

ACROSS THE PLAINS IN 1857 AND BACK IN 1859

WRITTEN BY ARATUS M. DEUEL

Transcribed and Submitted by Dorothy Harlan

Aratus M. Deuel was the son of Benjamin Deuel, a brother of Linus Deuel and an uncle of Frank H. Deuel. So you can see there are Cooper County connections. This is a great account of the many hardships our pioneer families faced in the middle nineteenth century.

First Installment was written on December 8, 1930 by the author who was 90 years old on July 10th, 1929

Dear Niece Edith:

On June 1st. 1857 there passed over the Mo. River at Kainsville, Iowa, near Council Bluffs, Ia. where Lewis and Clark, Explorers of Pioneer fame met, (six) powerful tribes (Indian) of that early period, to get their permission to explore, all the far West, now comprising several prosperous States of the Union, it was an important Council in that, it sealed to the U. S. the claim to all of that populous Territory now covered by cities and farms, and traversed by Railroads, Automobiles and Telegraph lines (and even looked down upon by Aeroplanes, who would have thought it possible from their point of view, that such things could ever happen?)

When Lewis and Clark bargained with the wild Indian, paying for the privilege of entering their Domain for such a purpose; the six tribes were the Sioux, Arapahoe's, Apaches, Cheyennes, Blackfoot and ShoShonee (such a deviation from the main topic.) Our train of 17 wagons, drawn by oxen for the most part, went slowly as the horse drawn buggy must go the same gait; (Our two wagons, had spent the whole Month of May, crossing the State of Iowa, from Waverly Bremer Co. and in making repairs before leaving Kainsville, Iowa.

Crossing the river at Omaha (or where Omaha now stands) we crossed on a steam Ferry, paying \$1.00 for each wagon (I think it is now crossed on a drawbridge free of cost) Omaha then had one log house and store -- the Sycamore trees in front of the house were lined with plows - handrakes, sythes, hoes and all kinds of farming implements and tools; but now look at Omaha; in or on the same spot where the log store and house were, ---Large brick buildings 7 to 10 stories high without exaggeration.

Our train now comprising 17 wagons takes its way Westward, for the Golden State of California on June 1st 1857. We made our way a happy band of men women and children -- how they did run and shout and clap their hands; Fathers and Mothers with their faces wreathed in smiles, did tell of joy in their hearts, it took us 3 days to reach the Elkhorn River, which empties into the Platte River (on the north side of Platte). We are to travel up the Platte for 700 miles; we reach the Elkhorn about (60 mi.) as we came near it rained hard causing us to camp at once; as our wagons were not waterproff (or covers) except the horse

drawn buggy which carried the family - Father Stepmother and four children, we then saw our first Indian a Pawnee (I recall my fathers remark) "he can stand so straight that all the rain can run off from him" (or miss him) the Indian was naked except a little waist-cloth.

The Elkhorn was spanned by a Military bridge built by the Govt. for its trains to pass over-free to the Public. The Country West of the Elkhorn, is a rich and level plain, for many miles, a part of the rich Platte Valley, about the third day, from Elkhorn we had an exciting time, a visit from a herd of Antelope, a man saw them coming--he took out the ramrod of his gun (a rifle) and hung a red handkerchief on it and fell down on his back, and held it high in the air above him, and the whole herd stopped--and looked with wonderment at the strange sight (to them)--Father and Mr. Corbett took out their loaded rifle's and by this time all the sweet-looking animals had run away--but one doe started, but too late--Mr. Corbett was a crack shot, the animal dropped dead after two or three pumps, the whole train feasted on fresh antelope 'til other game took its place - on our green-sward tables, from that time on we always had fresh meat to supply all our needs.

Next place I remember is Wood River, almost 170 miles from Omaha, after leaving Wood River, the next place of interest is Loup Fork, of the Platte River, it rises in the Cascade Mts.- and running East and South, makes its junction with the Main Platte river, not far from Grand Island Nebraska in the Platte River just above or below I forget which, on Grand Island was a Govt. Fort, as we heard the Drums beat and Bugle Call from our camp.

At Loup Fork we must stop and wait 4 days and help finish the Ferry boat to cross the turbid waters of the Pine Riser old angry Loup Fork ---After helping to finish the boat we paid \$2.00 per wagon to ferry us across, and taking all the cattle up stream while making them swim across to west side--when we arrived at Loup Fork, we found 200 wagons waiting to cross the angry tide, and we had no small job, to push the cattle in to be followed by 30 or 40 men on horseback, I was excused but remained in my wagon - (left out of previous letter), I did not tell you in its proper place that our train of 17 wagons, was the fag end of the emigration across the Plains for the year -57. In our long train, was a family by the name of Corbett. In that family was a slender modest boy named John -- While we were still in we came up with them and Father from much talk with Mr. Corbett, changed his plan to locate in Kansas, to going on to Calif. your Mother Ida and Aunt Lou Deuel were not with us; one night in camp with the Corbetts, we had a stranger to visit us in the person of a little girl of 12 yrs. of age; she had a familiar face, and was no one but the boy John Corbett (spoken of) when the Corbetts had left home the child left her home, where she was beat up and abused near to kill. So the Corbetts took her in; put boys clothes on her, it was at Three Rivers, Ia. where the slender boy became a sweet girl, her right name was Susy Gifford.

So now again we return to Loup Fork we all safely over that mad River, without the loss of any human being or cattle, we got across about 2 p.m. found plenty of green grass unlike the East side of the River, with 200 wagons and 2000 head of cattle. The big train soon left us in the rear, one month later on the

Upper waters of the Platte - we picked up the dry white slender blade of a buffalo (shoulder blade) on which was written in pencil -- Captain Corcoran (train) (the train spoken of) passed here 6 days ago giving date; -- so every train left its record on dry bones for those who followed.

One day on the Platte Walter Corbett and I took a ramble from the train without consulting our Elders; we went to the top of a high hill where we saw smoke arise; on looking over very slyly, we thought we saw a band of Indians dancing their Scalp Dance. But they spied us about the same time we did them, for we saw 6 Indians leave the dance, and Mount the ponies picketed near by - we were about 3/4 mile from the Red Men we started there carrying our loaded guns, but making good time for the train in full sight, but three miles away, but the Reds came over full tilt (over the hill after us), we ran yelling with all out might when Farher and Mr. Corbett ran to meet us, soon the gap between us reduced to one mile (or less) the Reds still intent after the two BRAVE BOYS, did not see the two OLD BOYS, with long distance rifles -- then the two Old Men knelt down, and two shots rang out - one Indian was badly wounded and one pony fell dead. Then the Indians beat a retreat in bad order, and kept out of our path to be sure. But two Brave Boy Hunters got a good scolding, for leaving camp unadvised. But Walt Corbett and I were full of desire for adventure so a few days later we must try again, we had been told not to waste any ammunition on wolves, for ammunition was high and hard to get, far away from any store. Wolves were plenty -- I could leave my 3 yoke of oxen and wagon in hands of Bill Robinson to drive any time, so Walt and I formed another hunt, we had been told that one of the big grey wolves, would not budge an inch out of his path, nor go faster now slower for any man -- for fear of (?) so we planned to try one-- we two Brave Boy Hunters -- so we went on before the train until we were out of sight of it, Ah! Here comes an old Grey Wolf (Gaunt) from our right, to cross the road a little before us -- he was a giant of an old wolf -- we got within 25 ft. of him, as he crossed our road -- he turned his head, and gnashed his teeth at us, and OH! such a G*R*O*W*L we stopped short, he did not stop; we made a hasty bargain with him--Please Mr. Wolf go on. On our way up the Platte Valley we were never out of sight of plenty of wild game, although it was quite difficult to get near enough to get a good shot - yet our tables were always supplied with plenty of fresh meat.

We passed by Court-house Rock and Chimney Rock on the South side of the River (we were on the north side of the River) it is somewhere about here where South Platte comes in. Every foot of distance had been measured by a road meter fastened to the hind wheel of a wagon, and sold to us in a guide book, giving exact distance, to every camping place with quantity and quality of water and grass. (How I wish I had a copy of our old Pratt and Slaters Guide Book,) how I would press it to my Heart, as I lived over again, all the scenes and camps, labors trials and dangers, -- But we will soon be opposite Fort Laramie 521 mi. from Omaha to Fort Laramie.

