure arrived here Sat. nite, having been appraised of his father's illness and was the only member of the family here at the time of his death. During his late illness he had had every care.....

Mr. McClure was born in Ind. May 3, 1829. He crossed the plains to Oregon in 1855* and settled in Eugene where he has ever since made his home except for a few years spent in Eastern Washington and Portland. In crossing the plains his family took a new route and crossed thru the central part of the state. When just east of the Cascades they ran out of flour and an advance guard of which Mr. McClure was a member was sent ahead to get provisions and to go back to the relief of the party. The advance guard started thru between the Middle and South Sisters mountains of the Three Sisters and encountered some very rough country and became lost and were obliged to eat their horses for food. The regular party got thru first and then went back and found the others and rescued them.

Mr. McClure was married in this city in 1858 to Sarah J. Dillard, who survives him. He was the first of 11 children seven of whom still living. He served as treasurer of this county a number of years ago and had been a provisional member of the Odd Fellows for the past 30 years.

Eugene "REGISTER" March 24, 1898

*
1853.

*This account begins at the
Oregon - Idaho border.*

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The fort is built of clay or sun dried brick, is small and it has suffered from the spring rise, the walls having been down and, in fact, everything damaged, but one or two small buildings within. They are now rebuilding, about fifty yards above. The principal charge seems to be in the hands of half breeds, who have something of a courteous manner and resemble the Mexicans in color.

Crossed our wagons this evening, but have left our cattle on the north side, as we had not time to swim them. Myself and three others are staying to guard them. Our leader made an engagement with a man connected with the ferry to cross our cattle for seven dollars. This place seems cheerful now but in the dreariness of winter must be an unpleasant place to stay. A man of feeling may have some idea of how he would like to live here, but when he conceives himself approaching one of his red or black fraternity with all the warmth of brotherly feeling speak of our affairs as our boat, our ferry, our trading post, our capitol, etc.

As we expected, we do not meet with much civility here. Money is the object of men who live here.

Monday, August 29th. Our man was ready this morning according to promise and succeeded in swimming the cattle by ten o'clock. After going to examine our cattle, we found one ox missing. Yoked the teams and drove up the river one mile and found grass.

Snake above and below the fort is so filled with salmon, that it would hardly be taken for a stream. The current runs moderately. Salmon are ascending now and the Indians catch them in large quantities and sell them to the whites for money, clothing, bread, sugar, etc.

Tuesday, August 30th. From the fort the road strikes the bottom and in one mile ascends the bluffs, which give a fine view of Snake

DIED McClure, at his home in Eugene, March 21, 1898 from paralysis, A.S. McClure, aged 68y. 10m. and 18l. Deceased was a pioneer of Oregon having come here in 1853 and had lived in the state ever since, principally in Portland and Eugene. He was the first of 11 children* 7 of whom together with his wife are still living. Henry and Walter of Seattle, attorneys, Horance, Seattle, assistant managing editor of "Post Intellegence", John S. of Seattle, William of Ft. Stevens, Charles of Portland and Miss Jennie of Seattle. Those now dead are the late Professor Edgar McClure of the University of Oregon. 3 children died in infancy.

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It would appear that both obituaries confuse his children with his brothers and sisters. Therefore, apparently, Mr. McClure had eleven children, instead of being "one of 11 children."

Mr. McClure is buried, near his son, Edgar, in the Pioneer or Odd Fellows cemetery, at Eugene, Oregon. The Society has not yet been able to locate a picture of him.

and a range of mountains far in the north. Travelled four miles over a sage plain and entered a valley and travelled up the valley five miles and passed over the ridge. A little bunch grass on the hills. From the ridge the road descends into another valley and follows it, winding for three miles, when it enters the valley of Malheur. Here is the cut-off into the Willamette known as Elliot's Trail. From here the old trail turns to the right and around the bluff passes down two miles and crosses the river. Good grass.

The Malheur is about ten feet wide and is a dull, sluggish and shallow stream on the ripples, but the still water is deep and looks more sickly than the generality of streams in this part of the country.

Travelled about fifteen miles today. No grass on the road. No water. The day has been very warm. One cow belonging to William Bond fell in the yoke and died. Several others were nearly exhausted when they got here. These long drives without water and grass are very hard on teams. (The trading post of Mr. Turner is stationed here.)

The clouds gathered this evening and we had another refreshing shower of rain nearly sufficient to lay the dust. This seems like cool weather for August, sufficiently so to wear overcoats mornings and evenings.

Wednesday, August 1st. After some deliberation, we arrived at the conclusion to follow Elliot on the old Malheur trail. The next thing in order was to look for company. We found a man with a small train, and five and the other of four wagons and a couple of thirteen wagons. The day was spent in making arrangements with the other men making like arrangements, with the quantity of cattle and the confusion of men and teams, there was produced more confusion than

have met on the road. All seems to be in readiness and tomorrow we start upon an unknown road and must be prepared to stand the difficulties of savage cruelty at the doors of their own wigwams.

Thursday, September 1st. After much confusion respecting the stock, we succeeded in getting started about half past eight o'clock. After travelling about two miles from camp, or three from the proper point for the junction of the roads where the Boise road first enters the valley, we ascended the bluff. Tolerably steep. After ascending, travelled five miles over a sage plain and came to a dry creek with water in pools. The descent is steep. Good coarse grass in the valley. Malheur about three miles on the left. Travelled five miles, crossing two deep ravines over sage barrens, and came to the valley of the river again. The descent is steep; the surface of the hill composed of coarse gravel.

Travelled two and a half miles and came to the river; good grass--coarse grass. One and a half miles further brought us to camp between two high hills which are near the river. Plenty of grass.

There are forty-seven wagons that started from the trading post this morning for this outfit and are encamped within the distance of Mr. Elliot is said to be leading twenty, which will leave about thirty, or near seventy wagons that are within three or four days of camp. Every alone party is about camp.

A sickness of fatal character is a nearly certain result of the child of the outfit, travellers is said to be very bad.

Friday, September 2nd. The sick child died this morning and was buried this morning near a rocky mound in a bend of the river on the left of the road. It is a pity how little sympathy is shown for on this road. There should be more feeling.

*13 miles
done - 15.*

Travelled four miles up the river and crossed it four times. ⁴
 The road is very rocky and the river bottom composed of large stones, which make it bad fording water; shallow not exceeding two feet deep.

Willows along the stream. Here we ascended the bluff, by turning to the right up a ravine, proceeding one hundred and fifty yards and then to the left. The ascent is rocky and tolerably steep. The bluff is four hundred feet high. After ascending, the bluff strikes southwest across a sage plain, the river crossing from the left among the hills out of a canyon. Travelling three miles, we descended by a long hill into the bottom which is broad and fertile for these parts, producing good grass. Travelled one mile and grazed in the valley. A good place to camp. Willows in the margin of the stream. From the river the road turns to the right and ascends the bluff over a sage plain. Travelling about three miles, mostly uphill, and descending a long hill, came to the river, crossing it twice in a half a mile. The fords are deep and crooked and will be impassable, except in the lowest stages of the water.

Travelled one and one half miles up the river and camped. The valley here is spread before us to the width of two or three miles and would produce good grass, were it not for the washing of the mountains, which covers the surface of the valley--some good grass.

One of our wagons upset in the river today, covering the inmates with wagon box, beds and bed clothing, clothes, packs, overcoats, etc. Fortunately, no person was hurt. The team came out with naked wagon, leaving the remainder in the stream. Luckily nothing was damaged. Those who have been unwell seem better. All in good cheer. Not so much rock here as we met this forenoon. The rock found in this stream is basalt.

The clouds thickened and presented some indications of rain.

The ground shows there has been a shower lately.

Saturday, September 3rd. This morning one ox was left dead at camp. From the river the road strikes obliquely about the bottom and passes over a ridge and, passing near some large naked rocks, comes into a valley. A little grass. Passing over another ridge, came into another valley wider than the first. Passing on in a westerly direction and six miles from the river, came to a ravine and spring on the right of the road. Travelling two miles from the spring up a ravine, we stopped to graze. Here a horse died, having been bitten by a snake or stung by a scorpion. The road rough most of the way. From here the road passes up a ravine about north 70 degrees west and we took to the high rough hills. The road is crooked here and the general bearing is about N. 20 degrees W. over rocks and a more fertile country than the lower hills. Bunch grass grows well here, but is very dry. Travelling ten miles and descending a long rocky hill, came into a green valley and came to a dry branch--water in pools. The grass is good, but the valley is narrow and would not afford grass sufficient for a large quantity of stock.

This is quite a gloomy looking place for the emigrant three or four thousand miles from home. The blue hills on the east. The thick willows on the banks of the creek. The narrow defile on the west and the high rocky banks on the north and south, all add to the gloom of the scene. The stone here is basalt.

Sunday, September 4th. Ascended the bluff this morning, and following a crooked trail over rough road for four miles, descended the bluff down a rocky ravine for one half mile. The bluff being about five hundred feet high, came to the same creek. Grass but no water. Four miles up the creek brought us to water in pools. Tolerably good water.

Grass plentiful. Grazed here.

Having grazed about two hours, started and turning to the right followed a ravine four miles and found water. Willows, Balm of Gilead and elder here. The Balm of Gilead is the largest I have seen. Watered the cattle, filled the water vessels and made a start from here and ascended a ravine by turning to the left, passed up a short distance and commenced the ascent of the bluff. Passing on four and a half miles, came to the ravine and camped without water. Some grass. It is not good. The water is supposed to flow into Burnt River from here. The road has been rocky the principal part of the day. The road is bad. The rock is black and the narrow valley present a gloomy appearance.

Monday, September 5th. William Bond lost a cow this morning. On starting we travelled up the side of the ravine for two miles, when descending a hill into the ravine, we came to a marshy piece of ground, where we were able to get a small quantity of water for our suffering cattle. The water here is not sufficient for much stock, but by digging holes and dipping with cups the teams were refreshed a little. From here the trail leads up a steep hill for one mile, passing several budding asp groves. When we arrived near the summit, the ground was more level. This part of the trail is very stony and hard upon teams. Travelling over this ridge and crossing a valley on a ridge which I suppose, is the dividing ridge between the waters of Walker and Burnt Rivers, rising out of this valley and turning to the right to pass around the mountain peak, and travelling three miles down it, we were again able to dip a little water from holes which we gave our stock in buckets. Here we found a dead ox and a deserted wagon, some dead animal stuff.

Ascending the hill out of the ravine and travelling one mile, found water one mile to the right in the ravine, sufficient for stock. Stopped here to graze, but finding water plentiful and grass as good as usual, the men came to the conclusion to camp. The road today has been very rough and discouraging. The roughness of the surface and the crookedness of the road are sufficient to relax or increase the energies of the wearied and worn out emigrant. Some still unwell. The weakness contracted on the Boise still stays with us. Grass here is plentiful, but very dry and the animal which eats needs water often, which it does not at all times find in this country.

Tuesday, September 5th. Left an ox near camp worn out by fatigue and want of food and rest. The prospect before us this morning looked nor did we find it at all deceptive in appearance. Instead of following the trail broken by Elliot, our men took the hill on the south and struck the trail two miles from camp.

Travelling about twelve miles over a very rough road and found no water. The road is the worst we have found this side of Missouri and the worst I ever saw. I think we have not travelled over one hundred feet of level ground today and the hills are covered with very large stones, principally of basalt. The descent from the top of the hill to Malheur River I judge to be not less than three thousand feet and that in the short space of four miles, while the road is the most stony that is found in this part.

Encamped at the foot of the hill on a small creek which flows into Malheur. Water tolerably good; dry grass plentiful.

Our cattle are weak and nearly exhausted and find no other visible cause but the roughness of the roads. There are no loads up a the wagons, and the grass, such as we find, is plentiful.

Some of the men killed a cow this evening for meat. She was the fattest and we thought made fine meat. The mountains before us look to be impracticable for wagons. They are higher, look steeper and more rugged than those passed over.

Mr. Elliot is thought to be about twenty miles ahead and seems to follow as nearly as possible the footsteps of Meeks. The road is said to have been surveyed across the Cascades is the only assurance.

Wednesday, September 7th. Started as soon as we could collect our cattle and for four miles the road led down a gradual descent, touching the creek in several places, crossing a spring branch of good water and passing through a fine bottom of grass. From here the trail takes a northwesterly direction for six miles and rises over the point from the mountain peak on the right. This part of the road is rough, rising very fast. The descent is long and steep, but tolerably smooth, being gavel. After descending this hill we come again to Malheur, but not the dull stagnant unhealthy stream that we found when we first saw it, but a bright clear sparkling mountain stream running with rapid current. About ten feet wide and two feet deep. Cool, good water for use. The mountains before us look to be impracticable for wagons, but Meeks and Elliot have both succeeded & "what man has done man can do." The valley here is covered with fine grass, the grass being three or four feet high and the wild rye at least a six feet. The former affording fine food for animals. The valley is from one to three hundred yards in width and bounded by high hills.

Saw signs of the train. No animals lost today.

Thursday, September 8th. From camp the road again led up the bluff on the right eastward of the river. This road bears the mountain peak on the left. The river on our left running through rocky canyons.

Some distance onward the trail turns to the left, passing down a ravine and over some very rough ground. We came to the river and grazed. Made about four miles in the forenoon. Found good grass. Here the leader of our train took two men with him and went ahead to examine the road. The teams were yoked and followed. He passed on and came to the crossing which is about S. 80 degrees W. from the mountain peak with a rocky top. The crossing is good. Mr. He passed on, ascending the rising ground, but after going some distance he sent a man back to stop the train, while he went ahead. When they returned they stated that the worst was yet to come; that there was a hill destitute of every thing but rocks, which seems to be striking directly across the range ahead. There is here and there a cedar which springs from among the large rocks on the sides of the mountain. This country is a little the most discouraging we have met--each ridge or range which we climb is but to bring another rougher, higher and more difficult to our sight.

Friday, September 9th. The crossing here is good, bottom solid and banks tolerably so. From the foot the trail leads up a rocky hill ¹² to the south of a ravine, which is extremely rocky. One mile from the ford we came to a plain which gradually ascends to the mountain. One mile further we entered a ravine, which if possible, is more rocky than the former and, being an ascent, made it very hard on the teams. Two miles to this ravine which runs in an easterly direction. Two miles from the head of this ravine over a cedar country and some hills we came to a dry branch with water in pools and is running in some places. This stream runs about 10 degrees east. The road follows down this stream one and a half miles ¹³, turning to the left up a ravine, ascends a bluff. The stream runs. When on the hill the trail takes a direction of about S 30 degrees west for about six miles, when it

Some stagnant water in pools, which is four miles from the crossing of the South branch.

