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LAIDLAW CHRONICLE

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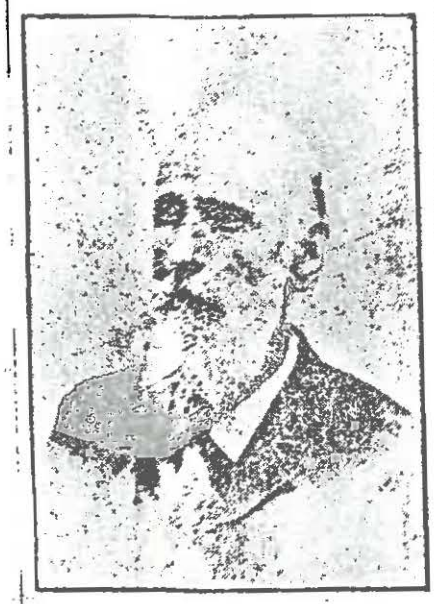
ACROSS THE PLAINS IN 1844: REMINISCENCES OF OREGON

81 yrs old

By HON. B. F. NICHOLS.

Nov 28 1906



CHAPTER I.

I have long been importuned to give to the public my reminiscences of my trip across the Plains and my experiences in the early settlement and recent development of the Oregon Country.

In the series of articles, which are to appear in the Chronicle, I shall endeavor to satisfy this longing of the people of Oregon for a narrative of this character.

It shall be my purpose to detail the incidents of that long journey in as interesting a manner as I can, and yet, be as accurate as possible in a historical way.

To that great pioneer and public benefactor, Marcus Whitman, with whom I spent one winter during the time of trials and difficulties, these articles are respectfully dedicated.

The Author.

On the 10th. of May, 1844, my father and family, with a number of others, left the Missouri river at a point seven miles above St. Joe, on the long and arduous travel across the Plains for the "Oregon Country". Much has been said and written of the courage, spirit and indomitable energy of the men, who with their wives and little ones, left the endearments of home and its associations to hazard a journey of over two thousand miles through an almost trackless waste, inhabited only by wild beasts and roving bands of still wilder savages, to find a home in the far away and, at that time, but little known Oregon.

The meed of praise they have received was justly due, I think; but have we not failed, to some extent at least, to extend to the wives and mothers of that noble band of early pioneers our gratitude and appreciation to which they were so justly entitled?

While the men risked their all in opening up and colonizing the North Pacific Coast, their wives and mothers were in the van guard of the toiling suffers, who patiently wended their weary way through the dust, sand and sage brush to the slow tread of the patient ox. The women had the little ones to care for and the meals to prepare while the men looked after the stock, ever on the alert lest a skulking Indian should steal in, stampede and drive off some of the work horses or cattle.

Truly, these were the times to try men's souls and women's heroism! One event I shall never forget; it was near midnight and all was quiet,

when out of the stillness came a cry, a new born babe had come, the first in the train. Next morning the mother had to be hauled in a wagon through the clouds of dust, over rocks and rough roads. She could not have the tender care and quiet so essential in such cases, and her recovery was rendered next to impossible. She did not get along well and at last was forced to surrender to the 'Grim Monster' and was laid to rest on the Plains. This lady was Mrs. Sager, mother of the children of that name, left at Dr Whitman's.

The women suffered not alone from from bodily toil and over work, but from anxiety and fear, as well, not knowing at what moment the train might be attacked by Indians, the men murdered, the women and children killed or carried into captivity. To be mabe an Indian prisoner was more dreaded than death.

Those who now cross the continent on swiftly moving trains with palace car, or pullman sleeper, can form no true conception of the trials and dangers that beset the early pioneers, who blazed the way for the future development and civilization of this Northwest Country. All praise and honor to the brave men and women who accomplished the arduous journey across the desert wilds, in those early days, to build a home in the "Western Paradise"—the Willamette valley! As Mark Twain would say, I will not "abate" one word about the "Western Paradise". I do not wish to be considered irreverent when I say that it is a grave question as to whether or not the Paradise, situated somewhere on the Euphrates, Gihon, Pison or Hiddekel, in which Adam was placed, would bear a favorable comparison with the Willamette Valley, as it was when I first saw it, as a dwelling place for unregenerate man.

At the Pioneer Reunion held at Portland, Oregon, in 1888, the question was asked: "What motive impelled the people to face so many dangers and privations to come to Oregon?" General Lish Applegate found, what he supposed to be, an answer to this question. He assumed the answer to be found in the history of the migration of the Caucasian people from the East to the West, beginning in Asia and crosssng Europe to England; over the Atlantic to America, and thence; across the Plains to the Pacific Ocean. While this disposition to migrate westward is unconquerable; and while it may, and doubtless, did have its influence; yet, I think the greatest incentive was the hope and expectation of receiving large grants of land from the Government. In 1842 or 1843, Lewis F. Linn, U. S. senator from the state of Missouri, introduced into the U. S. Senate a bill providing for large donatians of land to those who would settle and develop the Oregon Country. It passed the Senate but failed in the House. I know that this hope of receiving lands was often spoken of by the emigrants. They believed that each head of a family would receive a section of land—640 acres. Subsequently their expectatons were realized by the passage, September 27th., 1850, of what was known as the Donation Land Law, granting to husband and wife, each a half section of land.

While our train was yet encamped at the rendezvous on the Missouri river, occurred a wedding, which was decidedly unique, and the results of which, were any thing but satisfactory to the parties concerned.

—To be continued next week—

CHAPTER II.

The groom, with his widowed mother and her little ones, were ready for the journey, so soon to begin. The home of the bride was on the opposite side of the river, but the marriage took place in camp, where the lovers had planned to begin the new life together.

The bride remained one day after the wedding, and then, desiring to visit her family and friends before leaving, she crossed the river, ostensibly for that purpose. The groom waited patiently for the return of his wife but she failed to put in an appearance, and at last the husband could wait no longer but went for the wife to bring her over, as the time for breaking camp was drawing near. Upon reaching her home, what was his surprise and chagrin to be informed by her that she had decided she could not go to Oregon. She told him that the risk of life was too great; the thought of being captured, scalped and tortured by the savages and her bones left to bleach on the Plains was more than she could bear. Said she "If you will stay here with me, I think we can be happy, but to go to Oregon is out of the question, I can not go!"