Here we will rest for 2 days, and replenish our stock of Flour at \$10.00 per. cwt. the Comander of the Fort gave Father 2 Barrels of Hard-tack, for with this and wild meat a good soup is made, we are to go 170 miles up the Platte

River, through the far famed Black Hills. We were just one month traveling the 521 mi. from Omaha to Fort Laramie.

The Fort is on the South side of the North Platte, the road through the Black Hills was just as Nature had made it (but now the Hills are dug down -- valleys filled up -- streams all bridged at Govt. expense R.R. Trains go whizzing by, and Aeroplanes go overhead). But we must return to our Ox teams, we came next to Independence Rock - some 200 mi. from Ft. Laramie; not a house have we seen since we left Omaha. This Rock is a lone Rock, in the midst, of Rock it is 250 ft. long and 90 ft. high in the shape of an egg lying on one side, being balanced on a level. Here Lewis and Clark spent the 4th of July under its welcome shade, celebrating the Day and naming it Independence Rock, both because of its Isolated position and in Honor of the Day. Some men had written their names high up (how they got up to write them I know not.) ---Clark and Lewis had chiseled their names in the Rock --the Rock of History -- High up on the smooth face of the Rock. Others wrote with a paint brush (their names) but, the Storms of Life came down and washed their lines away. We are now by the clear waters of the Sweet Water River Tributary to the Platte, the Sweet Water River rises at the foot of Fremont Peak, whose snow capped summit is 13000 ft. above sea level. We next come to Devils Gate, a Mt. of solid granite rock 400 ft. high (mistake) cleft in two from top to bottom, by a convulsion of Nature so that the projections on one side will just fit and fill the cavities on the other side, all the 400 ft. from top to bottom - it being only 22 ft. across the cavity, the Sweet River runs below if the People of the U.S. want to see wonders, of the world, they had better stay at Home. We have come up grade every step of the way from Omaha, distance of about 1000 miles, to Pacific Springs where all the water runs toward the Pacific. (it seems as though Uncle Rate has left out something here) as there is a skip from page 12 to 20, if he fills it out on looking this over I will copy it).

Here is his note (I hope it will be worth reading Inasmuch you asked me to write it. -- I know it is all true, my actual experience, but having only a faulty Memory to write from many important events and facts, may be left out, I trust you will all Pardon the ommision. (Uncle Rate.)

The Indians and Mormans in the thick set thicket was much to our advantage -- a True God send, for our safety for they over shot us entirely when they sent their fulisade of 113 shots at us -- immediately we sent back at their blaze of fire 100 shots at them -- then the stillness of Death -- for a full minute -- the groans of one or two Indians, as we heard them moving away, Father had his coat collar shot through -, not a drop of our blood was shed and the tired old cattle just lay quiet all night, Captain Dunwoody and I were on guard over the cattle. They were used to gunfiring and were not afraid, their purpose was to stampeed the cattle, not caring how many people they killed; 2 or 3 of the Mothers had Sythe blades bound with rags, part way to defend their children, who were asleep in the wagons (low down) and their mothers wide awake standing by the Wagons.

Next day after the battle at night, we saw an Indian South of Humbolt River 1/2 mile away, sneaking through the sage-brush. Father took his big Rifle;

Balls 16 to the pound, rested it on the carriage wheel; raised his hind sight to a half mile shot, let go and the Indian fell and hid himself behind a big sage brush and we saw him no more. Our boys had planned to have a game of fun at the expense of a silly fellow named Bill Robinson who had engaged to go with Father to Calif. to help do chores to stand guard at night, and give Father \$25.00 after getting there...He fell in love with Caroline Dunwoody, Daughter of Capt. Dunwoody; but Caroline did not reciprocate--we set up a line of false letters written by us boys, in secret saying Caroline was in love with Bill, but the Capt. was raving about it and if he saw Bill and Caroline speaking together he would shoot him sure. Caroline and her Father were of course in the plot. And now comes to pass the Humbolt Wedding. My chum Walter Corbett (the slender boy) spoken of before was just the size of Caroline -- so we took some of Caroline's clothes and put on Walt. Now in our train was a lawyer named Partridge - he was the man qualified to perform the wedding Ceremony, we told Bill because of opposition of the Capt. the Ceremony must be in the dark; so all went well -- the new husband was bound by solemn promise to love and protect his wife, after the regular wedding vows had been made -- he discovered he had married a man instead of a woman, and the usual excitement following such a sham wedding; so ends the Humbolt wedding. And so life on the plains often goes from (the Sublime to the ridiculous - and back to danger - defeat and Death.

In recounting this story of Indian Horrors let us remember that the Mormans were in league with all nearby Tribes in waging war and outrages on innocent Emigrants. Such as the Mountain Meadows Massacre on the Southern Emigrant Route, we were on the Northern Route the same year of 1857. We now come to the Gravelly Ford of the Humboldt River down which on the North side we had travelled about 250 mile. We now cross to the South side until we reach the "Sink" Gravelly Ford was noted as the slaughter-pen of many a weak handed train of Emigrants who unwisely went in small companies affording better facilities for camping on a small plot of ground (or small patch of grass). It was next morning after the Wedding we went up a short ridge of ground, onto a level space to find 5 wagons of Emigrants burnt to ashes but still smoking -- Blood of the slain all about and a huge grave fresh dug near hand, the kind act of digging the grave, and of burying the dead, was done by the train of the evening before; it was now about 9 o'clock in the morning, they found Mrs. Holloway of the H. Train supposed to be dead - but I now give you my own word - I saw them kill my own dear Husband - by about 30 Indians, I saw the them lead off my own precious children for a Ransom. I was weak from loss of blood but kept still as if dead; they took two other children beside mine - a boy of ten and a girl or eight and also a girl of 14 years to care for all the rest of the children (captives). Two Indians the last to go looked back - my face was toward them one mumbled something in Indian saying I believe she is still alive and came back and shoved a broken arrow through my arm, I never moved a muscle nor breathed through the severest trial of my life - soon they left to my great relief -- they had also took my scalp, from which I lost so much blood-- and so they found her - the Train to come upon the awful horrors just recounted was one day ahead of us finding Mrs Holloway still alive, but almost perished for water -- they emptied a two horse

carriage for her entire use with the driver, kept wet cloths on her head and took her through safe to Calif. Her case was repeated to the Governor of Calif. and he gave large money to a capable Capt. of a fearless band of men - who found their snug retreat in the mountains North of the Humboldt River -- the home of the Modocs and Piutes who inhabit that region. They wanted the modest sum of \$30000 ---the Capt. had only \$3000 to give, but read a strong letter from the Governor of Calif. and the Capt. read on and on .

Out of that wonderful letter, to the effect that the Governor would send big guns and shoot off the Mountain tops - dry up the River, and kill all the grass and ponies would starve and die of thirst; so they brought out the 8 children which were all educated at the expense of the State. Mrs. Holloway got sound and well. --- You may be over-dosed with Murders and Massacres by the Redskins by this time; but, "Across the Plains in '57 and back in '59, has no Picnic to talk about; for it was a year of Horrors, from the many "Massacres" bringing many scalding tears from broken hearts of Relatives at home throughout the U. S. besides the deaths of the unfortunate victims. I refer in particular to the Holloway Train, and the awful Mt. Meadow Massacre, 180 lives lost. The U. S. Government hung the leaders of that bold scheme -- and literally wiped out the Modocs from among the Chalk Hills.

As we travel down the Humboldt River, we come to Humboldt Lower Meadows, there a strong force of Hostile Indians, (there were no other kind) hovering around us waiting for a chance to strike another killing blow. It looked dark for our little train of 17 wagons, so many women and children to protect, with the Holloway train fresh in mind, I confess it made my hair stand on end with only 16 men to bear arms, but what can we do?