The grass is pretty good here, but the water is very poor. From the crossing of this stream the trail takes a southwesterly course and, passing around a point again, turns to the west and winding over stony ground in ravines and on ridges, it descends a hill and passes down a smooth valley to a very steep hill, which we descended and came into the valley of several small branches. Encamped on the second, which is about seven miles from the last water. Tonight we encamped near Mr. Kinny's train. They have offered us hospitality, but not being in need we declined.

Sunday, September 11th. This morning we were cordially invited by Mr. Kinny to eat breakfast and, but having little provisions, we accepted. We were treated with much kindness. About seven o'clock we caught our horses and bidding our kind friends of the "Emerald Isle" a good morning, we set out on our way. From camp the trail ascends a hill and, taking a southerly course, follows up the ravine four miles, then turning west it winds among the heads of the branches which form what is termed the west branch of the South branch of Malheur. Here are some pine trees and the cedars are quite numerous.

The mountains ahead appear to be far away and the country to be more that of a small valley. We hoped for better roads. This part of the trail passes through a stony part of the country.

From this we appeared to be travelling down hill and four miles after leaving the ravine we found ourselves on the brink of a fall with a beautiful valley spread like a map before us. This, were satisfied, was the water of the Deschutes or Fall River, as it is sometimes called. Going down the hill, which is steep and somewhat rocky.

On the right in a ravine we found a pool of water not very good. From this the trail turns to the right end, following the ravine, passes round the base of the hill and down the ravine into a broad valley. Three miles from the last water the trail comes near a creek on the left¹⁸ with stagnant water in pools. Here we found Capt. Elliot's last night camp. The valley is very level and, when the trail is well broken will be fine travelling. From this creek the trail turns round the point of the mountain on the right and four miles brought us to a small stream,¹⁹ issuing out of the mountain and forming a slough. Water rather poor; good grass and a good place to camp. Seven miles further brought us to Elliot's camp, which we found to be on a fine little stream of good²⁰ water, coming from the mountains and running briskly through a level plain which looks like a meadow. These streams run northward perhaps emptying into the east branch of Fall River. (Salmon R. King's River) (Teller & P.C. King)

We found the Elliot train nearly out of provisions and had just killed an animal for food. They are in good spirits and seem to care little for their situation.

Mr. Elliot says he will make arrangements against running respt to forming a crowd for relief.

Monday, Sept. 12th. The arrangements being made with the Captain, we mounted our horses, promising to return in three days equipped for a trip to the valley.

Riding until about ten o'clock and retracing about twelve miles of our yesterday's travel, we met Mr. V. S. McClure and Mr. Drury. We stopped at the foot of the mountain, turned our horses upon the grass and awaited the arrival of the train. They came up about three o'clock and we went into camp at Dr. Creek, at the camp of Elliot on the night of the tenth.

The grass is very fine; a few willows for fuel.

We were overtaken today by some men of the trains behind who have encamped near us and intend to wait our readiness to start on the morrow.

The men of our train held a meeting for the purpose of making an arrangement for sending in for provisions.

Thursday, September 1th. Our train was astir early and, while in commotion to get us off, news was brought into camp that a lady in Mr. Miller's train died last night and would be buried some place along the road. This is the first death I have been near since starting. We got under way about eight o'clock and the company from our train which consisted of the following individuals; J. Denning, B. F. Owen, and myself, joined five others from trains farther back on the road. On arriving at the creek we were met by a messenger from Mr. Elliot who was directed to turn the trains directly across the valley toward the point of a mountain range which sinks away to the north. From here we travelled about sixteen miles over a sandy plain without water, when turning a little to the right we struck a creek. The water looks good and tastes well. Good grass here. Stopped to graze our horses.

While here Mr. Elliot came up and recognised Mr. Charles Clark of our train (pack train). The train passed us while grazing and stopped two miles down the creek--our train. The wagons started out after us and, if they followed our trail, they found larger game than they have heretofore met. They will, most probably, be obliged to cut the road with axes. We replaced our packs, mounted our horses and rode down to Elliot's camp. Mr. Elliot is in finer spirits than I have heretofore seen him. Grass is good beyond conception. It is from one to three feet high and of very nutritious quality. Willows for fuel.

This creek seems to flow into the lake, as it appears dead and does not flow as briskly as further up.

Wednesday, September 14th. This morning we started about seven o'clock and taking a course of about south 30 degrees east for twelve miles winding through sloughs and tall grass and nooned near the mound standing on the east side of the lake, which is called by some the Tule Lakes. The lake opposite this is a sheet of water which presents a beautiful appearance and is thronged with beavies of geese and ducks. The grass being poor and having no water, we did not stay long. After starting we again tried a course of about S 45 degrees W, but soon came to a creek which we found to contain water but so strongly mineralized that we could scarcely drink a sup of it. Facing about again, we found a crossing and tried to make the lead of the lake; after some difficulty we succeeded and, being aware that we had no water ahead filled our canteens and struck straight for the hills. Encamped on the hill. Some grass; no water. Made tea from the water we got from the lake, but found it so much like the that we could not use it and drank water caught from a saddle blanket put up as an awning. In this way we did not suffer for water. It has rained since about three o'clock with occasional intermissions. Travelled about thirty miles today, much of that distance having been covered among the sloughs which border the lake.

The low ground next the lake produces tolerable good grass, but the water is unfit for use. The emigrant should avoid it as much as possible.

Thursday, September 15th. The wind arose early this morning and, blowing a gale from the west, made the rain still more unpleasant. By finding a rock with a cavity on top, we succeeded in getting enough water for breakfast. We started about eight o'clock and, taking a

Don't put 12

direction of about west toward a sharp peak of the mountains, followed the low ground adjoining the lake. We continued this course for about twenty miles, nooning at a fine spring at the head of a marsh. We arrived at the south branch of Deschutes. We found this river bordered by a beautiful valley of fine grass, but the depth of the stream and the softness of the stream prevented our crossing. We again turned to the south and, following up eight miles, passed several Indian camps, we tried to cross, but hired a fine black mare belonging to Mr. Charles Clark and succeeded in getting her out with much difficulty. The banks are so soft that she would sink to her body with little exertion. We were obliged to draw her by the feet up a bank nearly perpendicular and about eight feet high. Encamped and made a fire to dry our clothes the larger portion of us having plunged into the river when the mare slipped.

Showery nearly all day and, after we turned around the point and struck a southerly course, we discovered the mountains before us covered with snow. While we ran shivering in a northwesterly rain, the snow was falling on higher land. The small streams in this valley are very hard to cross and it is seldom that they can be crossed far below their issue from the mountain.

Friday, September 16th. Started at seven this morning and, winding our way up the stream for three or four miles, we came to two high mounds on the opposite side of the river. Here we found good crossing and, supposing we were over all difficulty struck a northerly course. Travelling two or three miles, came to a small creek, which we found impassable from the softness of the banks. Wandering along the banks for some time, we finally made a way of willows and crossed. We were satisfied that we were around these lakes and struck a northerly course

that we might gain some of what we had lost. We travelled back to the lake and, being forded westward by what we supposed to be an arm of the lake, struck across the hills and when we had gained the summit, saw a beautiful sheet of water many miles in extent. Here we learned the mortifying fact that what we supposed to be Tule Lake was not what we had encountered, but a swamp which forms the east branch of the Deschutes.

This is a beautiful little lake surrounded by high hills, with here and there a mountain peak towering above all the surrounding country.

Grazed on the bank and travelled up the lake a few miles and encamped. This water is very poor tasting brackish and being impregnated with alkali. The water is muddly and unfit for use. The south bank is barren producing very little grass. Greasewood being the principal production. We are nearly out of provisions, only having started with enough for six days and are more than one hundred and fifty miles from the settlement. The sky is overspread with clouds and it has the appearance of rain.

Saturday, September 17th. The water was very poor not fit for tea, but some of the boys made coffee and stated that it was not as badly affected. Rained on us at intervals during the night. This morning the clouds looked broken and we felt encouraged that we would have fair weather.

This morning we followed closely around the head of the lake and again turned our faces to the west. Passing round the lake, we struck a fine valley which has many springs of good water flowing from the hills on the southwest. Mr. Brady and Mr. Clark ascended the hill to look ahead at the country.

Hitherto we had supposed this valley to be the outlet of the lakes above, but upon close examination we found it was only the valley of a small stream formed by the springs on the sides of the hills. Learning this our guides turned an easterly direction and struck for the Deschutes. Travelled several miles over a sage plain. Found no water but good bunch grass. No water here, we had but little water in our canteens consequently we will be very scant.

Sunday, September 18th. A week has again passed off and Sunday has come and gone. No church here to greet and call us with its pleasant sounds; no kind friends to ask us if we intend going to church; no affectionate to greet us with a hearty shake of the hand, ask us to dinner and politely attend us from his well supplied table. No. These are comforts we are not able at this time destined to enjoy but we heartily wish for them in a more appropriate place in a country and at a time when provisions shall be more plentiful. It has been said that we had but little water last night and that little was used for coffee. This morning we had none and proceed to cook our scanty breakfast, which consisted of a half a hare and enough bacon to season it. This, with pilot bread, made our meal and we caught our horses and were again off.

We again struck out easterly, which seemed to displease the whole. Mr. Clark is a fine man and is loved by all, but this was an error. He gave as his reason that he wished to strike the Deschutes that he might make a proper start for the mountains. Varying a little to the south, we struck the lake again and watered our horses. Even the horses seemed to drink this water from necessity and some of us drank it. From this, after some deliberation, we concluded to strike a northerly course, dividing between the wishes of those who wished to go

northeast and strike Deschutes. Travelling in this direction until twelve o'clock, we ascended a high ridge and found ourselves within five or six miles of where we left Mr. Elliott. We have been travelling four and a half days since leaving him and have travelled nearly around these lakes without making any headway or accomplishing anything toward affecting our object. Here all were consulted and we agreed to strike south 30 degrees west and follow it as closely as the country will admit and until we can determine more fully where we are. Following this course, we soon came near to a valley of green looking grass with willows in places--following along until we could get down to the rocky precipice which forms its southern bank. Here we found good grass and water for our tired animals and cooked a hare which we had packed up and ate heartily. We did not stop to graze or get dinner at noon.

Mr. Clark is quite unwell. In our windings we have travelled about thirty miles.

Monday, September 19th. Although we had grass and water in abundance last night, it was not sufficient to restore the strength of our horses. They moved very stupidly over the stones and some seemed as though they could go very little farther.

From camp we started up the valley, as it was the most direct course for the mountain peak we had in view. We found a little water in holes in some rocks in a ravine and stopped to graze about twelve o'clock. Two of the men ascended a high mountain near by and returned much cheered, stating that they saw a broad valley which they supposed to be Deschutes, having previously been impressed with the belief that we had not come to that river.

When we passed over the ridge, we saw a beautiful green valley with a stream of water. All were cheered and encouraged. We descended

but found the water runs southward into the lakes below. This is a beautiful valley and contains some fertile looking land.

The water is good. Made our supper for eight men of a sage hen, one piece of bacon and a little flour for thickening soup. As yet we have seen nothing of the Cascade range. Nearly out of provisions and perhaps two hundred miles from the settlements; we know not how far.

Our horses are failing fast. Several of us went out to look for grass but got none.

Tuesday, September 20th. Started out about eight o'clock this morning and for eight miles, crossing the valley through a sage plain, we grazed on the edge of the mountain and made some tea. The ridges passed over this evening were extremely rocky and the mountains covered with cedars.

Travelled about twenty miles today over rocks and rough ridges and encamped in a deep ravine, good grass and good water. Our provisions are nearly out, nothing left but a little tea, sugar, and flour. We made a little paste of the flour, which with some tea made a refreshing supper. Four of us went hunting. This seems to be a country of antelope, as the banks of the creek present numerous fresh tracks. One of the boys while out saw eight antelopes.

The boys seem more encouraged this evening than yesterday. A rough prospect ahead, range after range and mountain behind mountain seem to present an insurmountable barrier to wagons and teams.

The days are still and pleasant; the nights are frosty; the wind from the east west.

Wednesday, September 21st. Nearly all the boys went hunting this morning and, though we saw numerous deer tracks, we were not able to see any deer.

Started about nine o'clock and taking a northwesterly course came into a broad valley, but no water. We were so fortunate as to kill a sage chick and made some soup. This revived our spirits and late in the evening we caught our horses and struck into the mountains on the west. Travelled until nine or ten o'clock and stopped for the night in a valley in the mountain. We searched all evening for water, but were unable to find any indication. While crossing the valley before spoken of, we saw a trail of some eight or ten horses, apparently from the valley. The men complained of much weakness and say they cannot go much further without food.

The atmosphere is cool and pleasant. Travelled about fifteen miles today.

Thursday, September 22nd. We caught our horses by daylight and struck for the summit of the mountain. Travelling a short distance, we came to a green valley that gave us hope of water. Searching diligently, we were not disappointed and watered our horses for the first time for nearly twenty four hours. Stopped here and killed a small rabbit and made a little soup. The men collected and came to the conclusion that they would kill an Indian pony which had been brought out as a pack animal. The little animal, confident of the former kind treatment of its master, stepped up to be murdered for the rescue of man. We cooked some as soon as possible and found it to be excellent meat. I was then cleared of the prejudice which my education had placed before me and which is entertained by many persons in the States. Today has been spent cutting up, drying and preparing our meat, as none of us know where we are or when we will strike the valley, but we know that by going a northwesterly direction we must strike the Willamette or Columbia. The mountains here are steep and in many places rocky, making them hard to travel.

In the way of provisions we have a few slices of bacon, a little flour and some tea. The ridges which are most rocky are covered with cedar. The principal production is sage. Our meat will last ten or twelve days and in that time we will surely come out some place. The pony which was two years old was valued at forty-eight dollars, six dollars a piece.

Friday, September 23rd. Today we struck a westerly direction, finding numerous streams of water issuing from springs.

Travelling several miles we ascended the ridge and saw Three Sisters Peak. Every heart rejoiced and every person was seen to feel that we were again at home. The guides Clark and Tandy ascended a high mound on the left and saw the Three Sisters. This again inspired us with a newness of life. The men sat more erect in their saddles, the horses moved off freely, as if they too by instinct had discovered something to give them a newness of life. From the ridge we followed down a ravine until we came into a broad _____?. Turning up this we struck directly for Diamonds Peak, which lay about N. 45 degrees W. Travelling in this direction till late in the evening, we turned a northerly course toward the mountain for water. We did not reach it till night, when we found it composed of light sand and covered with cedar, which gave no hope of water. We encamped here. Our horses have fine grass but no water. Cedar for wood. It rained a little this evening, which wet the grass and will make it better for our horses until we can get to water. Our dried horse meat is rather dry to thirsty men without water.