"Nellie", he replied, "I am very sorry that you have so decided. I married you because I loved you and believed that you loved me in return and that you would go with me, not only to Oregon, but to the ends of the earth, if need be! If your decision is unalterable, I am forced to say to you that here our fates must separate. I cannot desert my aged mother and her little family and let them hazzard the long and dangerous trip to Oregon without my assistance. I persuaded her to leave our little home in Missouri to go to a country where we could get a section of land and build us a better home than the one we are leaving." So saying, he bade his wife good bye and sorrowfully returned to camp without her.

Next morning he, with the others, pulled out on the long and never to be forgotten journey. So, in this short space of time occured the first wedding in the train and the first separation. Unfortunate, and to be regretted, but the "Fates" so willed it.

The gentleman concerned was Elisha McDaniel and the lady, Nellie Bunton. I knew them both before their marriage and I lived in the same county with Mr. McDaniel many years after. He settled with his mother and her family in Polk county, Oregon, and at one time was the owner of several sections of land in that county.

Elisha and Nellie were never reconciled but were divorced and he married

a lady by the name of Jane Carmack and lived happily with her until his death. It is reported that his former wife, Nellie, afterward came to Oregon but of this I have no personal knowledge.

Our wagon was among the last to leave the camp on the old Missouri and it was with many doubts and fears, as well as with high hopes and expectations, that the train left the old familiar scenes along the river for, they knew not what.

The first day's travel was noted, particularly, for the mud and slush encountered while crossing a low tract of land that we were compelled to traverse. There was ample evidence of the difficulties experienced by those who had preceeded us. Here and there were sections of logs, which had been used as a fulcrum, and long poles for levers to pry the wagons out of the mire. Our wagon went through without our having to resort to any of these expedients, owing to the fact, perhaps, that father had an extraordinary driver handling his team, Charles Smith by name. Charley was an expert with an ox whip and possessed a further qualification, an inexhaustable vocabulary of cuss words at his tongue's end. This was deemed very essential by most of the teamsters, and Charley declared that no man could get all the pull out of an ox without swearing at him. Be that as it may, Charley certainly did both with skill.

That first night we made camp in good season and pitched our tent, with a number of others, near the Agency. Among those who camped here, was a Mr. Bishop, who was on his way to the Rocky Mountains for his health. The night was bad; one of the worst of storms raged and the wind blew a gale. During the night Mr. Bishop died, this being the first death in the train. All this long night I lay sick nigh unto death, my father and Charley Smith holding the tent to prevent it from blowing down upon me as I lay inside. It was not thought that I could live untill morning, but here I am, after a lapse of about sixty-two years, writing these reminiscences. At that time I was an invilid caused by a long spell of sickness, lasting from September 22nd., 1843. I was very much reduced from a physical stand point. I stood six feet one inch in height; bones, skin and sinews were normal and adapose tissue nil; weight 120 pounds. At last the long night passed away and the dawn was welcomed by the emigrants.

A point had been selected at which the wagons forming the entire train might meet and organize the company by electing officers This organization was effected at a point near Wolf river, and the officers were elected according to military rule, in the following manner: The rival candidates stood apart in an open space, those voting, taking place in a line with their candidate at the head. When all had formed into line, the number in the respective lines determined who had been elected. This was repeted for each office until all the officers had been chosen. A dozen or more Sioux Indians, male and female, were present and looked on with seeming interest at the election of the "Big Chief" for the company.

—To be continued next week —

CHAPTER III.

Cornelus Gillam was elected general; Benjamin Nichols (my father), first colonel; William Shaw; Al Sanders, Mr. Morrison, and John Owen were elected captains. I do not remember who, if any one, was elected as second colonel or major. It was the duty of the captains to look after their respective divisions of the wagons. They were to be ready to move when the order to march was given and were to have their companies in their proper positions in the train and many other incidental duties were expected of the captains.

One remarkable thing about the Indians who were watching our train was the unusual size of the squaws, many of whom were near six feet tall, large and masculine like men. They were fine specimens of the Red race.

After the election the train moved on to Wolf river where we found the bridge washed away and no place that we could ford. We tried to cross the wagons on a raft but this proved an utter failure and some other expedient had to be tried. Two canoes were hastily made and placed side by side in the water and far enough apart for the right forward and hind wheels of a wagon to rest in one and the left wheels in the other. After the wagon was placed in the canoes, a piece of wood was fastened in from and behind the wheels to hold them in position. This formed a very good substitute for a ferry boat, and all of the wagons were crossed in safety. Rain seemed to be the order of the day. It fell in torrents at frequent intervals, making travel very slow and disagreeable.

Somewhere on this part of our journey, the Indians stole some of our cattle, but were followed by the soldiers, captured and taken back to the Agency. Most of the cattle had been killed, but the Indian Agent furnished the train with others of like kind and number.

Our course lay up Wolf river and in a westerly direction over the prairie, and without any trail or sign of a road. Owing to the frequent rains the ground was rendered very soft and muddy and our progress very much impeded, the rate of speed being very little, if any more than two miles per hour. To less heroic souls the outlook would have been exceedingly discouraging, but to those undaunted spirits, no obstacle seemed to be too great for them to overcome. The dominant thought seemed to be: On and westward, Oregon, the goal!

We were governed, some of the time, by strict military rule. The wagon that traveled in the lead one day took its place in the rear the next, and so alternating until all were changed in the order of travel. This was done on account of the soft and muddy condition of the ground, there being no road along the line of our march. We traveled all the way from the Agency on the Missouri river to the trail leading from Independance, Missouri to Ft. Larimie without a road and through and almost level prairie country. The incessant rains caused the ground to become so soft that the rear

wagons often sank in to the hub, and frequently had to "double team" to pull out. I do not think there was twenty-four hours at any one time that it did not rain after we left the Missouri and until we reached the Platt river, and we had some lovely showers even after that. Thunder, lightning and then came down the rain in torrents like a shower of javalins, to pierce us to the skin.