On our approach to Humboldt Lower Meadows we came upon a vast herd of loose cattle owned and driven, by Capt. Martin from the States to Calif. as a speculation -- buy a cow in Iowa for \$12.00 sell her for \$50.00 or \$60.00 in Calif. He was resting at the Meadows, for 5 days to give strength to his cattle and men, for the struggle and strain of the next 75 mile to the "Sink" of the Humboldt into the Great Desert -- you may be sure we were pleased and relieved at such a find, one we did not expect. Capt. Martin had 80 men and 8 wagons; the men from Omaha and vicinity. He was to give them their board free for their Service through to Calif. The combined hostile Indians and Mormans were determined to Stampede that herd of cattle and get the whole bunch, but the Indian does not like to risk his skin as a target for the White mans unerring shot; Capt. Martin had invited us to camp under his wing, both for our protection and to strengthen his force. Again the warlike Scythe-blades were found in living hands to defend their children against them, every adult man and woman was on guard that night. The whole combined care was under the command of Capt. Martin, nearly all the men were outside the line keeping the cattle IN, and on the watch to keep the INDIANS OUT -- Orders were strictly given that no man may shoot unless it was at the Foe, and then shoot to kill.

About midnight, a foolish fellow in camp, was startled to see an Indian wolf dog, put his head into a dish kettle, to the the remains from supper - the foolish boy took up his heavily loaded Rifle - and Bang, killed the dog and broke the

kettle. At once the boy was sent to the front where the Indians were held back, to reassure the Capt. that all was safe in the rear, so the night passed away until daylight drove our fears and foes away. This was our last point of danger, from Indians; but we had another fierce foe to fight and that was impure water. Humboldt Lake (the Sink) is about 6 miles long to 1 1/2 to 2 mi. wide, just above the head of the Lake is Humboldt Falls with a fall of about 2 ft. so the Guide Book said. When we reached the Sink the water was so thick from impurities, that it would rope like thin molasses. Every one in our Train had their tongues swelled and they could neither shut their mouths or speak for several days, all from the impure water. One Indian found his way to Andy Pearsons Wagon when in mid-stream water about 18 inches deep, put his hand over the end board of the wagon and he slyly lifted out Pearsons Colt Revolver, let it down under his blanket and dropped it into the water, thinking no one saw him. I was on the shore about 15 feet away, I saw him and told Pearson at once, keeping my eye on Mr. Indian, and on the right spot - when Andy got through with that thief - there was but little of that Indian left - only 2 or 3 Indians about just then. The water runs out of the Lake in a stream 30 ft. wide out into the Desert, getting less and less as it runs. (I forgot to say Andy got back his gun.) It was 8 o'clock in the A. M. when we took to the Desert - 45 mil. to Truckee River, the poor old Oxen seemed to take on new courage, as they sniffed the cool air of the morning. One of Father's old mares "old Pelia" took sick that morning, so we had to put on a yoke of Mother's Oxen and one of the cows, to draw the horse carriage, with Mother and her 3 children, and bedding in it, but the road was a dead level, and nearly as hard as a rock, all the way but 6 mi. of white sand at the last. Dallas Deuel rode the other mare and led the yearling colt -- Father with a large tin bucket on his arm led dear old "Pelia". So on we went, leaving Father far behind - we were feeding out to each animal the fresh green grass, we cut with the Warlike mowing blades back on them. Lower Meadows had all our wagons full of hay to the rafters, no speck of green on the Desert, nor drop of water till at midnight we came to a hot Spring - so hot and salty, it must not be drunk. Just at daylight after urging the poor old Oxen, to swing on and still on a little longer (we the people had not stopped to eat any of our plain biscuits) - we struck the White sand, just as soon as our Wagons struck the sand (leaving the hard rocklike road) they wilted. Strength all gone. The sun was now up so we let the dear old (servants the oxen) lie down to rest, when upon looking back on the Desert Road I saw to my joy, Father coming along the road leading Pelia and still carrying that everlasting water pail. Went to meet him "saying Father did you have anything to eat?" "Yes - I had some bread in my bucket and old Pelias hay on top of it, at 2 o'clock she and I ate our Starvation Lunch together, not knowing whether we could pull through or not, but you see here we are." We all sat down together and spoke one to the other, as plain as we could speak, as we sat in the morning sun my step-sister asked what is written on that paper on the board over there? Father says show it to me - he went and read. If any one should be perishing for water, he can find pure water buried 32 paces due East from here. Help yourself - Pay at Truckee River \$2.00 per gallon. "Well then father says old Pelia shall drink \$5.00 worth of it if it takes my last dollar". So Pelia drank the last drop and

said "I thank you Master". As we sat there in the sun wondering how we could ever get 17 wagons through (though lightly loaded) that sand to Truckee River, 6 mi. of loose white sand? Hark! I hear! Oh look!; yonder see those 16 yoke of oxen big fat and fresh - here they come - 3 or 4 men on horseback! Hello there! they say jump in, Big and little Old and young. \$2.00 per wagon to the Truckee River - So we went. Say have you any harness? Yes indeed, I went to my wagon and pulled out our harness, put it on two of their fat well fed horses and hitches on the carriage leading old Pelia (mother and 3 children in carriage) But Oh what a jolly lot! Father in back end leading old Pelia (error) his ever present water pail at his side. See our old oxen - See them walk, heads up in the air sniffing; what about? Why they smell the River! 3 mi. away, and now from walking to a trot. Can it be possible? and now they are running; how they act. The old weary oxen took on new life as they approached the far famed Truckee River (for many have heard of the Truckee Silver mines) some men went there to make; while others went there to break? They; to did sniff the air and run as if crazy, for they were crazed with thirst. Soon we came wagons and all to the bright sparkling water from the Mts. as pure as can be. No one but those who have suffered from thirst, and impure water as we had can imagine what thirst for water means. Water pure and plenty as Gods Sweet Gift from Heaven always is.

The men acted much like the cattle did for they jumped off their ponies into the cold water 18 or 20 inches deep, running swiftly, to Yell! Oh! Oh! Oh! I wish the whole Truckee River could run through me, cattle would hold mouths under water (standing in the stream) after they were as full as they could hold then they went up on the level bank and lay stretched out from 10 A.M. till 2 P.M. and then began cropping the pure abundant grass - free for all; so all men and women too tired to sleep to eat kept time with the cattle in resting our weary bodies, all glad of the change from the Humboldt to the Truckee.

Soon several of our oxen died from Alkali Poison in the stomach - also my own old Berry - mate to old Bill of a previous mention by name I bought one from Mr. Corbett - who had brought his family so far in one weak wagon - such a changing of wagons now took place, 3 of Andy Pearsons best oxen died - so Father gave \$5.00 for a wagon which cost him \$110.00 in Iowa good as new - and we left both of our old wagons and Mr. Corbett left his and Hooked onto our best wagon and so we had plenty of wagon timber to cook meals with, without going to the hills for wood which was plenty.

Our way now led up the Truckee - in slow drives giving man and beast time to rest and recover lost strength. No incident worth mention took place until on nearing the head waters of the Truckee River (Oh but the road was rough). We met John Corbett, son of the family, he had spent some years in Calif.; and he now told us of Bowmans Ranch - at the left, off the emigrants trail, where was fine meadows of grass (the main road was destitute of grass) so Father was persuaded to bid goodbye to our tried and true comrades, for so many weary miles to go by - (It will be necessary to go back a little, somewhat in order to explain). It was in the Chalk Hills that Jim Corbett, who drove one of our Oxen teams was under suspicion of having stolen the Key to my Iron Bound Trunk.

Which was carried in the two horse carriage - having Fathers supply of money (all in gold) mostly \$20.00 gold pieces. Any way the key was lost - so we broke it open and kept it bound together with a strap, so the Corbetts with John the oldest boy, finally got Father to go with them to the Ranch spoken of. It was an untravelled way, and it took 3 days of hard labor, to go the 25 mi. to the Ranch.