Saturday, September 24th. Rained a little more last night enough to keep the grass wet. This morning most of the men preferred to go to water and did not eat.

We were on our horses early and following down the mountain side in hope of finding a stream of water. We found none and travelled until noon, when our guides turned north and struck into the mountains, partly to find water and partly to shorten the distance. Here the hardships of travelling over mountains were again renewed. We travelled across this point and late in the evening came to what appeared to be a broad valley covered with cedar timber. Here we lost all hope of reaching water and determined to travel as far as possible and stop. Encamped at dusk, after turning our horses loose, went to bed supperless. Hungry, tired, and thirsty.

Our horses will suffer tonight; no water for about thirty-six hours, no rain to water the grass. They are compelled to feed on dry bunch grass.

Sunday, September 25th. This morning we got up rather discouraged, caught our horses without eating and again turned our faces to the west. After starting, we found we had encamped in a deep hollow and ascended one rocky cedar ridge after another but to see one ahead higher and more rocky than before. Finally we arrived at the summit and just then the clouds cleared away in the west and hung over the snow capped peaks of the Cascades. The sun had just risen and shone with brilliancy over the scene. One of the men remarked that this is Sunday, which I had not thought of before. All were enlivened--we knew that we would not fail to find water at the foot of the snowy mountains ahead, if not before. Urging our horses onward, we hoped soon to come to water.

From this our way led through a pine forest which presented beautiful scenery, tall, trim and straight. Travelling till about one o'clock, we suddenly came to a clear beautiful stream of water running

rapidly and cold. We readily quenched our thirst. The next was to ford which we found difficult. The stream is about one hundred feet wide and about three and a half feet deep. The large stones in the bed make it difficult to ford. All got wet in crossing, but every thing went off right.

While crossing, I thought of its being the Sabbath and, while we are crossing it, many of our friends are listening to the voice of their old preacher.

Monday, September 25th. We encamped immediately after getting across the river and spent the afternoon cooking and drying our blankets.

Our horse meat tasted better than heretofore and we felt that we were feasting. The horses had very fine grass and made good use of it. Last night was cool, a heavy dew. This morning being cloudy, we had no other guide than a pocket compass. We struck a course a little north of west. After ascending hill after hill, we stopped to graze in a little spot of green grass.

While here, one of the men wandering a little to the north saw a fine stream of water. After catching our horses we struck for the creek, but found it so deep below and the banks so steep that we could not descend. Travelling up some distance, we succeeded in crossing and taking the North Fork, aiming to bear straight for the dividing ridge. Went up this a short distance through thick growth of pine and fir and encamped. Three of us attempted the height on the left, but it being late and the hill steep, we did not get up. It has been cloudy all day, which has baffled us in finding the pass.

When we left the train, they expected us back in ten days, but this is our fourteenth day and we are as much as six days travel from the settlement.

They, as well as we, have long since found that the distance is farther than expected.

Tuesday, September 27th. This morning Mr. Tandy and myself ascended the ridges with a view of getting sight of the mountains. Tandy could not get to the highest point, but my strength being greater, kept climbing with the intention of meeting the train. I did not see anything very reliable from the timber which covered the side of the mountain. I met the train about nine o'clock and we proceeded up ravines, across deep gullies, the ground being covered with logs and pine and fir timber nearly as thick as it can stand.

Travelled about ten miles, our way being very bad. Encamped tonight near a little flat, which is grown up with good grass--supposed to be about five miles to the summit.

Several of the men are affected with diarrhea and all are weak from want of provisions. Our provisions are again growing short and even our horse meat may become a desirable store, as it must be as much as one hundred miles to the settlement and we know nothing of the road ahead.

Wednesday, September 28th. We started in good time this morning and, windin our way up rocky canyons and across deep ravines, about ten o'clock, came to the summit of the principal range of the Cascades. From this the way led down steep hills directly towards Diamond Peak.

Passing closely around the foot of the mountain and travelling onward in a direction of about south 75 degrees west, we came in sight of a beautiful lake. Here we held one of the many consultations and it was concluded to pass the lake on the north. This lake is composed of

beautiful, clear, cold water from the snowy mountains which surround it on three sides. Passing around the lake, we attempted to pass down its western shore, but found the mountains so steep and rocky and the timber so thick, that we could not get around. Finding a favorable opportunity, we turned our faces westward and climbed up the side of the mountain and from the height, we could see that the lake seemed to have an outlet on the south. If so, this lake must form the head of some of the streams running into the Pacific. From this lake the way was over rough ground to one more lake surrounded by high hills and with no outlet. We travelled till nearly sundown and encamped on a beautiful little stream of clear water coming from a peak on the north. Good grass and water. The timber here is quite heavy--principally pine and fir. The timber here is quite an obstruction to our progress and the logs lying on the ground frequently seriously obstruct our way.

Thursday, September 29th. This morning we started about seven o'clock and, taking a westerly course, travelled about six miles and struck an Indian trail. This trail runs nearly parallel with the range and we took the left hand end with the expectation of being led into the valley or canyon on the south and from thence to turn a westerly course. In this we were not mistaken, for the trail did turn down the stream, but after following it some three miles it became so dim that we could not follow it. Here we found a day's work. The pine and fir timber on the side of the mountain and the alder in the bottom we found to be an impassable barrier. We rode our horses hard all day, sometimes in the valley and sometimes on the side of the mountain. Towards evening we began to find that we could not get either through or around. Turning about, we retraced our steps, with the intention of trying the other end of the trail.

Some of the boys are much discouraged, this being the most serious impediment we have met: Some have worn out shoes or boots, others with legs of thin trousers torn to strips and dangling in the air.

Our horses are badly worn out and most of them have very sore backs. This canyon seems to be a favorable hunting ground for the Indians. The numerous sign of old encampments, and the trail leading west is only a hunting trail. The air is quite cool. Frost last night.

Friday, September 30th. This morning we took the back track, following the Indian trail until it led us into the mountains and we were convinced it crossed the mountains. It is most likely a trail of the Cayuse tribe, leading into a noted hunting ground.

Leaving the trail we struck a westerly direction encountering high mountains, heavy timber and ground covered with logs. The timber is very fine. One grove of spruce in particular. The trees are very tall and straight and covered with moss--but I have no taste to describe it. It has been such a serious impediment in our course. The timber becomes heavier every day and the logs lying upon the ground and each other are so thick at times we can hardly get over them. We have not made more than six miles of twisting since yesterday afternoon. Encamped tonight on a bright running stream, which tumbles out of the mountains and runs a northerly direction into the middle fork, I suppose. No grass here. Much fallen timber. The ground is damp from the late melting of the snow. This seems to be one of the spots that is seldom visited either by the red or white man.

We see countless tracks of elk and bear, but, as our expedition has heretofore been unfortunate in spite of our utmost exertions, it is likely to continue so. We saw no game, except here and there a grouse which we sometimes get.

We eat twice a day and barely enough to keep our strength sufficient to preserve strength enough for the journey. The prospect is very gloomy tonight. Some of the men look as if starvation is already staring them in the face. I hope we are over the worst.

Saturday, October 1st. Last night two of the horses strayed off and followed the trail back several miles. It was late before we got them to camp and we saddled hungry horses and by many windings ascended the ridge, travelling through brush which it would be impossible to describe. When we arrived at the summit the brush, if possible, was found to be thicker than before and, creeping along, we at last came to the brink of a deep ravine, which is several thousand feet in depth and the banks very steep. We commenced the descent, which took about two hours and was very hard on weak horses. We did not get down hill till nearly sundown and encamped in the ravine without grass. We grazed our horses an hour and a half at noon, which is all the grass they have had since night before last. They do not eat leaves much. Our supper, which is composed of hawk with soup, tonight is more bountiful and, following a dinner which was got up of a couple of young pheasants, made some of us nearly satisfied. Our meat is nearly exhausted, not having enough for more than enough for one more mess. We have an awful mountain before us to ascend, higher and steeper than anything we have undertaken to cross. Some of the boys are down in the mouth this evening and to one who is indeterminate this is truly discouraging. Our horses are fast declining and a few more nights without grass will render them entirely unable to meet the hardships before them. Then a scare must take place.

Sunday, October 2nd. This morning were out of bed--or rather off our blankets--early and, saddling our horses and lashing

our coats and rifles to the saddles, made an attack upon the hill afoot and without breakfast. This was a serious undertaking. The men being weak and the horses weaker, we climbed for three hours faithfully when one of the horses blundered and fell and could not be got up. The owner, fearing he would die, and to save some unpleasantness of feeling, seized his rifle, shot him in the head and cut his throat. The men were soon collected and as much meat as could be taken care of was saved and carried to the horses. We were all much fatigued and I made an open confession that I felt as though I could not reach the summit. Proceeding on our way we reached the summit about twelve o'clock and soon found grass and water. Here we stopped to rest our horses and the remainder of the day was spent in preparing meat. All hands seem to have their appetites satisfied this evening. Of the pony, which was in tolerably good order, I could not eat freely--but of this I feel some unpleasantness; but hunger urges me to eat freely. The boys laughed at me and said it is prejudice. It may be true. The country looks better than before and we flatter ourselves that we are over the worst. We have not travelled more than ten miles--surface measure, in the last two days, but we try to make it count by living or going due west. The company seems to be in better spirit tonight.

Our guides have come to the conclusion that we did not pass around the foot of Diamond's peak as was intended, but being mistaken in the mountains, passed between two of the Sisters and north of the intended pass forty to fifty miles. Surely no part of the mountains can be more rugged than that we passed over.

Monday, October 3rd. We were slow to make a start this morning, and, turning our faces westward over a rather level country, soon came to an Indian trail which following down west--wound

over a rather level country, soon came to an Indian Trail which following down west--we soon came to an old Indian encampment. We hunted some time for the trail and finally found one bearing a southerly course. We followed it about two miles and came to the conclusion, from its easterly bearing, that it, like the other, led over the mountains. We left it and turned west and travelling but a short distance, found ourselves hemmed in by deep ravines, which were impassable for horses. Here Mr. Charles Clark asserted his determination to take his mare back to grass, leave his saddle and try his fortune afoot. He was joined by two others, Charles Long, and James McFarland, and we proceeded to divide the little meat we had saved yesterday. These little matters being adjusted, we proceeded to bid them farewell and here presented a scene which I have not here before witnessed. Men, stout hearted men, were soon with overflowing eyes and the already pale countenances became deathlike. The scenes were soon over and we proceeded to repack that we might proceed. They turned northwest with the intention of following the streams, which we all know empty into the Willamette, and we turned a southwesterly direction with the intention of heading the ravine on the south. Here we, as usual met with very thick brush and were obliged to turn eastward and regain the summit. Here we again met the Indian trail before spoken of, and were well contented to follow it. We soon became satisfied that the Indians were forced off to the south and east by the ruggedness of the hills and, after crossing the most southerly fork, succeeded finding plenty of good water, grass and wood. We are all well satisfied that the Indians are from the Willamette from the windings of the trail about the ravines.

Our crowd now consists of five men: B. F. Owen, of Missouri, Joe Danning, of Indiana, Melvin F. Roland of Missouri, and Robert Tandy

of Oregon and myself.

Tuesday, October 4th. This morning we made a respectable start and following up the dim trail, watching it closely that it might not lead us astray--we travelled on in fine spirits over very rough country until afternoon, when we came to a steep descent and the side of the hill covered with huckleberries. We stopped to satisfy our appetites, while our horses started to the valley to graze. We stayed about an hour and, searching for the trail found it led to an encampment in the valley and all attempts to trace it farther proved vain. We resolved to retrace the trail about three miles, where it was supposed they turned from the trail we had followed. While deliberating here, we concluded to camp and spent the evening in picking huckleberries, which I found to be the most delicious fruit I ever ate from a shrub. This evening gives signs of rain and some of the boys seem uneasy. Some huckleberries with dried meat and tea composed our supper.

Wednesday, October 5th. This morning we started as soon as we could saddle our horses and took the back track over the mountain. This was much against my will, as I wished to attempt to pass around the point on the northwest end gain the valley at the junction of the streams below.

Travelling about three miles back we came to the place where the trail was supposed to leave the communicating trails between the two encampments. We found good grass here and stopped to graze and get breakfast. We had been sufficiently fortunate to kill a grouse, which gave a good relish for our scanty fare. Here we examined closely for a trail leading off, but without success. After examination we concluded to descent into the valley on the left. This was a difficult enterprise and dangerous to horses. We were about three hours going down

and had arrived in the leading valley, a fine stream about thirty feet wide, shallow and running rapidly. This we concluded to be the Middle Fork and I was much animated to think that we had a guide that would at least lead us into the valley. We travelled some distance down the stream and encamped. Here we found some elderberries, the first I ever thought of eating, which we found very nutritious.

Our horses are still growing poorer and travelling over these mountains is fast diminishing their strength. The men seem to enjoy good health, but some are much discouraged.

Thursday, October 6th. This morning our breakfast was composed of dried meat and tea. The brush was so thick that we did not find our horses till late. The brush has been quite an obstacle in our path today. At times we met with a small trail, which we followed when practicable for horses. In this valley are some very fine fir trees and the down timber makes it quite hard for our weak horses.

Travelled about eight miles today and encamped in a spot of fine grass on the bank of the river. Here we found elder berries in abundance and, as we are about out of provisions, concluded to make our supper of the berries. We stewed a quantity and found them such that if sugar be added, no one can be ashamed of.

Friday, October 7th. Going on good grass this morning, we were late starting. After we left camp, we found the brush very thick and the river seemed to vary closely by high mountains. This is a source of much difficulty to us, as we are compelled to cross it frequently. Travelled about six miles and crossed the stream eleven times. Encamped tonight in the narrow canyon or kind of bottom. Very little grass for our horses. Made our supper of a dead salmon fish, which we found in the stream. The river here is about twenty yards wide.

The bed is composed of large stones, which make fording rough. Some of the boys have become careworn and fretful. We saw several indications of Indiana today and hope that when we meet with them we will get enough provisions.

Saturday 8th. This morning, after eating our last provision, we started and had not gone far when in crossing one of the horses fell, drenching the rider. The water is not deep, but from the roughness of the bottom, the swiftness of the current and the weakness of the horse, he could not be got out until nearly dead. We got him ashore, cut his throat and spent the remainder of the day curing his meat. Mr. Noland? having been on foot for several days from the weakness of his horse, and, as Mr. Denning no longer had anything to ride, Noland resolved to leave his animal and start afoot tomorrow.