When we left the waters of Wolf river, we were well out on the Plains, that great stretch of country which was covered with a heavy coating of grass but which was devoid of timber, except along the water courses. To look over that broad expanse of prairie is not unlike gazing upon the ocean. A sunset on the plains resembles a sunset on the sea. In the one the sun sinks down behind the earth and in the other, gradually disappears into the water, both grand and inspiring.

As we plodded our weary way we little expected or realized that many of us would live to see the day when a rail road would be built across that wide, wild country. Never-the-less, some of us have lived to see a number of trans-continental lines to the Pacific Ocean. Of a truth "The world do move" and the march of civilization is westward still, even to Japan.

Passing over the uplands between Wolf river and the Nimcha we encamped near the waters of the latter stream and next day crossed in safety

—To be continued next week. —

CHAPTER IV.

Up on arriving at another branch of the same stream we found no ford neither any landing for boats so we had to build a bridge in order that we might cross. At a point not far from here General Gilliam rode on in advance to reconnoiter and soon came back with good news. He had seen some of the wagons belonging to Col. Ford's train traveling west. They were about ten or twelve miles distant and on the road that Burnett traveled the year before on his route to Oregon.

We reached the Burnett trail in due season and traveled on it to a point called Vermillian at which place we called a halt on account of high water

At this point Clark Eades, a youth about sixteen or seventeen years old, had an altercation with one of the men of the train and attempted to shoot him. Eades was arrested and tried, court martialed, I think. He was found guilty and the sentence of the court was passed upon him.

It was one well calculated to prevent future occurrances of the kind and was executed with that grim promptness that was so necessary on the trail.

Thesente nce, which was passed and carried into execution so promptly, was that the young man should be staked out on the prairie like a horse, tied with a rope in such a manner as to prevent his untying it. He remained tied all day and the rain came down in torrents. Eades got the benefit of the clensing and cooling flood and it cooled his ire to a very great excent. Yet there was lurking beneath the surface an amount of unadulterated cussedness seldom found in a boy of his age.

Not many days after this occurrance Eades' mother attempted to correct him for some obsteperous conduct but the boy did not purpose to be controled in any such manner, so he let fly with his right and landed on her under jaw. It staggered the old gal but she was grit to the backbone, red headed, muscular as an ordinary athlete. The blow received from the boy brought her to the front in full fighting trim. She squared away and shot out her right straight from the shoulder in the most approved pugelistic manner, catching her son just below the eye. The place on his cheek first turned white, then red, a little blood oozed through the skin. Then they side stepped, feinted, parried, exchanged in rapid succession.

The mother, by a dexterous swing with her left, caught the lad on the jaw near the base of the ear and I thought he was going down and out but he rallied quickly, ducked his head and made a rush like going to butt, doubtless intending to take her about midships. She quickly side stepped and caught him around the neck with head under her arm. They tug, they strain, they writhe and twist like a toad on a red ant hill until at last they both go down, the boy above and the mother below. At this juncture the husband and father came up, caught his cub by the back of the neck, jerked him to his feet and shook him soundly with the remark "Clark, what air you a doin fiten yer maw?" "I don't keer, she hit me first" replied the boy. "Look out now, none ov yer sass. It won't be marm if I git holten yer." "Well I did hit ,im and I'll do it agin an give him the allfirediest beaten that ever he got if he don't mine me" said his mother.

"Ole umeren, you batter let that job out. He is gittin too big to whup I'm afered you'll bite off moern yer can chaw" replied the old man. Thus ended the first pugilistic encounter in the train, the woman being the wife of Moses Eades and the boy her son.

The river continued to rise and next morning began to flow out over the bottom where we were encamped. This caused us to move back to the higher lands about a mile distant, where we remained in camp nine or ten days waiteng for the water to recede within the banks of the stream so that we could effect a crossing. At last we made a ferry boat out of a wagon bed which was made something after the pattern of the old time ferry boat and was calked and pitched which made it perfectly water tight. By the use of ropes and this small craft we made a successfull crossing which took some two or three day's time, as I remember it. The improvised boat belonged to one of our company, Amariah Wilson, by name.

Of course we had an occasional Indian alarm and our ears were always alert for the slightest disturbances.

One time at about 4 o'clock in the morning, an hour best suited to the Indian for an attack upon a wagon train, I was suddenly alarmed by loud calls of some one, in distress, as I thought. I carefully raised the wagon sheet, poked my head out and listned.

The calls repeated and I at once recognized the voice as that of Henry C. Owen, one of the guards for the night.

—To be continued next week. —

CHAPTER V.

Owen was of Swamp Land notoriety and he was rehearsing a negro sermon which he had learned back in old Missouri. His voice was such that I am quite sure he could have been heard a mile away. My fears relieved, I lay down and slept soundly until daylight

Several of the men had gone ahead about one half day's travel to the Big Blue river in order to prepare a crossing. They found two canoes on the opposite side of the river, which were used by some parties who had crossed a head of us. James Owen came near being drowned while swimming across to get these boats and bring them over but finally succeded in reaching the shore. Soon the canoes were brought over and by use of a rope made fast at each side of the river, we were enabled to pull the craft back and forth and thus the crossing began and continued for about a day and a half. The river was quite high, although within the banks The water had been out over the bottoms which made them very muddy and in places nothing but slush. Mothers went splashing through this mud and slime to reach the ferry. One I remember carrying a small child on one arm and leading or pulling another, scarcely larger, through the mud. " Mamma, my shoe has come off." The mother turned and fished it out," and then went forward again, the children squalling, until at last she reaches a wagon fastened on the two canoes, into which she climbs with her children and is pulled across the muddy waters, is landed and finally stands on solid ground, safe with her little brood. She at once falters her thanks to Almighty God for life preserved from imminen danger. Through it all not a murmer had escaped her lips. At that time I was too young and inexperienced in the affairs of life to form a true estimate of human character but after the lapse of sixty-two years and when, as I humbly hope, possessed of a more mature judgement, I look back upon those men and women who compased the emmigration of 1844, I wonder at their patient endurance. I think they were an exceptional collection of true American citizenship.