When we got there Mr. Bowman would not allow us to herd our cattle on the good grass, but to feed on poor pasture. So we planned to make a very short stay, it took 10 yoke of oxen to pull one wagon, almost empty up that steep Mountain; it took one whole day to draw up our large wagon. Mr. Bowman put my trunk on pack-mules with 2 sacks of flour. My Brother Dallas were (and I) compelled to stay alone with the wagon at the Mountain top. In the night an old Grizzly Bear came to pick up the remains of our supper -- I yelled out to him and grabbed my gun, he (the bear) was so frightened he jumped against a wagon wheel in his haste to get away, he nearly upset the wagon - with 2 hind wheels chained. So two boys sang in Unison "Thank you Mr. Bear glad you ran away". Next day we got all our plunder up the Mt. in time to drive about 6 mi. - to call Bowmans Ranch was a noted failure, as a pleasure resort, for when Father opened the trunk, he found his \$400.00 all in gold gone - but all the rest of the things in the trunk in good order-- there was no appeal from this awful fact--here we were almost out of provisions -- Strangers in a strange land - where Civil Law was a thing unknown, every man was a law unto himself, a large family to feed or starve. No wonder we met Mr. John Corbett. No wonder the Den of Robbers we were led into. No wonder Mr. Bowman volunteered to pack the trunk on mule back on our last day there. So we went on Sadder but Wiser because of our loss. Father sold his big rifle for \$40.00 in gold to a bear hunter, so that helped us some - on the second night we camped at Blue Tent now a large house the border of civilization.

Our way now no longer beset with hostile Indians and Mormans, led us among miners, prospecting for gold on Surface Diggings, where a lone man, with few tools and small capital can dig his way into riches - If he finds a Nugget of Gold; what then? Oh! back home to wife and children, Whoopee!

With a lean pocket-book we come to a lone miner who said go a half mile to a Mt. cabin and a Mt. spring there camp over night - look up in a tree and find the hind quarter of a beef hanging - help yourselves to a 2 day supply - also plenty of potatoes and cabbage all free, I will be home about dark, so we were favored by 2 or 3 of these big-hearted men, so on we went. Like old negro slaves "Massa is going to die" Sambo said "I spect Massa finds it no easy going down Hill"; we found it all the way down hill; 'til we reached the foot-hills of the Sierra Nevada Mts. where we stopped to find rest and work possible. We found work Father and I at \$2.50 per day, burning charcoal for a blacksmith nearby, as all the hard coal he used came around Cape Horn, and cost him for soft coal 2 cents a lb. We earned about \$50.00 at the job and then leased hired pasture for my 4 oxen at 25 cents per head (per month). I borrowed \$10.00 off the farmer and went to the nearest mines, 20 mi. away leaving father and a family of 6 persons to try mining for the first time alone. I went to a huge dam across a River gushing from the Mts. and pent up into a huge Conduit, where every drop

of water was saved for Gold-washing, or for domestic use. Here I hired out to work for \$1.50 per day and my board - it was about sundown when I got to the mines, and as I stood looking at the busy crowd a well dressed man, a Stranger asked a miner "what is the name of the Town"? The miner replied "You be Dam" the stranger said Please be so kind as to tell me the name of this town? The Miner said again "You Be Dam"; Stranger I ask you in all candor? the name of this town? I do not expect an Insult. Miner said this town is after, the River and Dam Yuba River and Yuba Dam--.

A long quiet followed this last remark. Yuba Dam gave me work for 5 days, when I found I was not able to continue my work. As we could not remain where we could not find work, we started for the town of Nicolas on Feather River, which flows into the Sacramento River, 10 mi. West of Nicolas where we could get no house to live in, but we found one 8 mi. down the Feather River; this River is navigable for the Steamboat of light Draught as far up as Marysville, 20 mi. above Nicolas, here we found a zinc house with a good promise of a permanent home - if we had rich soil, which is now worth \$200.00 per acre, with plenty of time to make payments (then buy). I was then 18 yrs old I was satisfied we had struck a rich mine, if we had held on. In that valley was a plant called the Mexican Soap Root - very small above ground, but is 6 in. through at the root, they were of such a nature, that no plow would cut them in two, but Father went to Nicolas and planned a plow, after the make of the sod-breaking plow of Iowa; bought a file to keep it sharp - had a strong iron beam and then what? Our 4 yoke of oxen were in fine flesh, and now on good feed and in good trim for work, so all men, far and near came to see the Iowa sod-breaking plow at work--It had cost us \$45.00 not one of the old native farmers would believe it would cut a soap root - with many of them to cut.

We sailed in; struck out a land 1/4 mi. long on our own claim; complete success - it cut every soap-root in its way. The old farmers clapped their hands - we will conquer our old enemy the soap-root. We broke 20 acres for ourselves and went across the River at Nicolas by ferry, broke 15 acres for a man just opposite ours; got the cash at \$5.00 per acre - \$75.00. We had hired an old sailor (a young man) to do some ditching for a fence - lumber was high, and I did like Jack - while we were plowing across the River - Jack and I would take our Dinner. But we left the oxen over there until we finished; when there came a wild storm or rain and wind blowing up stream, so that billows ran high, and both Jack and I were afraid to cross out - the oxen were over there 48 hrs. tied up by the head in a barn, and were likely to perish for food and water. So in the second day of storm - getting worse - Father said we must go to save the cattle, se we went enduring hardships and dangers of imminent perils. But we overcame our dangers thru Jacks skill managing the boat, for I was at the oars, and Jack at the Steering oar, we made the round trip in safety, but Father was not satisfied, although under such fair promise of success. He hated the 3 children of the former husband, constant trouble between Dallas and them. So one night after many hard words had passed, but Mother making no reply nor neither Jack saying a word - a crying, Oh Rate! what can we do? to stop all this trouble - "I don't know Jack; I've tried every way I can think of but have failed; Jack said if we

would try hard to live together in peace, I would work 6 months for nothing - I will do it gladly and we could live so happily together, but Father inside had given his ultimatum - he would leave her soon - to become a mother again. He would take all his belongings including all money - leaving her two cows and one yoke of oxen which was hers anyway. He was paid \$100.00 for the plowed land, in two days he would be gone taking Dallas, and I was not allowed to remain behind the much I wanted to remain. Next day after his ultimatum, Mother told me privately "when you came to live with us I fully expected you as a bone of contention - so I was on my guard - but soon I found my mistake - for you have been a Solace and a comfort to my life, a loving Dutiful son - and I want you to remember this as long as you live - this has been a Sacred memory to me. The last loving words from me, I loved to call by the Revered name of Mother. 18 months after these events recorded, I learned from a reliable source, of the birth of a son (or brother) 2 months after we left, his name to be given by his patient Mother I have never learned, but I have often dreamed about seeing him. All her 3 children did love me as I did them, and would run to meet me when they saw me coming. Father led us, Dallas and I into the redwoods on the coast where we here, we prospered very well - he bought and sold Redwood rails - 10 and 12 ft. rails -- 10 ft. rails were \$2.50 and 12 ft. ones were \$3.00 per hundred. 7 ft. posts (fence) were \$2.50 (larger than rails). I hauled rails to town 16 mi. away we got \$15.00 per Hundred -- (I find I have got in advance of my story) So pardon me if I go back a little. My first work after we found a home in the zinc house on Feather River, was my trip to the mines, 75 mi. East of the Mts. -- I hired a Mr. Brockins to drive one of his ox teams hauling hay to the mines. He gave me \$2.00 per day for the trip, it took us 10 days for the round trip. His was the best of wild hay, baled containing about 500 lbs. to the bale. Our oxen were fed a grain ration of two qts. of barley from a nose bag, to prevent waste --always hay with little or no waste. We went well up in the mines to sell and got \$85.00 a ton; some price you will say - we were compelled to pay toll on dug roads 2 times, a dollar a team each time, which where you see the immense cost of making these roads along side of Mts. and costly bridges, across deep chasms, you will say, the toll is very small, for the roads and bridges are broad enough for teams to pass each other anywhere. Hard surfaced roads with welled in springs of pure cold water - are frequent - with an under drainage across the road to the spillway. Don't you say long live Calif. this was in the early days of the state (Golden) too.