Sunday, October 9th. This morning Denning and Noland bid us farewell and started on foot as contemplated and we gathering up our little, started shortly after. We were confused nearly all the time in the bed of the river and from the largeness of the stones. Some of the horses fell time after time and one fell in the river and it was impossible to get her out unfractured. Left her standing near the bank in a canyon. The brush here is so thick that it is impossible to travel. Encamped on the river. Had talked matters over when to our surprise Noland and Denning came into camp. They were much surprised to see us and we were glad to see them, as we can all start together. The sky is covered with dark clouds and we will likely have rain.

Monday, October 10th. Commenced raining about dark last night and rained all night. We did the best we could for shelter, some making coverings of fir bark and others stretching blankets. This morning the new conclusion was to be carried into effect and we divided the little

meat we were to take as nearly equally among us as we could. At first we thought of taking two blankets a piece, but this was a fair morning for a test--for besides the morning being wet and slippery everything we had was wet. We did not travel more than a mile when we threw away three. After travelling a while in the company of Noland and Denning, who had for several days been in a great sweat spurred off and are ahead. The brush is very thick and the river, being closely hemmed in by the mountains, has obliged us several times to climb steep points to get around. We are very tired tonight and three of us are again alone. Owen, Tandy and myself. During the course of the day the clouds cleared away, but the wind continued in the south and the day has been warm.

Tuesday, October 11th. This morning we tried to make a fair start, but the bushes were still wet owing to the heavy timber. The day has been fierce and we made slow progress. In the afternoon it rained and our light packs felt as if they were horse loads, but we still moved slowly onward till nightfall and with some difficulty succeeded in getting a fire. The difficulties of travelling today can be conceived by those acquainted with mountainous countries. Our way leading sometimes closely along the brink of the stream, at others we were obliged to climb high points that were both steep and slippery. A man accustomed to the Wabash Valley can form no conception of the thickness of the brush and the obstruction rendered by fallen timber. I must acknowledge myself discouraged tonight; but I do not despair.

Wednesday, October 12th. Rained nearly all night and our blankets were wet and heavy; but the clouds cleared away. We rolled up our wet blankets and started. We had not much to carry, but for men exhausted from want of provisions and worn out with fatigue it was a heavy load. The sky became clear, but the bushes are wet and we were wet all day.

immense fir trees. We found a part of a salmon on shore today which with two fine squirrels made our supper. Encamped to-night in the fork of the river, which we have concluded is McKenzies Fork of the Willamette. Much the larger stream is on our right. It is a fine rushing river about one hundred yards wide and too deep and rapid to be forded.

Thursday, October 13th. Out from our train just one month this morning. We were very weary and felt little like taking cold water and thick brush. The first thing we found necessary was to wade the river, which was cold but not deep. This afternoon we were overtaken by a company of five men, who stated they had left the Elliott Train at Deschutes on the first inst. We soon found that we could not hold pace with them and consequently fell behind.

note: Here this Andrew McClure diary ends. On October 20th, Isaac Briggs, settler at the present site of Springfield, Ore. who had been alerted to the condition of McClure, Owen and the others by the stronger men ahead, came up the McKenzie and met them. He had provisions with him and the following men, Charles Hardesty, James Wallis, James Sanders, _____ Morris, and _____ Tanner, who had been paid by him to come and look for the starving men coming down the river.

The diary of BENJAMIN FRANKLIN OWEN, who is being re-produced by the Lane County Pioneer-Historical Society this year, continues the story of the rescue of the Wallace-Owen group.

LOST WAGON TRAIN
1853

diary of Agnes Stewart

in the vicinity of Bigdon and cross the Millanette Pass just prior to the snow storms in the early fall.

The most reliable historical record found is written by Agnes Stewart, wife of Thomas Warner and mother of M. Y. Warner; It was carefully copied by Claire Warner Churchill, daughter of M. Y. Warner. The writer has read the original copy with comments by M. Y. Warner from memory as told to him many, many times by his mother. This is a written record by a member of the "Lost Train."

(Before Agnes left Allegany City, her friend, Mary Dawson, presented her with a tiny, little volume, a blank book designed to become a diary, a receptacle for the maiden meditations of the heartbroken Agnes. What is apparently the first entry is made on one of the last pages and curiously enough it is dedicated not to the giver, Mary Dawson, but to the dearest friend, the sole confidant - Martha May. So we find these inchoate lines. What they lack in poetic imagination they surely possess in fervor.)

TO MARTHA

"Oh, friend, I am gone forever. I cannot see you now.
The damp comes to my brow.
Thou wert my first and only friend, the heart's best treasure thou;
Yet in the shades of troubled sleep, my mind can see you now,
And many a time I shut my eyes and look into the past.
Ah, then I think how different our fates in life were cast,
I think how oft we sat and played upon some mossy stone,
How we would act and do when we were big girls grown,

And we would always live so near that I could always go to you,
And you would come to me, and this we would always do
When sickness came in fevered brow and burning through each vein -- "

(Here, apparently, grief overcame Agnes for she wrote no more.

Just what she and Martha planned to do when "sickness came in fevered brow" we are left to conjecture. After this burst of emotion the gentle Agnes restrains herself and seldom gives vent to the perplexity and grief in her heart. She begins describing in a matter-of-fact manner the preparations for the journey which were made at St. Louis and St. Joseph, Missouri.)

"March 16, 1853. Agnes Stewart of Allegheny City, Pennsylvania, was given this little book by Mary Dawson as a keepsake on the night before beginning the long journey to Oregon.

"On March 25th we arrived at St. Louis and bought supplies to the amount as follows: (But she neglected to list the supplies. The only things we may be certain of are the articles she later mentions. They must have been well supplied with rice for at the end of the journey that staple was their only relief from tough beef.)

"April 5th. Arrived at St. Joseph today. Was quite disappointed at the appearance of this place. I had expected to find log houses and frame shanties, but instead I find brick houses, and plenty of whiskey. Every man I meet looks like an ale cask himself. To my opinion St. Joseph would rise a great deal faster if the people here did not take so much advantage of the emigrants. But still, it will be a great place some day.

"April 9. John Warner (Agnes' brother-in-law) bought three yoke of oxen today. They look to be very good. I hope they will take them (John and Mary) across the plains to Oregon.

"April 10. Elizabeth (Agnes' sister and Fred Turner's wife) and I took a walk today, and sitting on the ground I could see the Indians across the river. The vast territory lies stretched before me, and nothing but wide forests can be seen as far as the eye can reach, and yet it seems small compared to the great continent once all their own (the Indians'). But now the government allows them part to themselves as a great favor, and taken by them as such, but that does not make it right.

"April 19. Done nothing today. Wish we were started.

"May 3. We will leave this place today and glad to get away. I cannot like St. Joseph. There is beautiful scenery around here but I do not like it so well as my native hills. They were bare and shabby, but oh dear, there were childhood's home. There first I learned to romp and play, and love others so well.

"There was a young man made a bargain with us to go to Oregon to help us on the way. His name is John Stewart. He is from Tennessee. (Not related to Agnes' family).

"The last load to cross the river in the evening which consisted of four men and one yoke of oxen met with trouble. The ferry ran into a root of a tree in the water and upset. All the men were drowned, and the cattle, although yoked together, swam out and were recovered next morning. The men had been drinking too much and were reckless.

"May 17. We have traveled 12 miles today. I am very tired, sitting in the shade of a tree waiting for the wagons to come up. Still we go on. I walked more today than I ever did before. I do wish Stewart's folks would come up to us, as I do not like to be parted from any of our people. (This

(This refers to a sister and her husband who were some distance behind.)
When we all get together again I hope we will not be parted. It is very warm today, but a nice breeze flying makes it pleasant. It is nice when all is well and happy. Passing a muddy little run. I don't know its name. Take in wood and water and go on again. How beautiful everything looks. As far as I can see it is beautiful green hills and I can see a thunder cloud in the distance, too - black it rises, and then it rolls and all is so grand. In appearance the forked lightning flashes and seems to drop to the ground. I must get in the wagon and not get wet if I can help it. It makes one so uncomfortable. Oh, such a windy day. We could not have a fire to cook breakfast. We had to travel five miles to a hollow place. 'Tis dreadful cold. Oh, the wind goes to a person's heart. I will shiver to death. I feel for the men gathering the cattle and yoking them up. It was so cold for them, and no warm breakfast. Camping under the heavens as usual.

"May 19. We present a sight watching the cattle with a whip while the men are yoking them up, some packing up the wagons. Little Janet Warner (she became Mrs. Stewart Brock, of Shadd, Linn County) passing around with a coverless umbrella. Stewart's folks in sight. Cattle lying on the ground. What awkward attempts some of the men make at yoking the cattle. Some of them scarcely ever saw cattle before they started on this journey. Some of them swearing. I think they might do without that, sinning their souls away for nothing. How plain we are told, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord, Thy God in vain." And yet one would think there was no hereafter, or no God to serve.

"It is a beautiful day. The sun is shining bright and warm, and a cool breeze blowing makes it very nice indeed, and it seems very much like home.

If I had a horse - but no, I would not like that either. Oh, they are just starting, so I must stop for today. Oh, I feel so lonesome today. Sometimes I can govern myself, but not always, but I hold in pretty well considering all things. Trying to write walking but it won't be done. We stopped for the night in a pretty place.

"Saturday, May 21. We started early this morning. We'll surely make a good day's travel today. A beautiful day. Lizzie (her older sister) is quite ill with some bad disease. Left Stewart's folks for good I suppose. This seems hard to bear for mother frets so much. If he (Stewart) would throw away one of his big wagons then we would wait for him. Yet if it was not for Anna and the children I would not care so much, but it is hard to leave them behind. (Anna was her half-sister).

"Ten o'clock - Martha, if you could see me now, traveling in the hot sun, and thinking of you. Passed the grave of a young man, just 21 years of age. Starting with all the pride of his heart in life, thinking, no doubt, of wealth and pleasure, when he possessed the wealth that thousands had done before him, but left with all his wild ambitions to wander away on the plains. Perhaps some romantic notion filled his heart before he started. Such things often happen to people. Perhaps a dear wife, or sisters, not knowing where he is, expecting his return at some appointed time, are to be disappointed. "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick." This is very true.

"Oh, Martha, my heart yearns for you, my only friend, and would that I could see you now. I would not ask for more for many a day - and I had built myself on the idea that I should send, and you would come to Oregon. But this I pass and must submit to Providence, but oh, my friend thou art dear to me. My heart turns to thee, thou cherished friend, for we often clung

to an idea that only gives us pain instead of pleasure. We often look for and cherish what, if known, gives us many a pang. I know I can never enjoy the pleasure of communing with you again. Yet mourn for the loss of one I can never see again on earth. Yet stop painful reverie, for I cannot help it.

(Agnes was here a better prophet than she herself knew. She never was able to return to Pennsylvania, and her friend, Martha, marrying a Mr. Hyland removed to Indiana, where she died many years ago. During their lifetime the two women wrote occasionally, but what passed between them is not known, that correspondence not being preserved. However, something of the bond between them may be understood from one habit which Agnes followed all her life. Even her grandchildren can remember watching her under a starry sky, looking at one brightly gleaming star, the star, she once explained, which she and Martha had named as theirs, to be looked at as often as the weather would permit, in memory of the distant chum.)

"May 22. This is the sabbath. How full our determination not to travel on this day, but I do not see how we can avoid it, for there is little wood and water so many places we stop at that is impossible to help it, but the heart can be right even when traveling along. We have just come over an awful place. We got over safe though it was more than I expected on the Sabbath. (Apparently the young and devout Agnes expected the Lord to strike them down for traveling on the Sabbath.) I wish the pain in my conscience would get better, but it will never get well, I know. I feel so bad I cannot enjoy anything I do. (Just what had caused this painful conscience is unknown but it may have been that her relations with young David Love, whom she admired

greatly, and who she apparently repulsed, were the cause of her being conscience smitten. Later she refers to David as being 'better than I'.) Another place to cross, but the wagons are safely across. Such a getting to Oregon.

"May 23. Monday started early, pleasant commencement. I hope we get a journey. I wish I could see Anna coming up. It is hard and cruel to leave her. I cannot hope she will forgive us for it, and I could never forgive myself if it were not a necessity. I would not care half so much, but to leave them thus seems too bad. They have not passed the Big Blue (river) yet. What will become of them I do not know, but what they are doing I should like to know.

"May 24. What a long day's travel we had yesterday, passed three graves, and two buried in one grave. Come to the Little Blue (river), a beautiful stream with timber along the banks which makes it look cool and inviting. I do not repent starting yet. The earth is very sandy here. We pass the stream and a dead ox by the way. It is sore on my breath. It is so warm, but it will come all right by and by. This is a long journey, and many weary steps we have to take before we reach the end of it. It is raining today and we cannot go on. I am very sick today with the pain in my breast. It is not any better. I wish it was daylight. We camped at a place on the Blue River where a woman had been buried and the wolves had dug her up. Her hair was there with a comb in it still. She had been buried too shallow. It seems a dreadful fate, but what is the difference? One cannot feel after the spirit is flown. I would as soon not be buried at all as to be dug out of my grave.

"Come six miles today, and took in water at noon as there is not water for us to use for 25 miles, but plenty of wood, and water for the oxen. I know I shall suffer more for the want of a drink than for the want of eating. The Little Blue (river) is a pretty run, but little grass. The bottom seems to be quicksand. Not easy to cross, but can be if one tries hard enough. Stewart's folks not come up yet. I wish they was. Two hundred and fifty wagons between us and the Big Blue. I did not know there were so many behind us.

"May 28. Started at half past eight.

"May 30. Made a short day's travel. Seen two buffalo. Mother a little better. Helen (another sister) found a pocketbook. Some one will wish they had not lost it. It contained some friendship lines, some lines of poetry, a lock of hair but lost to him now. Camping on the vast prairie and in sight of the Platte River.

"May 31. Passing Fort Kearney. There has passed here 13,000 people, 3,000 wagons, and about 90,000 head of stock. It is a little village 310 miles from St. Joseph. Times seems to roll. Camped near Ft. Kearney. Wednesday three Indians passed us strangely dressed. Bought one yoke of oxen. Gave \$30.00 for them. Sick today as usual. We are near the Platte River which they say is four miles wide. There is a storm now and I am in the wagon by myself. The rest of them are eating their supper in the other one. What dreadful swearing!

"Thursday. We saw three antelope today, but was not near enough to see what they were like. Saw three men chasing two wolves away from a grave.

"Friday. Passed Plum Creek today, a muddy little stream. Bad crossing making it hard to come through. It makes us glad to get on dry land again.

Mother fell in the creek while crossing and got all wet. Mother still keeps better. Tonight for the first time we cooked supper on a fire made of buffalo chips. I do not like such use of them. I would rather have wood, but cannot get it, and use water from a puddle hole - no better than it is called at that.