In the afternoon of the first or second day, for a miracle, the sun shown out in full splendor and the woman who had first crossed over spread out their bedding to sun dry. A boy about fourteen or fifteen years old, M. P. Gilliam by name, was crossing the plains with my brother and family and had among other articles of bedding a straw tick filled with straw, which he placed on the ground under his other things to keep them from the damp ground This was spread out to dry with other things. That night when the boy was preparing to retire he called to my brother to bring a light and examine his bed for he thought that there was a rattle snake in it for he could hear it singing. After a thorough search they found it coiled in the center of the bed, ready for business. It was what is called a prairie rattler, one of the most dangerous of snakes to be found. They are quick biters and very poisenous. This one was about twenty inches in length and not a pleasant bed fellow, even on a cold night. From Blue river we traveled for abour two days on good roads and over a very level country until we reached the Republican fork of either the Big Blue or the Kansas river at which place we camped and celebrated the Fourth of July. The men spending the day in hunting and the women by washing and cooking and cleaning camp generally, we traveled up the Republican to its source, over the divide, and on down to the Platte, one of the peculiar streams on the Plains peculiar in several ways, one of which is its troubled waters. At no place on its surface is the water smooth but is covered with little riffles or waves. The water is very muddy caused, no doubt, by the ever drifting sands which had been drifting for untold ages and in all probability will continue to do so until the end of time. One is curious to know how whence so much sand finds its way to the stream. In places the river is a mile wide, including the islands, which are very numerous, and exceedingly shallow, the water being scarcely two feet deep at any point. The bottoms are quite wide, said to be seven or eight miles from the river to the high lands on either side. We were now getting into the game country and several antelope had been killed within the past few days. These were the first wild game we had secured since starting on the trip and they were really toothsome, finely flavored and very highly appreciated by every one in the company. After three or four days travel up the Platte, General Gilliam called the emmigrants together and made a speech to them, after which he resigned as commander of the train. My father, who was second in command, also resigned which let us at liberty to travel in companies under the captains which seemed to be quite an advantage over traveling together as we had heretofore done. we were thus enabled to select camping places at different points and get better pasturage for the animals. Our course was still up the Platte and soon we were in the midst of the buffalo country. Herds were seen every day for a distance of over 100 miles travel.

—To be continued next week. —

CHAPTER VI.

A short distance above one of our camps and on the opposite side of the river was one herd of at least twenty thousand of the shaggy beasts. I think the number was greater, but I wish to put it on a believable basis. They literly covered the ground over an area extending four or five miles from the river and up the river as far as we could see.

Our camp was in such close proximity to that immense herd of buffalo that it was thought advisable and necessary to form a corral of the wagons for our protection. This was done by drawing one close against another with the tongue of one under the hind axle of the next and placing all in a circle and thus inclosing the camping ground of the families. All camped inside that night and an extra guard was placed to look after the horses and cattle, as well as the camp generally, in case of a stampede among the buffalo; something greatly dreaded by emmigrants crossing the Plains and through the buffalo country.

When these great hump backed animals start on a run, badly frightened, as they some times are, it was a fight between the train in their path and the on coming herd with the odds greatly against the train. When the buffalo become frightened to desperation and started on their mad stampede they make the very earth tremble, as if shaken by an earth quake, and it is impossible either to stop or turn them until they have exhausted themselves in their mad race. Sometimes thousands of them perish in a single stampede. However, we were fortunate in escaping such a catastrophe as being caught in the track of one of these great herds on the run.

Every man in our train, who had a horse and gun, was anxious to engage in a chase and kill one of the big old monsters. The sport was attended with some danger, however, as the following eppisode, will show.

General Gillia n and Henry Owen, usually called "Hen Owen", together with a number of others were in hot pursuit of a large band, among which was a very large bull. They had wounded the big fellow, which checked his speed somewhat and caused him to fall gradually behind the herd. The General and Hen were very anxious to capture him, on account of his immense size, The General was a little behind and just to one side of the huge animal, and Hen on the opposite side and both were approaching as near as prudence seemed to allow and in order to give him a death shot. Hen, being excited and withall somewhat reckless, made a desperate charge which brought him along side of the animal and in close range. He fired point blank but the ball struck a little too far back to bring the bull down. It weakened him, however, and lowered his speed. Hen, thinking to head him off from following the herd, dashed across his path. Just then the horse put his foot into a prairie dog den and fell, turning a complete summersault. Hen went off over the horse's head and lay flat on his back on the grass.

The horse was on his feet in an instant and, seeing the buffalo bearing down upon him with all the speed he had, lit out in a hurry and left Hen to fight it out alone with the ugly old brute as best he could. Hen was quick to take in the situation and started on a run for all there was in it just as the General yelled to him "Hen, run for your life". The General quickly dismounted and as Hen and the bull passed him at right angles he shot the brute through the shoulders and he fell to rise no more. Hen said that was an instance in which he could testify that possession, though not quite so exciting, was more pleasant than pursuit. This occured with General Gilliam's company, which was some distance ahead of us.

There were several fine buffalo killed by our party but not so many as by the companies which were ahead of us. I think we saved about all the meat, while those ahead lost the greater part of what they killed. We heard they killed fourty in one day, all of which spoiled before they could get it to camp.

Oh what a shame that our Government was so slow in protecting those noble animals and preventing their extermination.

We were also now in the land of the big wolves which were very large and ferocious. They caught and devoured any disabled or crippled buffalo and often attacked and killed the smaller and weaker ones of the herd. The buffalo, in order to protect their young from the wolves, kept them in the center of the herd, both while grazing and traveling, the bulls guarding the front, flanks and rear.

It was said that these big wolves quite often would exhume and devour those who were buried on the Plains. This caused a thrill of horror in the breast of those who were forced to bury their dead without adequate protection from the ravages of these ferocious beasts.