Next I bought hay of Brookins, at \$17.00 per ton and hired one yoke of oxen, at \$1.50 per day, and took the trip alone. Did not go so far and sold my Hay for \$55.00 per ton, got \$110.00 for my two tons of hay. Back home in 7 days, made Father and Mother smile at my success. Next Father with a three horse team, and I with my 3 yoke of cattle went far up in the mines rainy season had commenced - and sold 4 tons of hay for \$65.00 per ton where we sold out was a Hotel and a free open bar for the sale of the curse of the "Earth" "Whiskey", although it was raining hard, mixed with snow, I refused to go in where shots were being fired, from guns all night. I lay down to rest under a tarpaulin which was rain proof - but the oxen ate the hay from under me, got the cover off me and let the water surround me was nearly submerget 'till the slow

coming daylight came. In the Hotel Father met Bill Robertson, the hero of Humboldt Wedding Fame, who owed Father \$ 25.00 for feeding him across the plains, the money was promptly paid. Bill had \$100.00 in a bank near by. He said Miss Caroline Dunwoody might do worse than marry me for I save every thing and spend nothing. When we got down on the Coast Range of Mts. Father was much pleased with the Country; rainy season in full blast, and all vegetation and all Nature at its best. But when the long drouth came in and the hot summer came he got very much dissatisfied with it all - tho- he was making money - saving it too - working for Andy Fife cutting logs for Powers Bros. Steam sawmill. I was well liked to by all good people, also no whiskey was allowed to be sold nor was any drank in vicinity of the mills; in the yr. of '58 before I hired out to cut logs, we did run two teams, hauling Redwood rails to Santa Rosa - we got \$15.00 per Hundred at Santa Rosa - so we got \$9.00 profit per day, 100 rails was a load for a horse team, and 125 a load for the ox team - the horse team could make the trip and return in a day, (16 mi.) but it took the ox team 1 1/2 days for the trip, so I made a camp out 6 miles, where was good grass for my oxen - So early in '59 Father resolved to return to the States, to see his 2 daughters Ida Content (your mother later) and Louisa (Nellies mother later) so he demanded my presence to go with him. I can now see the mistake I made in not firmly deciding to remain in Calif. the Powers Mill offered me an increase in wages to \$50.00 per month and board, to cut logs for Andy Fife as before. Although the log cutting was distinctly Andy Fifes job - the Powers Co. would bear the extra expense. So many times in my life have I seen my mistakes when it was too late to remedy it. So many could if they would say their hind sight, was better then their fore sight. Father was getting ready to make the return trip to the States, and in making trades how they did skin him alive; he gave \$250 for a little American horse, and \$125.00 for a Mexican pony, to match the American pony (beauty) he gave \$275.00 for a very fine light carriage, (light 2 horse). Old Julia was sold for \$400.00 but he was paid in Bull pups at \$50.00 each his hard earned money, flew away swiftly. I also made some sacrifice to get together the mule and horse outfit with which to Cross the plains in '57 and back in '59. I went into a partnership with William Chambers, to cross the plains together to go equal in all expense, which we did. Dallas was furnished with a beautiful white mare 6 yrs. old, at cost of \$150.00 you should have seen him ride--whatever went with the white mare I cannot tell. Our Mexican saddles cost \$40.00 each, and so our money went faster than it came. Father got ready to start before I did - and so went on as far as Nevada City, to wait for us - Bill and I (in the most costly place to live - ever). Bill Chambers was a good lad about 30 yrs. old, a good cook, and ready at any work. We met Father in high glee on May 16th, 1859, and started at once to climb the Sierra Nevada Mts. - we soon came to the Falls of the "American River" a raging torrent down the steep slope - when at the Falls, such sights, a rainbow all day long, and a Kaleidoscope at night; we camped there a short time (and distance) from the Falls - for not alone the rainbow but the rain, to wet us through. A band of Digger Indians were on hand to beg for biscuit, me hungry; Mrs. Indian came with a handful of boiled ground acorns for me to taste - I shook my head refusing the delicate feast; but Oh how mad Mrs. Indian was, because I would not taste of

her supper. Soon we came to drifted snow - 100 to 300 ft. deep, with a crust frozen on top every night, so that it would bear up a horse or wagon, until about 10 A.M. we then had to remain there till return of night to bring relief; so we could get in motion again by midnight, to get across the Mts. without so much delay. On May 23rd. at midnight we camped on a bare spot of ground, a level piece about 50 ft. square - 4 wagons and horses and one tent, all crowded into such a space "Rid of Snow". An old Mountaineer was with us that night. I walked out on the snow to get some wood from a pine tree 300 ft. high - the old man said - which grew along side a perpendicular cliff - way down below. My dry wood came from that tall tree (top). I am glad that snow crust did not break through. Next day we got past all danger, by hiring 50 Indians, to hold fast to a strong rope made fast to the wagons, to let them down easy; we paid them with stale bread. One of our horses broke through the crust of snow, about 10 A.M. turned over on his side and shot down the steep hill like an arrow; he had a bundle of blankets tied about him - his head struck a rock at the foot of the hill, and he went heels over head - Father said - Rate go get all the clothes - for he is surely dead, but when I slid down to him, he was alive and not hurt - the clothes having prevented. Without trouble we now struck the old Emigrant road and about 60 mi. to Carson City, of the smallest State in Population in the U.S. Here we rested 2 days to recruit our strength, before making our rush of 50 mi. to the old Sink of the Humboldt River, we picketed our animals, on good fresh grass - which they surely enjoyed, as there was no grass for them on the snow clad Mts. only one qt. of barley, at a feed, for each horse or mule - the mules to pack their own.

From Carson City it is not far, (I forget just how far) to the 10 miles of white sand, till we reach the 40 mi. of hard road across the "Sink" we went in a sweeping trot all the way of the hard road - we found a well had been dug about midway across, but it was so salt, we did not dare drink it.

So on we went to the "Sink" at 2 P.M. to find the water not as bad as before, it being earlier in the Season, by 3 whole months. But we did not stop to water, nor feed, till we completed our 75 mi. that day, our horses were tired and thirsty, you may be sure - so we gave them an allowance of water, and plucked their grass to avoid the Salt grass.

We went up on the Mt. side for June grass. We had no trouble nor threats from Indians, until we reached Gravelly Ford, of the Humboldt River - always a danger point - where the Holloway train was destroyed in '57.

We had been joined at Carson City by 3 Mormans named - Coan Barnard, Jack Lewis, and Levi Tracy. When we came to Gravelly Ford (we saw at a distance by the use of a field glass owned by Mr. Chamberlain and Brother) an Indian Scalp Dance led on by plenty of Whiskey (this was found to be true afterwards) and threats were made from them on us. Now the forces for protection. They had 3 large Mo. mules - they were from Mo. and all 3 were well armed and with plenty of ammunition, and with courage to use it - we felt we were strongly reinforced, by their company. As we came near we saw their carnival of blood, and we saw a fine looking horse among the sage brush as if feeding there alone. Some of them (our boys started to capture that horse), when Coan Barnard " says better not go that is a blind". If you will go, an Indian

is hid near to plug you with an arrow.

After the scalp dance, at the Gravelly Ford, we did not cross over the Humboldt River to travel up the West side, as we came down, but we kept going on the East side, as the best road; we soon came to the East fork of the Humboldt River - a mountain torrent, when the snow capped Mts. send down their pure cold waters, for us to cross. We now test powers of the little mule I got from Andy Fife; Bill Chambers had boasted of the mule to me. Bill jumped on his back, to take over a rope with which to pull the wagon to and fro - the few women and children first, and then the provisions until all were over. We got safely over in our new styled ferry-boat in time to camp on the other side; no one got wet but Bill Chambers - up to the waist; (this was his boast to me). We had for our guest that evening an old Indian chief. He was given a large plate of food (full) from each of the 7 campfires (families) and he ate the plate clean every time. We found out later that he was a spy, sent out to spy out our strength, as we shall see later on. In the morning after breakfast our guest departed, with an enormous waist-line, to be no more.