*Saturday. Still traveling over the plains. The bluffs about a mile to the left of us and the Platte about the same to the right. Yesterday saw two wagons going back. On what account I do not know. Stewart's folks sixty mile behind us. They will never catch up, and we cannot wait for them for fear of endangering ourselves.

*Sabbath, June 5th. Camped beside a beautiful lake. I do not know the name of it. Such a beautiful hill behind it. The trees hang over it like woods. If the Giver of all good things intended rest and peace for the weary traveler, and no doubt, he foreseen that such a resting place would be needed after traveling over hundreds of miles and scarcely seeing aught but sandy hills and plains. How pleasant to stop at such a place as this.

(Wherever she encountered beauty the wistfulness of it reminded her of Martha, and she broke forth from her habitual restraint. So she writes her:)

*The birds chirp just the way they did by the old mossy stone I have spent so many thoughtless days upon with you, my truest friend, Martha. What would I give to see you now! Whether it is my nature to love so well, or because I have no one else to love I do not know. But one thing I do know; I miss you more than I can find words to express. I do not wish to forget you, but your memory is painful to me. I will see you again. I will. I will if I am ever able to go back to see you. Do you think of me half as often as I remember you?

"We are about 85 miles from Ft. Kearney and going faster than I had expected. I have been sick today, and borrowed some books from David Love. I wonder he would let me have them under our present circumstances. (She offers no explanation here, but the romantically inclined can easily fill in. She and David had known each other a long time before the journey to Oregon, and her son, Mason Y. Warner, says, that judging from remarks his mother made during her lifetime, she must have thought a great deal of David.) But he is better than I, and has ceased to care for me altogether. Turned out the wagons today, and found our flour spoiled a little.

"June 6. We went up on the bluffs, but could see nothing on the other side of the valley for the bluffs. I saw some rare specimens of wild flowers some more beautiful than I have seen cultivated in gardens. We passed one wagon while they were at dinner, that had six pups under it. Rather a large family for the plains. I went down to the pretty little valley to see it for the last time, and I saw a large rattlesnake lying by a bush, and we left the valley quicker than we had intended, thinking to myself that we know little what lies concealed beside us while all is fair to look upon. Where we stopped at noon there was a grave dug up by the wolves, and we saw a rib in the place, so Lizzie and I carried stones and filled the hole again. Some person had done the same before not liking to see the lifeless clay thrown about.

"Tuesday, June 7. What a beautiful morning. The sun shines bright, but not too hot. The birds sing and the flowers bloom just the way they did at home. The horses are lost and I do not know what we will do. The horses are found again. Today I am 21 years of age. How time flies around. It seems such a short time to look back to the day I was twenty. And now another

year gone round and what have I done that is worthy of note? No one congratulates me or anything, and I am glad of it. It is evening, and no one knows how strange one feels out here on a birthday. True, every day makes us older but it does not have the same effect as a birthday. How often is the day celebrated by people as a day of rejoicing instead of serious thinking. Too often spent by me in thoughtlessness.

"I am seated on a hill above the camp and the South Fork of the Platte River runs before me. It is a muddy stream. The sun is just setting and there is a storm coming up I am afraid. The hills and valley are covered with flowers, blue, yellow, and white and lilac. Everything looks beautiful as the Almighty intended it to be. The hills look like orchards, and there are a great many hills on the South Fork of the Platte. I did not expect so much variety on the route to Oregon.

"Wednesday, June 8. Two antelope were coming toward the camp and two of the fellows took guns and chased them, but did not get any and I was very glad, for the poor things were at home and we were the intruders. We are taking the south side of the Platte. All are well yet. Two trains passed and we have not started yet. We are delayed by some of the cattle going with another drove, but we got them all again. (Colonel Cline, the leader of the party, was driving some cattle to Oregon. These lean creatures were the final sustenance of the party after it had become hopelessly lost.) We had very good roads yesterday. We are going to cross the upper ford, 36 miles from the Big Platte. Dear me, what dirty muddy water it is. We had a dreadful storm last night, but good roads today, but it is very warm and looks like we were going to have another storm tonight.

"Thursday, June 9. It is going to be very warm today. We had the unspeakable pleasure of being well bitten by mosquitos last night. We are on the ground where it will try the oxen, - fat now, - a gravelly, sandy soil. We are progressing as fast as expected. Warm and sultry today. I like to sit and watch the dark shadows of the clouds dancing over the frowning and dark broken bluffs of rock. One of the men caught two little antelopes. They are dear little creatures. They are a kind of brown, or dun color. They let them go again, but I should like to have had one for a pet.

"Friday, June 10. We will cross the south fork today in about an hour from now.

"Saturday, 11. Three of our wagons crossed the river yesterday, and six to cross today. Helen, Mary, father and I came over on the first wagon on the tenth. I was very much afraid but we got over all safe enough. David Love's wagon went into the hole where the wagon, oxen, and man were all swimming. James Stewart and Charles -- (Name not decipherable) were carried under the oxen but came up on the other side. Dave lost his cap, Charles his hat, and John lost his whip. It was frightful. Our wagon took a circle and came out another way. They are just preparing to bring mother's wagon over -- all the wagons are over and all are safe.

"Sabbath, 12th. We drove all the wagons out on the bluffs and turned them all out, and there had nothing got wet. Then we have to pack all our wagons again. It seems to me to be such a lot of trouble.

"Monday, 13th. We had a Platte River storm last night. I scarce ever saw such a storm. All the fellows had to turn out and herd the cattle for they ran from the hail. They all got good and wet. Proceeding on our journey today as gaily as ever. Last night the wolves came within a short distance

of the camp and such a yelling I never heard before. Camping on the North Fork of the Platte, came across a sandy valley or ravine, steep bluffs on both sides with the straightest faces on them I ever saw on hills. The wagons sunk several inches in the sand in some places. The lower parts of the bluffs have trees, flowers, wild roses, and grape vines that give them a welcome appearance. There was a clear stream of cool water running at the foot of the bluff which made it delightful to wayworn travelers, and rocks on the top of the bluffs standing up so independently.

"Tuesday, 14th. Came up with Mr. Stevenson's company last night. We got acquainted with them coming up on the boat from St. Louis. I am ahead of the wagons this morning, and I saw what I never saw before. Away up in the rocks under a projection I saw a hundred little bird nests made of moss and mud. It looked so pretty to see so many little creatures living together so happy.

"Saturday, 18th. I have neglected my book for four days. Traveled over sand, and rough roads without much comfort, but heat. Passed Courthouse Rock today. It looks much like a courthouse from a distance. It is five or six miles from the road.

"Sabbath, 19. Passed Chimney Rock. It looks more like it at a distance than it does when passing near it. A long sultry day with a storm in the evening. Fred and his man (Fred was her sister's husband, Fred Warner) quarreled about striking some loose cattle. Fred struck him with his hand, and then knocked him down with his whip stock. A mean low dirty trick of his. I feel so mortified about it.

Friday, 24. We sat under a tree and ate dinner the first time for several months, and how pleasant it is to sit under a shade once more. It seemed like our old home where we were raised. I am sitting now under a pine tree on the Black Hills. And is it possible that we are in the Black Hills so far from home - the place I have so often read about and looked at on the map, but here we are. I wonder - is it possible? Today we made our first ascent. Yesterday we crossed Laramie's Fork, a very rapid stream. We swam the cattle across and paid two dollars apiece to get the wagons ferried across. If the Black Hills are not worse than the traveling we had so far we will not be very much afraid of them. It is very warm today, but there is a cool breeze blowing through the pine trees most delightful. Two days ago it was so cold that it was snowing. It is so changeable here that it cannot be very healthy.

Monday, 27. It blows so hard we cannot proceed on our journey. The rain blows up in a most dreadful way. I went today to the canyon of the Platte, and I never saw anything like it in all my life before. On our side there was a perpendicular rock 300 feet high for the length of three miles; on the west side almost straight up and down, banks of rocks, cedar trees, dead trees, frowning to all who pass below. I did not get all the way through, for another started, and when she could not get further we went back with her. Lizzie, Tom, Helen, and Fred went on through, and Mary, David and I went back. I was a little disappointed, but it could not be helped. Today we had a quarrel. Tom and as usual Fred, came to blows. (Tom, then but 17, later became Agnes' husband). Tom and Fred are always quarreling about something. I do wish they had not come with us, but it cannot be helped now. Tom is impudent, and Fred is overbearing and arrogant, and between the two we have a sorry time. But

Fred will repent of this some day, dearer perhaps than he thinks, for knowing how many days we have lost already, not less than a half a dozen, I think. Yesterday was the Sabbath and we did not travel more than five miles and today it is so windy we cannot go on, so that is two days we have lost. I hope it will quit (blowing) soon.

"Wednesday, 29. Yesterday was a windy cold day, and I had to walk to keep myself warm, and going along with a blanket around me it was hard to tell me from an Indian. We passed three Indians today, and four yesterday. Passed Labouta (or Labonta) Creek today. It is a beautiful stream, clear and cool. We had the worst roads yesterday. We had dreadful places to come down, ugly places to go up, and by the time I got out to walk up the hills and down the hills I had just as well be on my feet (all the time). I am very tired and weary. Today it seems as if it would be very warm. Oh dear, I wish we were in Oregon, or even out of these Black Hills. I am tired of them; they are so dismal looking.

"Thursday, 30. Oh dear, we have to stay here two or three days and it will appear two or three weeks. I want to go on and never stop at all if it could be helped, but the oxen's feet are all tender, and some of them are very lame. We must stop and let them get well again. I have been sick all day.

"July 4th. This brings to mind hurry and bustle, preparation for pleasure excursions throughout the union. Scarcely any person but what is going to have, or expects to have, a little more than usual today, while we are going on our weary journey. Crossed the North Platte yesterday, and went three miles on the most sandy road I ever saw. The sand was so heavy that it was hard to haul the wagons down hill. We paid five dollars for each wagon, and four yoke

of oxen, and 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ cents per head for the rest of the cattle, and the same for each man except one driver for each team. The ladies went across free for their dear little feet would not wear out the bridges. There was a great many Spainards there, and all of them had squaw wives. One was sitting in the door of a tent making a little bonnet for her baby. She looked so comfortable at the work that seemed to please her most, little dreaming that he who pretended to protect her would leave her whenever he saw fit.

"We had bad roads today - to say bad, camping in sight of the terrible Black Hills. I am sitting on a little hill alone above the camp. They are playing the fiddle and dancing, and I can shut my eyes and think I am at some kind of gathering of some description just like I used to be. It recalls old times to me.

"Tuesday, 5th. Such a warm day. Everyone is worn out and tired with the heat. We finished the Fourth of July by dancing. After Helen and I sitting on the hill and moralizing so serious we came down and cut capers like a parcel of fools. But this is the way of the world, change all the time in spite of reason. We passed the Devil's Den I heard some of them saying. I fell asleep and dreamed I saw some of the little black imps looking over every one of the big black rocks. It is evening and what a gorgeous beautiful sunset. I never saw a more beautiful one at home.

"July 7th. On top of Independence Rock. How often I have read and thought about it, and now I am on top of it. The wind blows very hard. That is the reason it is so unpleasant for those wearing skirts. It is quite easy to ascend but I think it will be more difficult to descend.

"Monday, July 12. Such a long time since I wrote last that I have almost forgotten how. Since I wrote we have passed the Devil's Gate, crossed the Sweetwater five times, and now ascending the Rocky Mountains, and in two days we will get our first sight of Oregon (Territory). Stopped yesterday and rested. It was the Sabbath. Mary lost one of her oxen, one of the best. It could ill be spared. I hope it will be the last.

(From this time on it will be noticed that Agnes is beginning to weary with the long journey, and that the entries are shorter and less hopeful than they were at the beginning. Then the whole train is beset by discouragement can be read between the few lines the young girl writes from this time forward. However it was not till they reached the boundaries of present Oregon that she ceased her entries, and then not till mutiny and later, starvation, faced the brave little band.)

"July 20, Sabbath. Oh, my patience, I have not wrote for so long a time I have nearly forgotten how. So many things and strange places we have come over. We have come over so many high hills. We have come up and down till I forget most of what I wanted to write. We are in the Bear River Valley now. How dreary everything looks to me. I feel like saying life is a weary dream, a dream that never wakes. We do not know what is to be our lot in life, nor do we know what is before us in the world.

"Monday, 23. Traveled half the day and camped along the bluffs. One of the oxen nearly gave out. How fast time flies.

"Thursday, August 11. On Rock Creek tonight. Plenty of grass for the oxen. One of our oxen died day before yesterday, and one of John's today. He has lost two, Fred one, and David Love one. Five out of our company is not very

many over such a road. We have had bad roads since we left Bear River. Traveling very slow for the roads are so rough they shake the cattle so bad.

"August 19. Here I sit with my pencil in hand trying to write, but how can I? So I take my book and pencil and think, and dream, and never open it till the time is past, and then I have to leave it and go and do something else. We are traveling very slowly.

"August 21, Sabbath. It is a beautiful day like the ones we used to have at home when we used to feel at peace when this time approached. I am very weary of this journey, weary of myself and all around me. I long for the quiet of home where I can be at peace once more. We have not traveled very fast of late, and it seems very slow. We often hear of people losing their cattle, and we ought to feel grateful to the Lord for all his kindness to us. Passed a graveyard with ten graves in it. They lie side by side as peaceful as if the church bells of their native villages tolled over them.

"Tuesday, 23. Well, well. People talk of being up to their eyes in dust, but if we have not been up to our eyes in dust it is strange to me. This last two or three weeks we have plenty of dust and sand. Camped on Barrel Creek last night. We thought it a nice place because we were out of the sand, not withstanding we could hardly walk for the cow dung, and could hardly breathe for the smell of dead cattle.

"August 25. One of our oxen died last night, and I was very sorry for he was a favorite, but it seems they all must go.

"Thursday, 26. Left one of our oxen yesterday and two died last night. They are going fast, I think. I wish we were through. Camped today on the Boise River.

"September 8. We parted our company yesterday, the Stevensons and Buckenhams taking the old road, and the Loves and Stewarts taking the new road

going south from the old one. Some say it is much nearer, and some say not. We will soon find out. We came twelve miles over very dusty roads to the Kal-haur River again, crossing one valley with no water. Camped beside the river, and cooked and ate under the willows. It was a beautiful spot, to me at least. Pack up and go again like a band of gypsies. I feel very lost without the rest of the company.