The howl of these animals at night would cause a chilly sensation and almost cause the hair to raise on one's head as he sat about the camp fire and listened to their clamor. I suppose these were the largest of their species on the American Continent. There were coyotes by the hundred and last but not least in numbers by any means was the prarie dog. These small animals burrowed in the ground and lived in great colonies or towns. The dogs would sit at the door or mouth of the den and bark at the wagons as they passed, darting quickly from den to den and upon a too close an approach of the traveler Mr. dog would give his stub tail a jerk and with a saucy bark, vanish into the earth. I do not know why the name of dog was given to these little animals. They don't look like a dog; they don't live like a dog and they don't bark like a dog. The shrill cry or bark which they utter is more like the bark of the big fox squirrel of the West than any thing of which I can think.

—To be continued next week.—

CHAPTER VII.

It is no uncommon sight to see a small white or gray owl sitting at the entrance of the prairie dog's burrow. The birds and animals appear to be on friendly terms and the owl often darts into the den of the dog, when disturbed at a distance from his own home.

The owl makes his home in the deserted dens of the dogs and there builds his nest and rears his young. He is a sort of sentinal to the dogs in the town and when any thing strange enters the town the owl will fly into the air and utter its peculiar call and the dogs will at once rush to their individual dens, rear onto their haunches and utter their short sharp bark. The rattle snake is also a frequent visitor at the home of the dog and some have thought that the snakes are not welcome visitors but those who have lived among them and watched their habits say that the rattler visits the den of the dog to feast upon the young, which they swallow with as much ease as a toad swallows a fly.

(The dog and the snake are the most bitter enemy and the bight of the rattler is certain and quick death for the dog. I have seen a dog bitten by a rattler fall dead before running 50 paces.-Ed-.)

We had been traveling up and on the north side of the South Platte and were now at a point where the trail left the South for the North Platte. We were at this time with Captain Shaw's company which was behind most of the other divisions of the train. We had been detained on account of sickness, Mrs. Seoring and Mrs. Frost were not expected to live but a few days at most. We traveled over a beautiful plain to a place called Ash Hollow and down the hollow until we came to an ash grove where we camped at a spring. Next day brought us to North Platte up which stream we traveled for several days, passing Ft. Larimie a short distance and making camp on the river of that name. It was at camp that I bade an affectionate farwell to that infamous, diabolical Missouri desease, called fever and ague. 'Twas here I had the last shake and it was all shaken out of me. I have said, but will not repeat it here, that the shake was so heavy that it caused the earth to tremble and settled the sand in the Platte for a mile up and down the river. I might be willing to eliminate from the above statement the trembling of the earth and settling of the sand, but not one jot of

the shake. I shook and shook a plenty! As I said, I shook the shake all out of me and from that time on my convalescence was very rapid.

It was somewhere on this part of the trail that Mrs. Sebring and Mrs. Frost died but I can not remember any of the circumstances connected with their death and burial as they were some distance behind us, I think. The wagons of the entire train were scattered along the route, some being as much as two or three days travel behind others of the train.

From the camp on Larimie river we crossed over the divide to Sweetwater, a beautiful crystal stream of pure clear water, and here we made another camp.

Next forenoon Joshua McDaniel killed a very large buffalo bull and as it lay about fifty yards from the road our wagons stopped and we went out and made a close examination of it. It looked almost as large lying there as if it had been standing. The buffalo have very large fore quartes and very light hind quarters and this gives them a very peculiar appearance when they are running. At about this time six very large ones ran across the road not more than 100 yards ahead of our wagon.

We camped that night on Sweetwater creek and during the night my brother's little daughter' Elizabeth, died of a protracted fever. She was about 10 years old and a general favorite with the emmigrants. We remained in camp during the next day to prepare for the funeral and bury the remains of the departed little one. It was the most pathetic scene I have ever witnessed. The father and mother stood at the brink of the grave and looked for the last time at the form and features of the little one, whose loving smile had been the sunlight of their existance. She was a very bright little girl and beloved by all who knew her and it was exceedingly hard to leave her alone on the almost trackless wild.

Although strong be the hope held out of a better world, there is in it none of the satisfaction felt in an unthreatened existance. The human mind, powerful in its struggles with the vexatious problems of life, becomes finite, weak and supplicating at the threshold of death. To die amidst loving friends and kindred, surrounded by all the comforts of a quiet home, elicits the sympathy of all, but who can fathom the depths of the grief and despair of those heart broken parents as they turn and gaze for the last time upon the little mound of up turned earth that covers all the earthly remains of their loving and beloved little daughter, knowing as they did, that they would never return to plant a rose or strew flowers upon the lonely grave. "If, in this life only we have hope, we are of all men most miserable." In the beautiful drama of Ion, the hope of immortality so eloquently uttered by the death devoted Greek finds a deep response in every thoughtful soul. When about to yeald his young life as a sacrafice to fate his Clementha asks if they should meet again, to which he replies " I have asked that dreadful question of the hills that looked eternal; of the stars, among whose fields of azure my raised spirit has walked in Glory. All were dumb; but as I gaze upon thy living face I feel that there is something in the love that mantles through its beauty that can not wholly perish. We shall meet again Clemantha."

The fairest flowers in the garden of Creation seem to be the first to fade and decay; the most promising among the young are the first, it seems, to be gathered in by the reaper, Death.

CHAPTER VIII.

Again we move on and up the Sweet Water and pass Independence Rock on which we find engraved many names and dates, some running back to July 4th. in past years. That was a little too thin for us. No emmigrants for the West had ever started early enough in the season to reach Independence Rock as early as July 4th. Why, we celebrated the 4th a way back on the Republican fork of Blue river.

We afterward learned that we were unnecessarily skeeptical at that time or in after years it was not unusual for a company to leave the Missouri river in May, cross the Plains and land in the Willamette Valley the last of August or first of September following. We didn't know it all There were some things for us to learn about traveling and we learned it later on.