We had no more Rivers to cross, as it was all the way upgrade, till we reached the "Thousand Spring Valley". It has been known and often said "Look out" when you see plenty of Indian Tracks, but see no Indians; for then murder plans are made by the combined forces of Indians and Mormans. It must be 175 mi. from the East Fork of the Humboldt River to the Thousand Spring Valley, all the way up grade - good roads - good grass - and good water - a most beautiful country, naturally of the whole trip. Now comes in the 3 Mormans, Coan Barnard, Jack Lewis and Levi Tracy. We shall see. As we went on we found a letter logged by Coan B. revealing the true character of the two first mentioned - to the fact that they were regular High-way Robbers; we began watching them, soon after leaving East Fork, and learned some more about our old Chief, (the big eater). We still had with us our new friends, the Chamberlain Brothers and their cook, and good council and advice from them. Mr. Levi Tracy, was a true man in our time of need - he knew the Indian Language, in which they spake, and they knew not that he knew it either - and so he became aware of the plot to destroy the whole Train in which we were travelling. The train went on its way toward its (destruction) according to the plot and plan, of its wicked design, who knew - Not - that their plot was already revealed to us. Their plan was to gather all the Indians, within reach of the 1000 Springs Valley, on such a date, and they would divide the spoils - taking the 10 or more children, for Ransom, Levi Tracy revealed the whold plot to us - but all the same we were at their mercy, although - we did foreknow of our danger; and so our prospects at hand surely looked black as the total darkness, at this time the Mormans were in open defiance of the U. S. Government and every Indian was a Hostile Indian. It developed that our destruction was planned, when we were at East Fork - and the old Chief sent on to gather up a Horde of Indians, to co-operate with more Mormans, to meet at a given time; at the head of the Valley. So we went slowly on; as we drew near the fatal spot - the location of which was made known to us (secretly) by our true friend Levi Tracy - we found the Indian tracks, we had seen daily, going along the same way we were going -- had turned into real Indians for as we reached the

Divide between the Humboldt River and the Thousand Spring Valley the hillsides were lined up with Indians, in War Paint, with Papoose nor Squaws along with them - the two Mormons were advised by the Chamberlains that their scheme of Murder and robbery, was known to us - and that any movement on their part, to advance to meet their Allies, would be the signal of certain Death. "They took the Hint" and held back, from any forward movement, but as we saw the throng of Painted Warriors - we could see no hope of escape unless by a Miracle of Unseen Mercy of God. Now as we turned around, a point ridge, at our right - the Miracle took place; for there just ahead of us was a train of 4 horse wagons 75 in number, just going into camp, they were the advance guard of Over Plus Pikes Peak Gold Seekers, going to Calif. - to try their luck in the larger mines of the Golden State. But now how our Courage Did Rise - we were given permission to encamp, under the safe Wing of our God sent Deliverers. We were now Happy. In the morning after our joyous deliverance, the wonder is what became of the Painted Warriors, so Brave, for not one could we see far or near. Also from where came the Indian women? and their children? all so suddenly, squaws picking up crumbs, from the camp fires of the white campers? Let it be known that our little Company, were a happy lot from the next day, as we went on - next day I was riding and driving the pack mules, when one of them turned short to the right to avoid my horse, when Larry, turned like a flash, to bring the mule in, without my guidance, and jumped high over a Sage Brush - the mule came into line in a hurry and went on with the rest; so we went on about 5 mi. when upon putting my hand on my scabbard - my colt revolver was gone - I called to mind my horses jump over the sage brush - I called to father my loss, and I was going back after it, he told me I would be shot - to let it go as it was not worth the risk, but I went in haste to the very sage brush, saw my gun under the sage brush and I jumped on my faithful Larry and put the Colts Revolver in my Scabbard, and buttoned it this time, and ran him a mile of the 5 till I reached camp in time for dinner; Indian women all around had not found it; for several days we met droves of disappointed Pikes Peakers, going on to Calif. so thick were they, that they drove us clean out of the road into the Sage brush.

As we met the throng, 4 and 5 wagons abreast, the Thousand Springs Valley abounds in not springs, but wells (bottomless) making it dangerous for cattle and men, to come too near to get the sparkling water. Coan Barnard and Jack Lewis were not seen until we got within 100 mi. of Salt Lake City - then they suddenly turned up. I had a Spanish jaw breaking Bridle bit, which Coan wanted, and as I was very willing to part with the too severe and cruel bit; I traded with him, for once in my life making a good trade; I got \$2.75 in making the exchange, but he did not have the money and gave me his address in Salt Lake City, but gave me the wrong one thinking to cheat me, but Levi Tracy, gave me Coans right address, and so when I called at his home, he had to shell out the \$2.75. Albert Sidney Johnson had come to Salt Lake, with 3 thousand U. S. soldiers to settle (General) the Mormon dispute. It was in '59 that he was sent out, to settle Who's Who in Utah - Brigham Young wanted General Johnson, to loan him a cannon, with ammunition to celebrate the 4th of July with. General Johnson assured him if he did not mind his (own business) he the (General) would come

to town (from his camp) and celebrate the 4th. in good style (for him). The Rev. Brigham Young did not talk back to the General.

It was a detachment of troops guarding a supply train we met on the Sweetwater, in '59. We were charmed with their bugle call as they gave the "Call" for the mules, to come in from foraging, out yonder in sight. How instantly, the horses and mules understood the "Call", and started for camp.

Father was obliged to stop behind in Salt Lake, to take a course of medicine, he had been ailing for some time - we, Dallas and Bill and I were to go on (to be overtaken by the Stage.) so we went on slowly, on fairly good grass and water, Father did not overtake us at Pacific Springs, very much tired out from horse-back riding, to which he was accustomed - he had also taken a bad cold, in wading the Black Fork of the Green River at night; water waist deep with his clothes in a bundle on top his head.

He had been given wrong directions, by mistake, causing him serious trouble. We were now on the Sweet River (Water) a tributary to the Platte, and so all waters running into the Atlantic Ocean.

While at supper one night Bill Chamberlain told me he was going to leave me and join some horse back riders to go faster than we could go with our wagons, the Chamberlain Bros. in their wagon still with us - so Bill and I divided our supplies, and he went at once to join his new company. Next morning he came back early, to say he had been robbed of \$60.00 from his pockets. Of course we expressed our sorrow at his loss - he had \$400.00 more of gold coin in a belt around his body, which they did not find. Bill broke with them at once after saying he was sorry he had left us. But he went on alone, in a hurry to get home, the Chamberlain Bros. still with us until we reached the North Platte and with Kind good will left us, on to the South side of Platte, making their way to Howard County, Missouri, their Home.

We had an exciting time (incident) to take place on the North Platte. It is well known that an old Buffalo cannot see straight ahead, because of the thick tuft of hair, growing over his eyes, but he can see out each side - as we were driving along we saw a half mi. away at our left, a man cast a lasso over the head of a buffalo calf 3 months old - when caught the calf gave a loud bellow, as a call alarm to the whole herd, of at least 500 buffalo, which started on a run toward our little train. Now when a herd of buffalo runs, at every jump they give a grunt in unison as they pound the earth with their feet; nothing will so scare a horse out of his wits as such a sound, but here they come in a packed mass directly toward us. Now we saw plainly that unless stopped, or turned away, we would be tramped to death, so Father, had called every man to his gun - and wait close up to fire into their faces, and fire to kill; we let drive about 25 shots when they turned to their right, and all the horses and pack mules with them. Buffaloes and all our live stock, on a wild stampede. All our boys were riding mules but me, and I was mounted on Larry horse back. All the horses, hitched to the wagons, were firmly held by any man (spare) the worn and we may say "old plugs" took on a frightened look and a new life, but I was busy you may be sure, so buffaloes and all together yonder they go. For I put Larry to his best, and ran a nearer way to intercept them, and ran Larry into a quagmire and he mired down - this rider

had to get off, into mire waist deep in muck with my halter in hand, I got on shore, and Larry floundered out also - now where were the loose horses? yonder 2 mile away, as was a dust telling WHERE? I started full tilt, to overtake the wild runaways - in a long run I got alongside of them, when I seized a picket rope, torn to ribbons, and so still running my horse, let the horses slowly out of the herd of Buffaloes, and got them cooled down, at last to good horse sense. I get the mule riders to join with us, to get the wild stampeders back to the wagons; soon dinner was ready, and so we called it a good joke, but we did not crave another stampede.