"September 9. Traveled fifteen miles up the Kalhaur River, passed several bluffs and forded the river six times. Lost father and found him again. (It is interesting to interject here that John Stewart, Agnes' father, who was lost and found on this occasion, was later lost permanently when he made an attempt to cross from Little Fall Creek in Lane County to Big Fall Creek). It is thought that the Indians made away with him, for the numerous searching parties never found the slightest indications that he was "lost" in the accepted sense of the word. (What became of this pioneer is still a mystery). Camped by the river, plenty of grass for the cattle.

"September 10. Came twenty miles today, hard on man and beast. Very warm. Nothing but hills and hollows and rocks. Oh dear, if we were only in the Willamette Valley or wherever we are going, for I am tired of this. Came twenty miles - six to the Sinking Springs - they rise out of the ground and sink again - then eleven miles to a beautiful valley with plenty of grass but no water - then three miles to a little valley with plenty of grass and water too.

"September 11. Traveled eight miles yesterday over very rough stony roads, came to water in four miles, and again in four miles more. The water came up in eight several places and sank again. Began to ascend the Burnt River Mountains, or the Blue Mountains, I don't know which, but one thing I do know, they are very serious hills to come up with."

(Here in these "serious hills" the diary ends. The account has been continued by M. Y. Warner, the son of Agnes Stewart and Thomas Warner, he being none other than the Tom she mentions in the diary as being "impudent" and it is more than likely he was one of those she considered as "swearing their souls away" as they labored with the cattle. Be that as it may, Agnes married him, and bore five children, three of whom are now living: Clyde and George Warner of Fall Creek, and Mason Warner of Eugene, who continues the narrative as it was told to him by his mother, and written by him many years ago when he first copied the diary.)

"I have often talked with my mother and father about the trip and the following they have told me:

"After crossing the hills last mentioned in her diary they came to the east end of Lake Harney, or Lake Malheur. Here a dispute arose as to which side of the lake to take, whether north or south.

"Captain Miller, who had been over the new route insisted that they go by the north side, but some others insisted equally on the south side. So the whole company except Captain Miller went on the south side. He traveled one day and a half on the north side thinking the rest of the party would follow him. Finding that they would not, and being afraid of the Indians by himself, he went back, followed the route taken by the rest of the party, and finally overtook them. Not long after it became evident that the train was lost, for they could not find the marks by which they had expected the new trail to be blazed.

"They now insisted that Miller again take the lead, and that he try to find the way through to the valley. This he firmly refused to do, but said he would follow the rest of them till they found their way out of their diffi-

culties. His attitude almost caused a riot, some insisting that Miller take the lead and others defending him. There were even threats of hanging, but after a great deal of talking throughout which Miller held firmly to his decision, they all cooled down, and started west again, hoping to reach the valley before winter set in. Provisions were running low, and they must reach some post where they could get supplies, and could pass the winter in safety.

"Striking what they thought to be approximately the correct direction they crossed the desert and hills. Sometimes they had water and often they had none. Sometimes there was grass for the cattle and sometimes not. The oxen weakened and many died. The little straggling train kept on, determined to reach their destination. At last they came in sight of the Coast (Cascade) Range, its snow peaks towering to the clouds. Shaping their course by these peaks they struck the Deschutes River about three miles below the present site of the city of Bend. From then on they were on a route which had been blazed for a road. Captain Miller had been to the Willamette Valley a year or two before, and had gone east to return with his family. On this trip east he had gone via the upper Willamette thinking that by his return a rough wagon road would be open through. This would make a much shorter route than going via the Columbia River. However nothing had been done to make the blazed trail passable. When the little band of immigrants came to the foot of the mountains they found no road - nothing but an occasional blaze on scattered trees, an almost imperceptible path to guide them. They were ^{now} ~~at~~ on the east side of the Coast (Cascade) Range near the south side of Crescent Lake.

"In order to continue with their wagons they had to make the road as they went. This they did as best they could and as fast as possible. It looked like a hopeless task, but they had to get through or starve. Colonel

Oline, who was with the train, saved them from actual starvation. He was bringing a small herd of cattle from Missouri, and generously told the people to take the best of them for meat. If they could pay him, they might, but pay or not they must live. All thanks is due to this sturdy pioneer. The meat was tough and poor, but empty stomachs were grateful for even that. Had it not been for this small band, they might never have reached the valley.

"Before leaving the Deschutes River they all threw away everything they could possibly get along without. The trip to the summit of the mountains to the head of the Willamette Valley is a story of terrible privation, great courage, and greater determination. Try to imagine coming down the Willamette - no road whatever, with only a few worn-out oxen to bear you along, and these oxen half starved - worn-out women, tired babies, anxious men. They finally reached what is known as the Pine Openings.

"Here it appeared that they surely were beaten, for it was useless to attempt to get the wagons down the thickly forested slopes, hopeless to try to reach the valley settlements handicapped as they were. The scant supplies would be gone long before they could renew them. So with what little could be carried on their backs they abandoned their wagons and set out for the valley on foot.

"In some way word of the starved travelers reached the settlers in the Upper Willamette Valley. Probably the word was carried by watching Indians. At any rate the kindhearted pioneers gathered supplies, and packing them on horse back, sent a man named Squire Powers to the relief of the lost party.

"On the way up the river Squire Powers met three or four men who had hurried on ahead of the main party, trying to reach a settlement and to return

with supplies. Old Mr. Powers used to tell that he baked 1500 pounds of flour into flapjacks that night, and that the four men ate them all.

"In company with the men Squire Powers went back to assist the women and children. October 29th they camped under the great pines that stand at the foot of Butte Disappointment, about half a mile below what is now Lowell.

"After resting a few days the men went back to the Pine Openings and brought the wagons down to Lowell. In making this trip down the river they forded more than forty times and drove along the gravel bars whenever possible.

"This is the true story of the Lost Train. There are stories told how they had to eat snakes and snails, but these stories are not true. The nearest they came to starving was when the rations were divided - each woman and child was allowed one tablespoonful of rice to eat with the tough meat, and each man was allowed two tablespoonful. The meat was so poor and tough it could hardly be eaten, even had they possessed seasonings, but it wardied off actual starvation. The chief difficulty was that they dared not stop long enough to really cook the meat. I do not know whether or not there are any survivors of this train now living."

EARLY SETTLERS

James and Richmond Sanford, brothers, settled on the Sanford ranch, the present city of Oakridge. They were the first permanent settlers above Lowell. They came in by pack train and settled in 1860. They traveled an old Indian trail that did not follow the Middle Fork but took to the ridges. James Sanford continued to own this ranch until 1909, when he sold his holdings to Ernest Hyland and Charles McFarland. Hyland divided a part of this tract into city lots and named it Oakridge. The Sanfords were men long in the business of raising cattle. Some of their cattle were as much as ten years old and would weigh as much as 1400 pounds when they were sold.

ESTHER BRAKEMAN LYMAN

1853

Lost Wagon Train
Middle Fork Route

Reproduced by
Lane County Pioneer-Historical
Society

Eugene, Oregon

1961

FORT KEARNY, May 28. We were so disappointed in not getting a letter from Cooper when we expected one that we hardly knew whether it was best to send any more letters home or not; but concluded finally to write a little more in the journal. However we have so little time to write that it will be impossible to be very explicit.

SUNDAY, 29. Camped tonight only five miles from the fort - had no wood but willows, and these were afforded by wading across a part of the river to an island. I promised you a description of the Platt river; and I might as well give it here. The Platt is quite a large stream being three-quarters of a mile wide on an average, below the junction of the north and south forks. It has numerous islands, something like an archipelago; which are more or less covered with small timber while the shores of the river are almost entirely destitute of it. The Platt is a shallow stream; but everywhere swift. The water of the Platt is saturated with earthy limestone and sand, and has a turbid appearance. Before using it for drinking or cooking purpose, it should be settled by sprinkling a handful of cornmeal slowly into a pail and stirring it at the same time. It will soon become quite clear, palatable, and wholesome. The great emigrant thorofare runs upon the river bottom from a point where it first touches it

to the lower ford of the south fork; some of the way near the river and some of the way farther back towards the bluffs. The width of this bottom land on the south side of the river varies from one to four miles. It is flat and in some places soft in wet weather.

MONDAY 30. Made rather a short drive today - grass poor - fuel the same as last night. We camped early tonight on account of the appearance of a storm. Mr. Sharp says that twenty-four hours seldom pass together while on the Platt without some kind of a storm either rain or hail.

TUESDAY 31. Today Joseph put both span of horses on the buggy. His grain is nearly gone, and the horses will probably grow poor, as the grass is not abundant. We camped tonight on Plumb creek, and had the luxury of dry cotton wood. I might as well tell you here, how we manage to build our fires since we left the stove. We dig a trench about six inches in depth, one foot in width and between three and four feet in length. We lay small bars of iron across this trench, after the fire is kindled, and then it is ready for use. The worst trouble is not having something to bake in - Joseph found a bake-kettle, but it did not have any cover, but we can borrow one sometimes as there are several in camp. I am obliged to close my journal very abruptly for reasons which will be very plain here-

after; and give as short an account as possible of our journey. Perhaps I may give more particulars another time if you wish it. We joined an Oregon Company about the first of June and Joseph was taken sick two weeks after with mountain fever. All the medicine we had with us did not help him; the fever ran twelve days, he then took a powder prepared especially for this fever. The operation was so powerful that the next day he was as weak as a child. We had to give him brandy to keep him alive. He began to recover slowly from this time. We laid by one day while he was the weakest; this was the fourth of July. We were at Independence Rock. Our company went on to find grass, Swartz being the only one who remained with us. The next day we started on but Jo was so weak he could ride but little ways without stopping. Towards night we came up with an acquaintance we had formed in St. Jo., who persuaded us to go seven miles from the road, where we could find good grass and recruit our teams. We stayed there five days. In the meantime Joseph was gaining strength but I was taken with the same fever the day before we left this place, and when I tell you that it was six weeks before I was able to be even taken out of the buggy, and then was more helpless than sophia you will have but a faint idea of what I suffered during that time. I had just got able to stagger around a little when I was taken down with diarrrhea and this in a

short time reduced me lower than ever. It seemed impossible to check the disease and I fully expected to die. Joseph was almost distracted at the thought and I think my grave would have been on the plains, if I had not had a comfortable place to ride and one of the best sisters to take care of me. On the 21st of August I lost my babe; it only lived a few hours. I should not have mentioned this only I wanted to tell you one particular about it. It was a daughter, however that is nothing strange; but if you had seen it you would have thought it ought to have belonged to Mary instead of myself. It had five fingers on each hand and it was exactly like Marys, her worst one. Otherways it was a perfect child. Hatt said it was prettier than Florence. Please read this part of my letter only among our folks. The doctor said there was no use to give me any more medacine as I could not live longer than twenty-four hours at the most, as at this time I could not raise my hand to my head nor speak above a whisper. Of course they had to stop awhile, and thanks to a kind Providence in the course of a week I began slowly to recover. If I should stop to tell you an eighth part of the incidents, accidents, bad roads etc. that we encountered during this time I should fill several sheets. Suffice it to say our team was reduced to three yoke of cattle and three horses. Every time we lost an animal we had to throw away something to lessen

our load. There was a report that a new road had been made across the Cascades shortening the distance 150 miles. Many were in favor of taking this new route and many others thought it dangerous as there was much uncertainty about the new route being explored and it would be impossible to get provisions should we be longer getting through than we had calculated, on the old road trading Posts were established to supply emigrants with provisions that were necessary. Joseph was in favor of taking the new road, and Mr. Swartz too. The routs diverge 15 miles this side of Fort Boisie. We had provisions enough to last us three weeks. Here Harriet and Elisha left and got a chance to go with a Mr. Cline who had lost his wife on the road, she was sick a good deal as I was and died leaving a babe two weeks old and eight other children. We started on the new road the sixth of September. That morning our cow was found dead. Joseph thought he would have to leave the wagon; but Mr. Cline offered us the use of a cow so he concluded to take it on. We laid by that day on Mrs. Swartz' account. We left the next day with an addition to our party in the shape of a young daughter, the property of Mrs. Swartz. I kept getting stronger all the time but Joseph and Luther had to do all the work. We found the road very rough being so hilly beyond description, some of the

hills were so steep and long that it took seven or eight yoke of cattle to draw up the waggons and the descent was sometimes more than a mile. This was among the Burnt hills. There was a pass through the Blue mountains where it was comparatively level. We had been detained so long on the road that first one company and then another would leave us behind until we were the last. One night we overtook a company that had stopped to make some repairs and concluded to join them. We traveled with them two days when we became so short of provisions that Joseph and a young man named Gardner concluded to go on ahead and get provisions. They thought they would be back in ten days. O how little did they know the misery in store for them. Joseph took the three horses and left Luther to drive the cattle. I felt very bad to have him go; it seemed to me that I should not see him in a long time; if I ever did. I was not able to do much and the most come on Luther. He was a good faithful boy I assure you and was so afraid I would get down sick again that he nearly worked himself sick. Joseph left us in the care of the company and one man agreed to help us along if our cattle gave out. I must make my story as short as may be. Mr. Eliot had been hired by the people of Oregon to Pilot the emigrants through. It seems the road had not been cut out only to fall river (Deschutes) near the Cascade Mountains. Mr. Eliot thought he was sufficiently acquainted

with the country to take the shortest road to the river but he got bewildered and led the emigrants over deserts some fifty and sixty miles without water. By this means the cattle became weakened and at the last desert within 15 miles of Fall River, we were out of water and our cattle broke loose in the night and could not be found in the morning, our company left us, having camped a quarter of a mile beyond us; but fortunately another company came along in a few hours, and Mrs. Swartz and myself and children went with them to the river, leaving Mr. Northrup and Luther with the wagons while Swartz came on to look for the cattle supposing they had come to the river having been without water about three days. When we reached the river we found most of the emigration balked not knowing where to cross the river in order to strike the road on the opposite side. Mr. S. looked all that day for the cattle but could not find them. Mr. Northrup came the next day saying he saw some of the cattle about five miles back from the river; that Mr. Swartz must hurry back with water to Luther or he would perish; to cut the story short only enough cattle were found to draw one load and that the lightest which was Mr. Swartz he gathered up every thing and put all the things together in the wagon and brought them to the river. The most of my things were left about half of them among the rest one feather bed, a pair of pillows and Josephs tools. I secured them as well as I could

expecting every day to meet Joseph and thought he would have a fresh team and could go and get them. The waggon and all that I had left. The next day after we left the river a company came along that we knew nothing of and picked up everything I had left and had found a yoke of oxen belonging to us besides. I claimed them but the man drove on saying he would see us in the settlements. But I am getting ahead of my story. When we reached Fall river we had been out of bread for two weeks. We had nothing left but meat and coffee; and the meat was obtained by killing a cow that had been left behind being unable to travel. Before we left the River Luther found another cow which was unfit to work but we thought she would keep us from starving so she was drove along and killed the second day after we left there. When this cow was killed we had about a tablespoon of salt left and there was not enough on the whole Beef to grease a griddle. We continued up the River fifty miles before crossing and then found the stakes and a notice that the road was cut through to the settlements. We were now within 15 miles of the foot of the Cascades where peaks were visible at every opening of the dense forest through which we were traveling.