We traveled up the Sweet Water to its source on the summit of the South pass of the Rocky mountains. Here the curtain was raised and one of natures grand panoramic scenes burst upon the vision in all its sublime grandeur. Far to the north and south was a vast undilating plain, devoid of timber but covered with grass and scattering sage brush. To the northwest, like a dark cloud resting upon the earth, could be seen the Rocky mountains extending far to the north. Rising at intervals, and projecting them selves up into the snow above the timber line, were a number of peaks, covered with a white mantle of perpetual snow. It was a picture never to be forgotten, especially by those of us, who had been born and reared in the level country of the West where there were no mountains or hills with an elevation much above that of a large ant hill.

For the last day or two we had encountered hills, sand and dust; the latter almost unbearable. It seemed to be governed by a law of coudnction similar to that of order. It was diffused through the air like the slumberous breeze of a July morning, trembling amid a bed of roses, entering the eyes, ears, nose and mouth of the one driving the team, covering his garments with a coat of dust and filling every rent (of which there were many) and seam to repletion, causing him to resemble old Santa Claus more than an ordinary human being. Often the cloud of dust was so thick and dense that the oxen in front could not be seen by the teamster, who was walking by the side of the wheel ox of the team to which they were all attached, As I recall it, through the dim vistas of so many years, it seems, in memory, like the gosimer outlines of an interminable dream, and so much like the stern realities that confronted us day by day on our journey to the land of promise.

Having reached the summit of South Pass we moved on down a grade toward Green river, following one of its branches to its junction with the main river and thence down it to the ford. We crossed the river here and camped on the west or south side. I do not remember the number of days

travel from the summit to this crossing of Green river. I can only remember that we traveled very slowly on account of Mrs. Sager's condition, she being at the point of death. We had crossed the river late in the evening and next morning my father, who was watching by the bed side of Mr. Sager, who was also very ill' called to Parter Gilliam and my self to come and watch while father wes eating his breakfast. I was in a position to see the face of the sick man and in a few minutes told Gilliam to call father and tell him that Mr. Sager was dying Mr. Sager lived but a moment after father got to the wagon.

CHAPTER IX.

We halted to camp during the day in order to bury Mr. Sager, which was done by digging the grave and then making a crude box of split cotton wood logs and placing the box in the grave in such a manner as to form a kind of vault. The body was then tenderly lowered into its last resting place and all that was mortal of the father of the orphaned children who were destined to become victims of the memorable Whitman massacre of November 24th 1847.

These children, after the death of their father, were left to persue the remainder of the long journey without parental help or guidance, but not without friendly assistance. Uncle Billie Shaw (Captain Wm Shaw), who had a heart in him as big as an ox and a philanthropy intensified by a true and devout Christian faith, voted himself guardian, protector and helper for the little band of orphans during the remainder of our journey and right well, Oh Noble Benefactor, did you discharge your trust.

From Green river to Fort Bridger the road was hilly and very heavy, pulling for the sore footed work cattle. Poor dumb brutes that so patiently trudged and hauled the wagons through the sand and over the steep mountain roads at the bidding of their masters.

Is there no words of praise to be spoken of them? They should have been decently buried at death and a monument erected over their graves reciting their patient and silent suffering and their faithful sevice to the cause of emmigration to the far West.

Our road to Fort Bridger led us up or near a tributary of Green river and in a direction a little south of west and we traveled for a period of some three days, arriving at the Fort on the evening of the third day, and camped on the opposite side of the stream from the Fort.

In an eddy hole of the creek were a greater number of fish than I had ever seen before in that amount of water before. The hole was about twenty yards long and four yards wide and from two to three feet deep. One of the wagon sheets was taken off and used as a seine, the first haul bringing out two hundred two fish from six to ten inches long. Some were trout and some were a kind of white fish, grayling perhaps, but no matter about the species, they were "Just too nice for any thing," except to eat, when fried to a nice crisp brown.

Here we met a young man by the name of Nathan Smith- commonly called "Nate Smith." He told us there was no conntry to settle and live in where we were going. He said it was all mountains and heavy timber and that Uncle Johnie Howell, who crossed the plains the year before in Burnett's emmigration train, was on Clatsup Plains at the mouth of the Columbia river trying to raise potatoes in the sand and that we were not more than half way from St. Joe, Missouri to the Willamette Valley and that we had seen no bad roads, they being all before us and not behind us. He was accompanied by a young man by the name of Jesse Gage and when we started west they went east. Smith was a full fledged back woods Missourian and not overburdened with the Heavenly Graces nor did he possess a little hatchet, hence he could prevarica e somewhat, He was well known to many in the company, otherwise, his story would of had a very depressing effect upon the

minds of the emmigrants. As it was, they whistled long and loud to keep up their courage and drove on for Bear river.

From the Fort to the summit of the highlands toward Bear river the roads were very steep and rocky in many places and progress was, necessarily very slow and hard on the teams but at last we reached the highest point and in view of the most grand and sublime scenery that my eyes had ever beheld.

CHAPTER X.

Mountains! yes, real mountains looming up from the level of the surrounding landscape to a point above the clouds and covered with the glittering snow of ages. I tried to think of the highest things I had ever seen in order to make a comparison with these lofty peaks. I even called to mind Jacob's Ladder, which was said to extend from earth to heaven, but upon reflection I knew it was not a real ladder but a mythical one; so I gave it up, cracked my whip, yelled at the team I was driving and moved on.

I must mention the fact here that at Fort Bridger I was promoted to the dignity of teamster for our wagon. I thought then and I think now that it was a questionable proceeding for I was not skilled in the art of swearing and this was thought by many to be a prerequisite for an ox driver.

From the summit of the high lands to Bear river we traveled on a down grade, in places very steep, and it took us about three and one-half or four days to reach Bear river after leaving the summit.

Our route from the point where we reached the river was down the stream to Soda Springs and our roads were good all the way, although crossing the river twice.

From the base of the mountains which reached nearly to the river issued forth, at intervals, immense springs all along the way to the point where we left the river for Fort Hall on the Snake river.

At the Soda Springs nature produced some of her greatest wonders. I shall not attempt to describe them. "The subject is too great and I am too small." Judging, however, from the amount of gas ascending in bubbles from all over the bed of the river; the stream rising in vast columns from the boiling hot pools and the constant ebb and flow of the Steamboat Springs, one is enclined to think that Nature has a large plant underneath from which she is sending out a world of curiosities. I can imagine that Dante must have visited a similar scene before he wrote his "Inferno."