Next we come to Wood River; on its banks plenty of wood for fuel, not far ahead a trader had started a store; he and an Indian wife, thus getting security from the Indians (and perils) by becoming one of them; so we camped there over night. We thought a good place to camp, but to our dismay in the morning, that our camp was an Indian Camp also, and the ground literally alive with lice -- Oh you say -- that is a poor topic for a story - but wait - I am telling the trials. So we changed our camp to an unused place near by - we then borrowed a cauldron kettle, from the trader, (we were in luck that he had one to loan), and with plenty of dry wood, we boiled every rag we had, then we bought of the trader at a very high price, (an ointment) (Red precipitate) and made a sure riddance of unwelcome guests.

So we went down the Platte an easy journeys 170 mi. to Omaha. We soon came to the Loup Fork of the Platte, where in place of a ferry boat we found the U. S. Govt. built a strong bridge, over which to cross troops and supplies. We found on the East side of the River, a new town named Columbus, but it was town only in stakes, a high level town-site, a beautiful town site, a rich soil over all the Platte Valley - we were offered a fine residence lot free, if we would build, any kind of a house, and live in it to start the town. We left Columbus to go East. I wanted Father to cross the Platte and go south into Kansas, at the time - a new Region, not yet a State, but he refused and finally, and firmly stood to go to Wisconsin to see the 2 little girls of his, but he never got to see them; our little ponies were all worn out not having anything but grass to eat since we left Carson City Nevada. His beauty, American horse Charley, took sick about this time - cost him \$250.00 and we put another pony in his place to draw the light wagon; his sickness caused by drinking Alkali water, tho they - the horses had been watched to prevent them getting it. But Charley got worse and worse, until one night he in very high fever fell into the Platte River, to get drink - but Father was awake and saw him fall in - So he ran to the tent to wake up all the sleepy boys, and to bring a strong rope, to pull Charley out with. We found him against a perpendicular bank, side deep in water (the Platte River) he saw us coming, and he knew Father could not desert him - No Never-- and gave a loud Whinney to welcome our help. The rope was thrown over, and when Father said come Charley; we all gave a pull and out he came; the water was cold and he was shivering with the cold. So Father threw a blanket over him and wiped him dry with dry grass. So we boys went back to our tent again, but Father stayed up with Charley all night; Charley was taken away from the River bank, so he could not fall in again, but, later when he wanted water, Father was on hand to give it to

him. Charley had to lie down from which he never got up; he died next morning, Father with the big pail on his arm, with water in it. Father would not come to breakfast and leave Charley to die alone; so we waited breakfast for him, till he came to the tent choking with tears "saying Charley is dead" (the big pail on his arm).

A few days before Charley died -- we were travelling back from the River next to the Bluffs (Council) working as usual to the wagon - we were beset with a big fly in a solid mass of them, all at once, which near set the horses crazy with pain; for wherever they bit, the blood would run from either man or beast.

So we all put in to it and covered all the wagon horses as well as we could, put gloves on and covered our faces, (covered the horses with blankets and quilts) but there was many parts left uncovered, but we travelled, hoping to come to the end of this trouble-some pest; As we went on we met a train of horse wagons, who were in the same plight as we, badly bitten - we asked them and they us - how far - had we come since our first - we said about 5 mile, they said about 3 mile. and with our faces hid we went on our different ways - to find relief only when we had gone the stated distance, I am thinking that it was bout here that our thin skinned Charley got his death. Some thing there that happened speaking of those we met on the way.

In the year 1832, there lived a man, alone in the wilds of the Territory of Oregon whose name I never knew, he was a man of a devotional mind, and of a Christian Missionary Spirit - he had an acquaintance with a man, whose name is known - and make a connection possible with my story, I am compelled to make a small dip into History. This nameless man wrote an appealing letter to his friend, whose name was Mark Whitman, who lived somewhere in Illinois. This appealing letter was sent of God, for though sent at adventure - it found the right man - the man of God's choice, Mark Whitman. It was in the month of April when soft winds began to blow. Whitman was a man of strong courage, and of strong Physique -- and a still stranger faith in God. His life had long been dedicated to his Master, and now came a call, he will hear and obey; so he set out to go on horseback - then a trackless wilderness, beset with Hostile Indians, in order to tell them, in a loving peaceful way and (tone) of a more "Excellent Way". This is what is called by his friends and all good people "Whitmans ride to Oregon". He took only one strong horse to ride and one sturdy pack-mule to carry provisions, to eat by the way. He took a Northern Route to avoid the large streams of water, farther South. He surely had the approval of God, for when he did meet Indians, in their homes, they not only fed his animals, but gave him a fresh supply of feed to eat on the way, and gave him an Indians hospitality - by "saying all right go ahead". So on he went Praising God for his Mercy. He had many trials to test his courage and endurance - so after many dangers by water and discomforts by snow (in April) reached the vicinity of his friends and acquaintances - began to feel a softer wind from the mild coast breeze of Oregon so often spoken of; he also felt the atmosphere of "The more excellent way" as reflected by the Light of the world shining in a dark place -- the Work just begun of these Pioneer workers with God. Whitman with his friend - with Greetings of joy, and loving Christian fellowship so ended Whitmans (first) ride to Oregon, but it was not his last.

These two Brothers (Christian) lived together sweetly in their work of faith and labor of Love, for 6 years and then Whitmans friend took sick and died, and so Whitman was left alone to labor on; this he did until 1842, when he was shot dead, as was standing in his own doorway, by an Indian Chief of the Klamath Tribe of Indians. His Heavenly Armor which he always wore, did not prevent the cruel bullet, from piercing his body -- but his Soul unstained, was soon found clothed in a shining Robe of Righteousness, standing in the presence of God. "To go no more out forever" his record on High" a devoted friend of Whitmans took the opportunity, and duty upon himself, to write a book, giving many of the most important events of this consecrated life. I have forgotton the Authors name, the Title was "Whitmans Ride to Oregon"; not a large book. In 1910 I sold 28 copies. But I obtained the last one of the stock, and sold them all. This interesting book told all of the events (and more) that I now relate to you. How that Whitman rode in the dead of winter, by a route, well to the north, to cross the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers on the ice, for there were no ferries nor bridges, so far West in Whitmans day.

Now let us examine his object in going, there is now 6 States formed out of what was then Oregon Territory. Whitman had a political and patriotic vision, as well as a devotional mind. He saw the Canadian Government sending settlers into Oregon Territory, so that in large numbers; that by a vote the Dominion might outnumber the settlers by a vote -- and all of Oregon Territory might fall under British Rule. Whitmans ride to Washington, in haste, is explained. There was strong enmity manifest between the two parties, of settlers, as to the outcome; Whitman went to Washington to awaken an interest, in this matter in Congress at that time in session. He found that Congress was indeed asleep on the matter of the possession of Oregon Territory. One Senator declared, that the U. S. Government did not care a pin, who owned Oregon Territory. It was only a land of rattle-snakes and sand-hills, sage-brush and Hostile Indians and if the British want it, for Gods sake let them have it, the U. S. don't want it.

Whitman saw it was no use to talk with Congress - such Apathy, cannot be moved to take an interest - but yet he will Act. As he returned to (on his way) Illinois, he got to talking to people about free homes, in a mild climate, of rich soil, (no sand or sage brush) all absolutely true, and the people got busy and organized a Company of 150 families, all sturdy Pioneers, to go at once; in April to get ready to vote for U. S. Possession of this Promised Land, they went with Mark Whitman, as their leader and guide. They made them a flat-bottomed water tight wagon-bed with plenty of rope, with which to cross streams, and they all got through safely; so says the book mentioned. On the next summer a new company of 250 families, went by well marked route, and so the Britishers were beaten at the game of colonization. A few years later, Congress got wide awake, on the Oregon question and U. S. and the Dominion got together and established a boundary which existed until Presiden Grant bought Alaska from Russia, when the boundary line was further extended in favor of the U. S. Government.

Now look if you can, the land of rattle-snakes - Hostile Indians - and sage brush. Now R.R., Aeroplanes go whisking over land and in the air too, hourly from every State in the Union, (county and city). Harbors and Rivers are teaming

with commerce, too; and from everywhere; all this and more came largely from Whitmans Ride to Oregon and West ride to Washington, and the hundreds of families he settled in the Western Territory.