(Esther B. Lyman, page 8)

I forgot to mention that we left the sage plains for heavy timber about where we left the waggon. Such lofty pines I never saw before, it was quite a stretch of vision to see their tops. The mountains were thickly covered with pine and cedar. The road was very rough and our teams so weak that we made slow progress. We were afraid of getting caught in the snow before we could get to the valley. We were ignorant of the distance; we had been told it was twenty miles from the foot of the mountains to the summit but we called it a long forty miles before we got there. Everything seemed to work against us. We had only just begun ascent the mountains when the waggon tongue was broken and had to be tugged up with a pine tree, then two of our cattle were mired in a ravine and we came very near losing them. There is no grass of any consequence on the mountains and when night came we chained the cattle to the trees without a mouthful to eat. Myself and children had to sleep on the ground and some mornings our outside covering was covered heavily with frost then again the rain would pour in torrents during the night deluging us with water and rendering our situation truly uncomfortable. The preparations for breakfast did not occupy much time at this period, one piece of broiled beef apiece, and placing our jaded cattle before the waggons we were ready to start. O what visions of bread, butter, pies, cakes and other good things, visited us by

night making the awakening reality still more dreadful. During this time Josephine and myself walked a good deal; it was easier than riding over logs from two to three feet through. One day we had started on ahead of the waggon and got about a mile in advance, when stopping to listen if we could hear the waggons coming on, we heard the faint sound of a bell; we did not know that there was any company within fifty miles of us but thought perhaps the bell belonged to some stray cow that we could make use of as we had cooked the last of our meat in the morning; we walked on the bell sounded nearer and nearer when coming to a sudden turn in the road we saw a man on horseback coming toward us, and joy to tell he had a sack of flour on his horse. I think I never was so glad to see a human being before. As soon as I could command my voice sufficiently to speak I told him my situation, his reply was that I and my children must be got into the valley as soon as possible and as I had no husband to see to me he would just take me and the children on his own animals and convey us to the settlements. He had two horses and a pack mule. One of the horses he rode, while the other animals were packed with flour, potatoes, onions, salt, sugar etc. He told us we were eight miles from the summit of the mountains and ninety miles from the first house, that we had a very bad road before

us, would have the Willamette river and its branches (to cross) over thirty times and that two or three rainy days would prevent any waggons from crossing the streams on account of their swiftness and depth. He concluded by telling us that a few steps would bring us to a camp where he had just left some flour; we went on to the camp while he proceeded to cheer Swartz and Luther with the sight of flour. When we all got together you had better believe we had a time of feasting and rejoicing; bread never tasted half so good before although it was made of salt and water and flour. When we had partially satisfied our appetites and turned to thank again our generous benefactor the tears were chasing each other down his cheeks. He hastily dashed them aside and replied that if he had relieved our wants he was amply rewarded. O he was a noble young man and the blessings of many a grateful heart will follow him while life lasts. He informed us that the people of the valley were appraised of the situation of the emigrants only three days before; he received the news at midnight and had not slept since. Several young men started and immediately gathered provisions as they went and that we would meet with a plentiful supply all the way to the valley. Runners had been sent in different directions, and he thought by that time the whole country was aroused. There had been an uncertainty about the emigrants coming this new route or supplies would have reached us sooner. Two men had

left the foremost train to see if they could not reach the valley sooner than the poor cattle and literally crawled into the valley more dead than alive having subsisted on analls for several days. This was the (way) the people found out there was suffering in the mountains. But I must hasten. The next morning I prepared to accompany Mr. Tripp having packed what clothing I could in a couple of sacks they were put on the mules and Sopnia with them together with some pillows and blankets and all securely bound, this was the only way Sophia could be carried with safety. Josephine rode behind Mr. Tripp and Florence in his arms, leaving me to ride his own horse as it was the steadiest. Luther staid to help Swartz with the cattle. Our party was increased by a Mr. Hamilton and his wife and three children the next day and the day after by others of Mr. Hamilton's relatives assisted by another young man from the valley until our company numbered 19. It was a noble sight - those young men helping those women and children over the swift streams returning two or three times to carry the children in their arms as the mothers were so timid. Sometimes the water would come up to our shoes as we sat on our horses and run so swift it was with great difficulty we could keep our seats in the saddle. Mr. Tripp and Davidson supplied the whole with Provisions and it took no small amount to satisfy the famished stomachs of so many.

We were constantly meeting horses and mules laden with provision all a free offering. Many were leaving their waggons and packing things on their horses or those that had come out to help them. It was estimated there were 9 hundred waggons and about 1500 persons on the road. We were in the last train of waggons and passed the whole emigration with the exception of one team before we got into the Valley. After we got down the worst of the mountain we every few miles met fresh cattle come to bring out the emigrants and others for Beef and such cattle you never saw in your life so large and fat. At one place a Thousand lbs of flour, fifty bushels of potatoes, a hundred weight of bacon were left by partys with a notice for the emigrants to help themselves all one free will offering of one man. The day before we reached the valley we heard that several men had got in to the settlements; some that had left the trains to get provisions about the time that Joseph did. I was in hopes that he was among them, but found to my sorrow that he was not. Some thought he had gone to the Dalles others that he would still get in the same the others did. Within half a mile from the first house we found a provision wagon that had come sixty miles. Mr. Briggs the owner of the wagon very kindly offered to take me home with him and stay until I could hear something of Joseph. Mr. Tripp, seeing

me so kindly cared for Procured fresh horses and started back to the mountains to render assistance to those still behind. Here I found Harriet. She got in the same day; we staid with her. Elisha was still behind with Cline's train. I sent the children in advance in a waggon drawn by two pair of mules. The next day when Mr. Driggs put his team to the wagon, took my things and started for his home. That night we ate our supper prepared by kind hands in a house for the first time in 7 long dreary months. On the 24th of October we reached Mr. Driggs' on the Eve of the third day, and was glad to find a resting place. Let me describe Mr. Driggs and family. They have two daughters and two Boys. In the first place he is one of the wealthiest and most influential men in Oregon. His wife is about my age, tall, fair and very good looking. They are very kind to the children especially to Florence. Mr. Driggs people have every thing that heart could desire. Joseph says he will write you about his journey after he left us. I think you will have then all you will want to read, so I think I will bring my journal to a close.

Fearing Joseph was not coming back at all I sent his Mason papers to the Masonic Lodge by the mail Carrier and requested them to assist me to find employment. I asked for no penury assistance but they sent me twenty one

dollars. The mail carrier added five dollars, in a letter from the Lodge they wished me to come there to Salem. Me. Driggs and I with the children called at a store where he bought Josephine and Sophia each a pair of shoes and the merchant gave Florence a pair. We were directed to a Mr. Chapman in salem; the first news I heard as we stopped at the house was that Joseph had arrived in town but he had gone to Mr. Gilberts to stay all night. I went to their place the next day. We had a joyful meeting. Florence did not know him. Joseph looks very thin and pale. He had suffered a great deal but is much better since getting in the valley. I like it here very much, wish we could settle here in this Valley. I shall be contented but the Homesteads are all taken. I am pleasantly situated with Mr. Chapman, his wife and four children, one daughter and three boys. The daughter is attending the salem Institute. They are a pleasant family, but expect to leave them as soon as Joseph gets back. The other day Mr. Chapman brought in 10 yds of factory cloth given him by several gentlemen in town, and two dollars in money. I then went and bought 6 yards of calico. It was 20 cts per yard.

I must close my journal now. Oh how glad I was to get Anna's letter, sorry to hear of Phils accident, but glad to hear his foot was better. Glad to hear the rest are all

well, and dear old mother hope I see her. Tell Mrs. Gilbert that I delivered her message as she asked me to her sons wife, myself, and if she wants to see a good likeness of his wife she must look at Louise, Johns wife. Giving best love to all. kiss little Emma for me. Tell Josephs folks to write. Florence is the greatest talker you ever saw. she calls Mr Chapman pa and has ever since Joe went away. She can point you all out in your Degaria-types at least all that I have but I am afraid that she will be spoiled if we dont go to House keeping pretty soon. Now I am going to stip and (if you can) read it I shall be glad. I shall write immediately on Joseph's return. I want you to write as orten as you can. good bye one and all. your loving daughter and sister

Esther Lyman

(Esther B. Lyman, page 16)

(Note: Apparently Mrs. Lyman sent the first part of her "journal" of the trip as far as Fort Kearny to her relatives in Cooper, Mich., and it was lost. The entries from May 28 to May 31 were a continuance of the journal. Then Joseph Lyman became ill, and from then on her illness and the rigors of the trip prevented her writing day by day, and she wrote the resume of her experiences after she was settled in Salem. One perhaps in _____ of 1853.)

JOSEPH LYMAN LETTER - 1853

Letter written by Joseph Lyman to his mother in Michigan, dated "Salem, Nov 11th, 1853"

Dear Mother & Friends and all

I now take my pen to try and inform you of some of the particulars of our journey as we have but just arrived. Es will write within a few days.

The first part of our journey untill I left the waggons which was the 16th of Sept when I left the buggy as the horses were getting so poor that I feared we would lose them and we were nearly out of provisions so I concluded to take my horses and go on and get some and go back with it, two young men with two horses joined us and we traveled into the mountains, got lost had to kill all three of my horses to keep us alive as we had nothing the first two weeks except a wolf and one small wood pecker which was hard eating I assure you. we came as near starving to death as any person ever did being out 44 days without anything but horse meat and so poor that one of them gave out before we killed him.

We were obliged to strike north to the Dalles on the Columbia River which we reached the 1st of Nov and was so reduced with fatigue and starvation that I could scarcely walk. I took steam boat the next morning and arrived in Portland the 3 found your letter (or Anns) was glad to hear from you but had not heard from Es, came on as fast as possible got to Mr. Gilberts day before yesterday he had got a letter from Es who was about 25 miles from here she had sent my demit to Salem requesting the Masons to get her a room as she supposed me dead they got her a house and sent her 25

dollars in money and the man she was staying with brought her down here and to-day we were again united after an absence of nearly eight weeks She will write the particulars of her journey across the mountains..... behind somewhere They left the other waggon and..... ..know as there is but one steer left of all our cattle that has got through but I cannot tell yet I am going up the valley tomorrow to find L(uther), and see about my cattle The Masons have responded to my call I have had one pair of new pants 2 pair of new boots 3 pair of new socks one new vest 2 shirts 1 coat and a neck handkerchief given to me by the Masons and Es and myself have about 100 dollars in money also given to us by them. they have got a house for us here and she has agreed to lend me a stove and as soon as I get back we shall go to keeping house A life Mason a Carpenter that will let me have the making of 500 lights of sash as soon as I get strength enough to go to work at 20 cents a light and I can have other work that I can have if I am a mind to stay here but I want to look me up a farm as soon as possible I intend to get only the Pacific coast if I can find a place there that suits me as there is plenty of Oysters and Clams and any amount of salmon and such fish you never saw from 10 to 20 pounds apiece and the best fish I ever saw I intend to go into the fishing business as soon as I can get a start sufficient they are worth 25 or 30 dollars per Barrel I like the country extremely well I never saw such handsome Prairie in my life as here and

Joseph Lyman Letter - 1853

page 3

such crops you cannot imagine I have seen a cabbage head that would hardly go into a large wash tub and turnips grow here larger than a half bushel and the largest and finest potatoes that I ever saw but it costs something to live here I have paid from six shillings to one dollar a meal for victuals, wheat is worth 2 dollars a bushel potatoes 1, flour 8 per hundred, p(o)rk 20, sheep 12, green apples 10, dried 4, sugar 12 to 18, coffee 25 and so on but wages are high however but at this season of the year there is but little going on as it is now the rainy season and it pours down for certain Butter is worth 5 shillings a pound and eggs 1 do a dozen

Es has got so fat that she can hardly see out of her eyes she looks in this face like Jennet Brown and is nearly as fleshy, you would not know her she has altered so much she found some excellent friends.....stuffed her as you would a turkey I am.....hurry and cannot write all the particulars now as the man I am going with is nearly ready so I must close I shall write again soon tell Eli I should like to have a letter from him and let me know about the gold piece I hope that you will answer this as soon as possible tell Phil I am very sorry to hear that he was so unfortunate but I hope he has got well by this time give my best respects to all enquiring friends so good by

J Lyman

CROSSING THE PLAINS BY OX-TEAM IN 1853

I'm writing this story from memories of conversations I overheard when I was a small girl, between my mother and my grandmother Leonard. Grandfather Joseph L. Leonard and his wife, Mary (Purdom) Leonard, with their four children. Catherine, the oldest, had her 13th birthday on the plains May 29th, 1853. Cyrus, eleven, Lucinda, nine, and Joseph, seven. They left their home in Clark County, Missouri, the latter part of March, 1853, to join up with a wagon train that was being assembled at St. Joseph, Missouri. They called it St. Jo. Folks were congregating there from all over the country; eager to start the westward trek. Each train consisted of about one hundred and twenty wagons. Grandfather was elected captain of one section of about forty wagons. That was about as many wagons as one man could be responsible for. Most families had two wagons with two teams of oxen. They had extra teams in case they were needed. After being supplied with food and other necessary supplies they started out on their trip to Oregon, April 1st, 1853; which proved to be a long and weary one as they were lost for a time and almost perished from the lack of food and water, before arriving in the Willamette Valley, in late November. They had to carry other supplies as well as food. There were shoes for the horses and cattle. They didn't shoe the loose stock. They had extra cattle and horses along. There was rope for the construction of bridges over streams that were too deep to ford. They would have had to have some sort of blacksmiths tools. Each wagon had its tar bucket; in it the oil for lubricating the wheel to keep them rolling smoothly, also a water barrel, with extra water for the noon stops. Sometimes they had to make a dry camp. Grandfather had two wagons and two drivers. Their names were