To move and go forward on our journey or not to move was the question. Whether it was best to remain there and be consumed or to hitch up our teams and move on toward Ft. Hall and thus put an end to our fears was a serious question with many of us but we were again on the way for the Fort and traveled in a northwest direction over a vast field of comparatively smooth lava. In many places there were holes about the size of an ordinary well and extending to a depth of from ten to twelve feet. On this route we crossed a small bed of sand but otherwise the road was good and we made the drive in about four days from Soda Springs to Ft. Hall.

Here we met the Hudson Bay Company officers stationed at the Fort they treated us most kindly gave us directions about crossing the river and sent three or four Indians on horseback to ride below the teams while crossing, to prevent them from drifting down stream, the water being quite deep and swift for fording with wagons. It was the largest and most dangerous looking stream we had found on our route since I had been honored with the position of teamster and I have to confess to a degree of trepidation. of course I was not afraid, oh no, I was brave! I could drive a team any where, yet I was possessed with a peculiar sensation, like one down whose back a small stream of cold water is slowly trickling I had to close my

mouth very hard to prevent my teeth from chattering. I felt there was a great responsibility resting upon me. I was expected to steer the team carefully and bring the wagon safe over the stream, the occupants being my father, mother and three sisters, together with the load of goods. Had the wagon drifted into deep water just below the ford it would have been next to impossible to save the occupants from drowning. Knowing that we were compelled to cross over, I summoned all the courage I possessed, drove in and steered for the opposite bank. Two Indians rode below the team at the same time yelling at the top of their voices "Gee Haw, Buck, G—d d—n!" It seemed that they had learned the few words from the teamsters mong the whites with whom they had come in contact, and who were coming into their country to civiize them.

I think there were ten wagons in our company at this time and all crossed over in safety, assisted by the Indians, who used their newly acquired lingo quite freely.

—To be continued next week. —

CHAPTER XI.

Next morning we started early down the Snake river, so called on account of its tortuous course through the rocky canyon which markes its direction We traveled down the river several days and crossed it again not far from Ft. Boise, which stood upon a hill to the left of the road. Next passing over some very rough and hilly country we reached Burnt river valley through a gap in the rocky hill which stood guard over the pass. The gap was about thirty or forty feet wide, with perpendicular walls on each side rising to a height of fifty or more feet. From this point to the river was about three miles and across an almost level prairie. When we passed through the gap the shades of night were upon us but some one of our party had gone ahead and built a fire on the bank of the river and the bright blaze could be plainly seen and appeared to be but a short distance away but, using all the skill I possessed as a teamster in urging the oxen forward, it seemed that I was unable to draw any nearer to the light. We drove on and on and on, and it seemed that we would never get there, but at last I saw a man by the fire and knew that we were nearing the goal. I shall always believe that we were at least two hours in crossing that strip of prairie three miles wide.

The poor work cattle were weak and nearly worn out and I think one could have offered up a short invocation between their steps. Oh but it was slow traveling and from here we encountered the worst roads we had found, so far, and we began to realize that Nate Smith had told some truth. The road was steep and rocky but we found camping places all along the route to Powder river.

I think it was at Powder river that Bennett Osborn and Thomas Shaw left for Dr. Whitman's to procure flour and corn meal to supply our company of ten wagons with bread as we were running short of this commodity. As I remember it, most of the families were well supplied with provisions with the exception of bread stuff.

After many hard pulls up and over mountains we landed in the valley on the south side of Grand Rounde, the most beautiful and picturesque spot we had seen on the road. Surrounded on all sides by mountains which were covered with green foliage, consisting of pine, fir and tamarack, it formed quite a contrast to the sand and sage brush of the plains through which we had passed.

From this valley we ascended the timbered mountains, going up some very steep grades before reaching the summit and then down and up hills or mountains until at last we descended to the Grand Rounde river, a mountain stream and heavily timbered We camped at the ford and some thirty or forty Cayuse Indians, men, women and children, camped with us. They were returning from the buffalo country, their pack animals heavily loaded with meat. We bought some of them and I thought it the best meat I ever tasted. About dark Shaw and Osborn came in from Dr. Whitman's with an ample supply of flour and corn meal for the entire company.

While these men were at Dr. Whitman's he asked them if there was a mill-wright in their company and Shaw told him that my father, Benjamin Nichols, was one and the doctor wrote a letter to father, requesting him to come to the Mission and build a saw mill, saying he wished to saw lumber to build houses for the Indians.

We were off the next morning, bright and early, for the Ummatilla river, and to the best of my recolection we made the trip in one day.

Doctor Whitman had learned from young Shaw that the orphan children of Mr. and Mrs. Sager were in charge of Captain Wm. Shaw and he sent a request to Captain Shaw to bring the children to the Mission and leave them with him and Mrs. Whitman to care for, They had no children of their own and were anxious to have these children left in their care and this was done when the company reached the Mission.

—To be continued next week. —

CHAPTER XII.

There were ten families who went from Umatilla to the Mission and remained there during the winter or until the 18th. of February, 1845, when we all left except the Sager children, who remained with the Doctor and Mrs. Whitman. Those who remained at the Mission that winter were the families of David Goff; James Howard; John Perkins; William Morgan; Solomon Shetton; Theololus McGruder; William Sebring; Mr. Humphry; —— McCalliser and Benjamin Nichols; Through the kindness of the Doctor all the families were provided with shelter for the winter. A large adobe building, containing four rooms was occupied by the families of David Goff; Wm. Sebring; James Howard; and Benjamin Nichols; I think the rooms were 14x16 feet The partitions were of the same material as the walls and raised to the same height, leaving all the space

above to the foot open, hence we were all on our good behavior. An ordinary conversation in one room could be heard in the others, however we got along nicely. Goff and Howard were of Ford's train the other two families were of Gilliam's train.