Now all this leads us back to my Title -- "Across the Plains in '57 - and back in '59 by A. M. Deuel.

In the populous State of Iowa, lived a young man about 30 years old, a bachelor and a Methodist Preacher, by the name of Charles Page. In some way he got to read one of the books, with the title of "Whitmans Ride to Oregon" - which told of the tragic death of the martyr Mark Whitman. He was at once impressed with the thought of going to continue the martyrs work, so suddenly laid aside. For him to receive such a call, evidently from his Master, was to answer here am I Lord "send me". Even so I had such a call - but I was not fit to go; so I was laid aside in this place, to let another do the work which I could have done. Mr. Page went to the Whitman job on the opening of the Gold Rush to California in 1849 - so we see that in place of going to the Gold rush he was looking unto Jesus, the Rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. And so after 10 years in Oregon without going home, one day we met on the Big Sandy a thousand miles West of Omaha, we came together from different roads, one from Oregon, and one from Salt Lake - we were in close fellowship with each other, he and I for a thousand miles of travel -- "Blest be the tie that binds" I loved Brother Page from the first night.

Of course he began to tell me at once how he went to the hostile Region, where Whitman met his death, not knowing how soon he might be offered up, but he was to follow in the footsteps of his Master and he was now ready for service and sacrifice. It may be for both Service and Sacrifice on the same day. After 10 years of Service, 1849 - 1859; he in his Masters leading and Protection, had changed whole tribes of Hostile Indians, into Successful farmers and to consistent Church Members -- "Truly Christ can make the Arid Desert to bloom like the Rose".

He told me how one day he went out hunting, not too far away, and killed a deer, a fine large buck and brought it home, on his horse - having gone on horse-back. Now there were under his care, six Nations - or Tribes of Indians; most of them very poor - and scarcely fed at all, but as intelligent as the average Indian. Having brought his game home, he skinned the buck, taking out the entrails, and head off, he was taking care of the meat, when an old Indian and his wife, came to the door - so poor in flesh they could scarcely walk - they had a small boy 1 year old in a papoose pocket - on a board Indian fashion - so poor he was not expected to live an hour.

They made signs that they wanted to sell the boy to Mr. Page and would give him to Mr. Page for the entrails and head and feet, so the trade was made and after cooking some of the neck, the poor old half dead Indian and his were treated to such a feast, as they had not had for many a day.

Mr. Page took the poor boy out of the pocket and gave him some gruel he had made and fed him, when he began to revive; so he was named after his owner; Charles Page Jr. so after he had lived and grown fat, but not tall - we met to go in their Company -- 1000 mile to Omaha. He told me of the difficulties, he

had in teaching the 6 different tribes, with 6 kinds of speech. So, he and others who had joined him - began to build up a new language - which they called a Jargon - to bring into one the forms of speech; they used the same letters as we have in our alphabet, English letters making it easy, finally to slip, from the Jargon, to our own Language. They took a word here from one tribe, and one word from each, to form a sentence in the Jargon - and so to get them to understand each other, as well as their teachers - they would feed and clothe the children to get them to attend. So they labored on getting help from God. It was plainly "Stepping Heavenward" each mile of the One Thousand Miles we travelled together from Big Sandy to Omaha, as he was living and laboring with a far-seeing vision, as he lived with a consecrated purpose, Building for Eternity. He told me that his Father and Mother had recently died; both near the same time, and he was not near them to hold their dear hands while crossing over Jordans River. I hope that these few lines may reach and touch, as with the Finger of God, all who read them - as he also touched me, with the Power and prestige, of an endless life, his tender appealing words, they linger with me yet.

We know we are nearing the Holy ranks of friends and kindred dear. For we brush the dews of Jordans Banks. The crossing must be near. He said he was now going home and settle up his fathers estate. He too had been a Methodist Preacher, as also a Medical Dr. and (Pioneer); and then he would hurry back, to resume his favorite work.

His Father and Mother had indeed been Pioneers all their lives - living from childhood in the same locality, and knew of all the vicissitudes of a frontier life; and now at the advanced age of 84 and 80 years had gone to their Reward. And "Truly their Works do follow them". Mr. Page Sr. had given his name to the County when the State came into the Union - and Mrs. Page had given her name Clarinda to the County Seat - so that until time shall cease - every one who writes a letter or sign a Deed will write it to Honor the names of Clarinda, Page County, Iowa. So look on the border between Iowa and Missouri and you will say the "Story across the Plains is true", the truth is always right.

So on we went, and as we travelled every day began with Blessing and ended with victory and praise, for we always ate our meal together, and little Charley folding his hands, heard a blessing asked upon our food. He could surely give thanks. As we neared the place of parting a lump would rise in my throat and tears would fall. His manner all the time was cheerful - mine at this time sad. His course was all mapped out before him; mine seemed undetermined - his faith was strong. I had the care of a sick Father to weigh me down. So we crossed the (Old Muddy) Missouri River, we came to the Forks of the road where we must part; as we stood with hands clasped, tears streaming down our faces. (Yes Indians cry some times too) - we said tenderly goodbye; "till we meet again". But as he turned to go home, how the name of this town rang in my ears - Clarinda, Page County, Iowa. I regard the meeting with Charles Page, as one of the happy events of my life. No young man has lived a cleaner life then he did; for it was like the melting of two Chemicals into one, when we met - wherever we made our Camp over night, we could say surely this is the house of God, this is the Gate of Heaven. One time when we were riding

through the white sand, all so still, Father asleep as I thought, for I felt entirely alone as I did ride. I sang an old song to keep company - and this is what I sang. "My Mothers Bible"

This book is all that's left me now,
Tears will unbidden start,
With faltering lip, and throbbing brow,
I press it to my heart,
Here is our family tree
(For many generations past)
My mother's hands this bible clasped
She dying gave it me

(2)

My Father read this Holy Book,
To Brothers and sisters dear
How calm was my dear mother's look,
Who learned God's word to hear,
Her angel face, I see it yet;
What thrilling memories come,
Again that little group is met
Within the Halls of Home.

(3)

Thou dearest friend man ever knew,
Thy constancy I've tried;
Where all proved false, I found thee true
My Counsellor and Guide
The mines of Earth no treasure give
That can this volume buy;
In teaching me the way to live
It taught me how to die.

(4)

How well do I remember those
Whose names these Records bear,
Who round the hearth stone used to close,
After the evening prayer,
And speak of what these pages said,
In tones my heart to thrill;
Though - they are with the silent dead,
Here are they living still.

After I had finished the song, putting all my voice with fervor into it, Father said with a tearful voice "Rate your Religion seems to do you a great deal of good, if I were you I would stick to it". I thank you Father for those kind words. I am not inclined to give up my hope. It will hold on to me, until I reach the end of this life. This the first and only time I ever heard him speak kindly of Jesus Christ.

We travelled on slowly (after crossing the Missouri River) 'till we reached the N. E. corner of the State, at the place where I formerly lived and worked. I was very kindly received by the Members of my old Home Church. It was Wednesday, August 18, 1859 at about 4 P.M. when I got home Father having stopped, at Sand Spot 3 mile away. They put two boys on horse-back to go to the church members and bid them to a special prayer meeting, to welcome me home. They came in liberal number and you may be sure it was a joyful occasion - I there received a letter from brother Linus to meet him at Lancaster, Mo. at an early date. We in a few days started for Lancaster - to meet Linus - but he did not come to keep his promise. Distance 250 miles, but we Dallas and I found in Greentop, Mo., 20 mile away on to the Father, to sick and unconscious, to talk, eat, or sleep. He died on October 18, 1859. Was buried in Greentop, Mo. So ends "Across the Plains in '57 and Back in '59".

May all who read my lines repeat with me, the prayer - that we may meet forever in communion sweet; While bowing low at Jesus feet; Or walk with him on Heavens Golden Street, With those we love -- Our joy complete. Amen. These Lines to be place at the end of the story - by A. M. Deuel.

Dear Edith I remain with all of yours.

Your Uncle Rate.