?) Farley and Tyler. Farley died soon after coming to Oregon; I don't think they kept in touch with Tyler. Grandfather, Catherine and Cyrus rode horseback all the way across the plains. Catherine and Cyrus helped to drive the loose stock. They had to be kept in limits as they were prone to wander from the beaten path in search of forage. I remember mother speaking of her mount, an old mare she called "Old Gray". Grandmother and two younger children rode in one of the wagons. There were quite a few young men paid their way across the plains by driving the ox teams for families. (My father crossed that way in 1851). They brought extra oxen to replace the worn out teams; even so, many wagons were being drawn by milk cows before the journey was over. Many times they had to pull off the road five or six miles in order to have water and feed for the stock. When they had had a long pull they would stay at these watering places and let the stock rest and graze. The loose stock could snatch a bite here and there but the cattle drawing the wagons had to be kept in the beaten path. There was no chance of them feeding. The only time they had to graze was at these stops, and the daily stops at night when the days journey was over. When they were short of water they traveled part of the night. At these stops there were always chores to do. Wagons to be repaired, clothes to be laundered and bread to be baked. They probably boiled a kettle of bacon and dry beans. There were always cattle and horses to be shod. At these stops the young folks of the train would take hikes. Mother spoke of them bringing back snow with them at one stop. The cattle were always guarded while grazing as they were always fearful of them being stampeded or stolen. A trick of the indians was to drag a bear hide across the road in order to stampede the oxen. The indians would then follow up and pick up

whatever was lost from the wagons. Mother said this was a fearful sight as the panic-stricken oxen would run with the wagons; some were over turned and several people were severely injured. The only way they could stop the frightened cattle was for the men on horseback to race along and whip them over the head with their bull whips. In the evening when the cattle were through grazing they were brought in and driven into a corral made by forming the wagons into a circle. There they were kept for the night. Fires for cooking were in this enclosure too. Guards patrolled the camp all night. Some of the streams were too deep to ford so were bridged by spans made of rope. They anchored the rope on the bank of the stream, then swam the horses across dragging the rope to the opposite bank where it was anchored. They then wove rope back and forth from the main ropes to form the floor of the bridge. Where ever available, they cut brush and small trees and wove them into the floor of the bridge. In some of the prairie country, they used willow trees that grew along the streams. They took the wagon beds off and floated them across, and then they pulled the running gear of the wagons across by hand. The wagon beds were made like boats for this very purpose; hence the name "Prairie Schooner". Sometimes a wheel would slip through the rope floor; then they had to get it righted before they could proceed. One wagon after another until the whole train was across the stream. They swam the livestock across. It took them several days just to cross one stream like this. The bridge had to be dismantled for future use. Fording the streams was no small task either. Sometimes they would drive along the stream for miles looking for a place where the banks were low enough to get the wagons into the stream. Then they could not always drive directly across the stream, but would have to

travel up or down stream to get out. The men always rode along side of the wagons to keep them in the right channel and to keep them moving as some times they encountered quick-sand and they did not dare stop. I don't know how the drivers of the wagons got across the streams; perhaps on horse back as they would have to be along to command the oxen. I got the impression that they followed the Platte River for quite some distance and crossed it more than once. For baking their bread, they carried a large iron vessel they called a Dutch Oven. I remember the two grandfather brought across with him. They were about twenty inches in diameter and about ten inches deep, with a heavy iron lid. They would dig a pit and build their fire in it, and when the ashes were good and hot, they would put the bread in the oven and after they had drawn the fire out of the pit, they would place the oven into the pit and bank the ashes up over it then replace the fire on top of it. They couldn't always have time to bake in the dutch ovens, so they made a bread they called Dough-gods. This was made from a sourdough starter leavened with soda; they called it saleratus. I can remember when the package we now get called soda was labeled Saleratus. This bread was made into cakes and baked over the fire in a skillet. When done on one side it was flipped over and baked on the other side. It is quite palatable when spread with butter. I never heard them speak of matches, but they did talk of a tinder box. This consisted of a flint stone, a steel and some tinder. They would lay their fire with the tinder underneath, then make a spark by striking the flint and steel together. They would hold it so to direct the spark into the tinder, thus lighting the fire. I got the idea they lighted just one fire this way, then whoever wanted a fire got their light from this one. I remember

In prairie country they used Suggs's Chips for fuel! Some times sage brush

mother speak of her mother sending her to get fire. They got some light from the fires but they did have a supply of candles along, and made some on the trip. We had the two candle molds grandfather brought across the plains. One made twelve candles and the other six. I remember my father threading the molds for mother. This was generally done in the evening when we were all gathered around the fireplace. This is a pretty particular job, as the twine for the wick has to be placed so the wick will be exactly in the middle of the candle and tied securely in that position. The mold is then stood upside down and the melted tallow is poured into the mold. It is then left in that position until the tallow is cold, usually overnight. Then the candle is slipped out and ready for use. I remember our first kerosene lamp. We children were never allowed to carry them as they were considered dangerous. We were given a lighted candle to light us to bed. When crossing the mountains the travelers encountered some pretty rough and steep grades. There were hazards both going up and coming down, and very wearing on both the teams and wagons. There were many breakdowns on these pulls. Going up the grades they had to hitch extra teams on the wagons and the men folks would put their shoulder to the wheels to help the poor tired oxen. Every one riding in the wagons who were able, walked up these grades. The roads were dusty and there were deep ruts and great boulders sticking up to harass the drivers and teams, and took their toll of broken wheels and axles. Many of the wagons were abandoned. It was easier and safer to walk at these times; the lurching of the wagons made it difficult to stay on board. Going down was equally as difficult. The brakes on the wagons weren't adequate to hold the wagon from crowding the oxen, so they were obliged to use other means. They would cut down trees and tie behind the

wagons. The drag from the weight of the trees helped and sometimes if there were standing trees handy they put ropes on these trees and let the wagons down that way. They didn't make very good milage on these grades. It was a tremendous task to get all those wagons through. Mountain after mountain, day after day, their cattle were getting thin and weaker every day. It was hot; the dust was deep; the roads deeply rutted by previous trains, and the stench of dead animals along the road made it almost unbearable. I remember mother telling of wrapping one foot in her bonnet and the other in her apron, as the hot ~~sun~~^{day} burned her feet. She was probably barefoot. Always when they talked of the trip I was so engrossed I didn't ask questions. I'm sorry now I didn't as there is so much I would like to know and there is no one to ask. She spoke of the cunning little animals they called Prairie Dogs. They lived in colonies; their house was a burrow dug in the ground. They would sit up on the rim of their burrows and watch the wagons rolling by. There were small owls and rattlesnakes seemingly living in the same burrows. The indians would come to the wagons and offer to trade ponies for the girls. They had to watch them as they would pick up anything that was loose. Mother told of an indian picking up a teakettle of boiling water and hiding it under his blanket. Mrs. Robinson, the owner of the teakettle, went after him with her fire shovel; he jumped back and the hot water spilled on him and he dropped the teakettle and ran. They didn't have any stock killed by indians until they got into Oregon.

There was one incident that gave them concern. A young man in one section of the train shot and killed a young indian girl who was in a canoe on a lake. The indians came and searched every wagon on the train; satisfied they were not hiding him, they went away. This did

not happen on grandfathers section of the train. Mother heard he got a horse and escaped but was never sure what became of him. There were abandoned wagons and all kinds of furniture along the road. As the teams wore down the loads had to be lightened. They now and then got some repairs from derelicts left by other travelers. Mother said the indians never took any part of the abandoned wagons but the coupling pins. There were births and several deaths, with burial by the wayside. Mother spoke of their stop at Fort Laramie. There were soldiers stationed there. They camped near the Fort for a few days. Another thing that slowed them down was a sticky mud they called Gumbo. This mud would stick to the wagon wheels and fill up between the spokes until the oxen just couldn't pull the wagons. They would stop every few feet and dig it off the wheels and it was like that until they got over those places and sometimes it was quite a stretch through them. Mother said there were great piles of it along the road where previous trains had cleaned their wagon wheels. They might have had some of this before reaching Oregon, but I know they had it in Oregon. This probably was bad after the rains started. While crossing the Snake River into Oregon, mother and her brother, Cyrus, were guarding the cattle to keep them out of the willows growing along the bank. Cyrus' cap was raked off by a willow branch. A little indian grabbed the cap and put it on his head. Cyrus jumped off his horse and jerked the cap off the little indians head and threw it in the Snake River. The little indian dived right in after it. Mother said he swam like a duck. Cyrus had heard the indians had lice. He didn't want that cap, neither did he want that little indian to have it. There were a couple of incidents mother didn't mention in her letter to Mrs. Dye. One was when they were suffering so much for the lack of

water that Grandfather got where he couldn't speak for lack of water. There was a man that took a small cask and went on foot in search of water. He found a little stream about ten miles from where the wagon train was. He gave Grandfather a small cup of water. That was where they turned the stock loose and let them go to the water. They brought water to the camp on horseback every day until the tired stock were able to come back to the wagons. Another thing was some of the men on the train found gold. That was further on, just before they came over the Cascade Range. They dared not stop to investigate it further as they were starving and had to put all their efforts into finding the road. I remember a remark mother made, that she had seen the Willamette River where she could step over it. That must have been where they started down the Cascade Mountains toward the Willamette Valley. Mother's letter will tell you of their trials when they were lost in Oregon. I remember all the incidents she reveals in her letter. I'm using mother's letter with the permission of the Oregon Historical Society. This letter is one of the Dye collection that mother wrote to Eva Emery Dye. Seems to be some confusion about the date of this letter. It couldn't have been written in 1903. Mother says in her letter that her mother was living with her and that she was 96 years old. Grandmother had her 96 birthday in October, 1900, and she died Feb. 20th, 1901. Mother did a lot of writing for Mrs. Dye in the early 1890s. I can remember her writing by lamplight when I was ten or twelve years old. That must have been the time mother and grandmother talked so much about the trip recalling the incidents when I overheard so much of their conversation. Mother wrote dozens of pages to Mrs. Dye. They talked this over and over that is why I remember it so well now.

This part of narrative by:

Mrs. Gertrude E. (Jones) Morley, 403 N. 2nd St., Silverton, Oregon.

Marquam, Oregon, November 12, 1903 (1900?)

Mrs. C. H. Dye.

Dear Madam:-

It was in 1853 that I crossed the plains with my father, mother, two brothers and one sister. I was then thirteen years old. My brother and sister were younger than I. My father's name was Joseph Leonard. We started across the plains the 1st day of April, 1853. All went nicely until we came to Malheur River about 18 miles this side of Snake river. There we met a man that came to meet his family, his wife and two lovely children who were traveling with us. He had been in Oregon two years and told us of a road that was two hundred miles nearer and we could get good feed for our poor worn out teams. This was the 1st of September. Well, father thought if Mr. Elliott was willing to risk his family that he must be telling the truth, so we consented to go with him. We gathered three large trains of forty wagons in each and we started into the Blue Mountains. We kept on old Meek's road that was traveled in 1845 or 46 until we crossed the Blue Mountains, then we came to chalk and glass mountains or hills. The Indians stole horses from some of the trains and we had to help them get through. When we came in sight of the lake which I suppose is Harney lake, Mr. Elliott said we must go south, so we left the road and went to the south of the lake. You may be sure that we had a hard time traveling without a road through in Indian country.

The Indians built signal fires on all the high mountains and tried in every way to entrap us.

Some of the streams that entered into the lake were so deep we could not ford them and a man would take ropes and swim across, while some would fasten the ropes on the side we were on, and the men would lay willows on until we could run the wagons across and swim the horses and cattle. It was while we were crossing one of these streams that the Indians were hid in the bush and shot 40 head of cattle.

My father told my brother and I to drive our cattle away the first thing after we crossed and we did so and saved ours, but the others would not take his advice and lost forty head right there, for the arrows were poisoned and killed every one that drew blood.

We went around the lake and then struck out on a barren desert, nothing but sagebrush and sometimes a spot of wild onions. Plenty of water in the winter, I suppose, but in October when we came through it was as dry as ashes. We traveled on this desert all day and night long and in the morning when our teams gave out we loosened them from the wagons and the men took kegs on their backs and followed the cattle about ten miles and found water. We had to stay there six days for the teams to get so they could come back to the wagons. The men went every day and brought water to drink. When we started from there we went by the little stream and stopped all night and then went on across another desert, but were more cautious about filling our canteens.

At the first desert I saw a lot of men draw up two wagons and tie the end of the tongues together, they said they were going to hang Mr. Elliott for leading us through that road. Father, Mother and several of the men begged them to spare his life. He admitted he did not know anything about the road, but thought it was all right and claimed that the people in the upper end of the valley said they would pay him five hundred dollars to pilot the emigrants through that way. He offered all his cattle to be killed for food for the starving people for we were without flour or anything to eat. Every one that was sick died. We killed the poor oxen and the meat was like glue, it would stick to anything it touched, the mud would run out of the liver, but we had to eat it without salt or starve. I saw men boil the hides and hoofs of cattle and eat them. Father offered five dollars for a pint of salt but could not get any. After we crossed the second desert, we could see three snow peaks in the distance which were the Three Sisters and came to an old Indian trail to Fall river or Deschutes and there was only one place we could water for forty miles and that was about as wide as a common door.

Here we stayed six days hunting a road: finally we started up the river traveled about forty miles then forded it. Now here was a place that we out fitted those two younger men to go for assistance. It was then in November. People threw in and bought an old mare, then gave them dried meat and bedclothes

and they started not knowing what was before them. Here the snow fell; we went through six inches of snow, it was terribly cold and wet; we crossed the summit. Oh! such a road. here we found a grindstone that showed some one had been here. The road was cut in some places; they had bridged over logs four feet through rather than cut them out; teams gave out; wagons were left and everything they could do without was left; the suffering was intense as we came down the Willamette, the stream was narrow and swift and we could ford it every little while; every time it was a little deeper until the last time Father said we could not make it.

We were near it, sitting down eating boiled beef straight when two men came riding up to us, threw us down some flour and potatoes, never was a morsel more gladly received. Those boys had taken in word of starving people. The poor fellows walked and led the old mare until they could ford that swift rolling current on that poor old animal until she gave out and all their grub was gone; the old mare had a colt and the poor fellows ate it, then starving sick and disheartened, young Kelly lay down to die as he thought his companion would not leave him. In the morning early he heard the chickens crow, he went in that direction and came to the house of a young man. He went back and brought Kelly in and left the two young men until he went down fifty or sixty miles to Albany. That night the citizens of that place made up five hundred dollars of provisions for the Emigrants. And plenty of men and pack animals loaded with provisions went out after us. Every man, when his pack was unloaded, would take some of the Emigrants on their horses to the valley.

I do not remember but one of the young men's names, I think they went to California after they came in. Mother who is living with me, does not remember them, either.

My father went to his long home twenty years ago; mother is ninety-six, of course she does not remember much that happened. Now I have written facts but if I could see you I could tell you a great deal more. Mr. Elliott is dead, he died near Eugene. I have a daughter in Oregon City, when I come to visit her I shall be glad to visit you and have a talk.

Yours truly,

Mrs. C. J. Jones