As soon as the necessary arrangements could be completed for the work the Doctor with several of the men were off for the mill site or what has since been called Mill Creek, which is about twenty miles from the Mission

Before leaving, my father spoke to the Doctor about taking me along to work on the mill. The Doctor said "No, Mr. Nichols, your son and these two younger daughters of yours should attend the school here. It will cost you nothing, the teacher is paid by the Board, and he has but few pupils. I don't want your son to work, I only want you to boss the work on the mill and let your son go to school."

Never, while memory lasts, shall I forget my feeling of gratitude and thankfulness to the Doctor for his disinterested kindness to me on that occasion. At his suggestion, I was enabled to attend the school for about sixty days, which constituted the larger portion of my school education.

Dr. Whitman was no ordinary man, neither from an intellectual nor physical standpoint. He was about six feet high, rather broad shoulders, weight, about 175 pounds, very dark hair and beard, blue eyes and large forehead, a mouth denoting determination and great firmness of character.

I have known him to go down to Fort Walla Walla, at the mouth of Walla Walla river on the Columbia, about twenty-five miles distant, remain over night and ride home in the morning for breakfast at the usual hour. On one occasion I sat on the corral fence and saw him walk in among the young unbroken cattle and catch three year old heifers by the under jaw with one hand, and with the other hold of one horn throw the animals upon the ground and hold them while they were being branded.

No less a determined and intrepid character could have made that memorable trip to Washington in the winter of 1842–3 to prevent, if possible, the trading of Oregon to Great Briton for a cod fishery bank on the shores of Newfoundland. Much has been said and written, both pro and con about the object of the Doctor's journey to Washington. Some years ago Mrs. Victor, in a communication to the Oregonian, said that Whitman went on business connected with the Mission, and not for the purpose alone of trying to prevent our government from trading Oregon to England. Now if such was his only object in making the trip, why was nothing said about it until many years after it occurred?

I have given the purport of Mrs. Victor's language, as I remember it, and with all due respect to the lady, I must say she was mistaken about the matter, it not having been mentioned until many years after he made the journey. The circumstances and purpose of Dr. Whitman's trip across the continent in 1842–43 was often spoken of by the emmigrants, while they were at the Doctor's during the winter of 1844–5.

—To be continued next week.—

CHAPTER XIII.

The facts relative to Dr. Whitman's object in going east at that time, as related to us, were substantially as follows: The Doctor was at Ft. Walla Walla, and while at the dinner table, in company with a number of the English officers, who were enroute from the upper country to Vancouver, the matter of the pending negotiation between England and the United States was being discussed by them. One of them remarked, "that will give us all of Oregon," doubtless referring to the probability of getting Oregon in exchange for a cod-fishery bank on the shores of Newfoundland The Doctor left immediately for home, and was soon on his way to Washington.

I quote from an address of Senator John H. Mitchell, published in the National Geographic Magazine of April 20th, 1895, "It was at this critical period in our history that the great martyr to the cause of the vindication of American rights and the advancement of national development and christian civilization came to the front, and in the grandeur of American manhood, in its sublimest sense rose equal to the great emergency, and by his memorable trip across the continent, from Oregon to Washington, in the dead of winter, in 1842–43, prevented the contemplated barter of that great empire for a cod-fishery bank on the shores of Newfoundland." And, farther on he says: "It is conceeded by all historians, who have written on the subject that Dr. Whitman's mission to Washington, accompanied as he was across the continent by that other brave pioneer, General A. L. Lovejoy, in the winter of 1842–43, saved Oregon to the Union, and all that is implied in, and which attaches to that Salvation."

"Dr. Whitman was a born leader of men. He had the courage to face every danger, however perilous, in defense of the right. His efforts, while in Washington, coupled with the magnificent success of his expedition, the same year, turned the scale in which that vast territory was being weighed and balanced between the two countries in favor of the United States."

Whether or not, Oregon would have been lost to the United States had not Dr. Whitman gone to Washington in the winter of 1842–43 and urged our government not to barter Oregon away for a cod fishery interest on the coast of Newfoundland, may admit of some question, but as to the fact of him being an important factor, if not the entire cause of securing Oregon to the Union, is placed beyond the domain of controversy.

I am not a hero-worshiper, but fully endorse the sentiment — "Honor to whom honor is due" If the facts warrant one in saying so much in honor of Dr. Whitman, what shall we say of his noble companion, Mrs. Whitman? She was no less a heroine than he was a hero, no less a martyr than he. Oh! how often, in the days gone, when I was in a reminiscent frame of mind, have the

form and features of that noble martyr appeared to me in all their freshness and reality, as if but yesterday. She was of medium height, a form that would have filled a perfect measure; light hair, inclining to golden; eyes, blue and clear; possessing not the "flashing brilliancy of a meteor," but rather, "the calm radience of the evening star." Her was a cultivated mind, possessing all the higher ideals that constitute the make-up of a true christian womanhood, and herself a true christian woman. She was ever devoted to the welfare of others, especially to the little orphan children placed under the care of her and the Doctor. At the time of the massacre she was standing in the door, Elizabeth Sager was at her side, holding to her dress skirt, they were watching the Indians killing the Doctor, when an Indian fired at her, the ball passing through her chest. She staggered backward, and made her way in to the schoolroom and while life's blood was flowing fast from the fatal wound, she knelt and asked the God, whom she devoutedly worshiped, to protect and defend from harm the orphaned children who were left a second time without a mother. Who can tell the feelings of that devoted woman, dying there alone without husband, kindred or friend to witness the departure of the fleeting soul, or lend a sympathetic farewell.

"In the great cloister's stillness
and seclusion,
By guardian angle's led,
Safe from temptation, safe from
sin's pollution,
She lives whom we call dead".

The day before we departed from the Mission, Mrs. Whitman sent for me to call on her. When I appeared at their door, she welcomed me in and invited me to a seat, and seating herself, asked me what I proposed doing, when we got to the Willamette valley? I replied that I would help my father in building up a home for the family on a farm and occupy my time farming. She looked at me with all the seeming earnestness imaginable and replied, "I think there is a pursuit or calling for which you are better qualified by nature than farming. When you get to the valley go to school soon as possible, study and prepare yourself for the ministry and make preaching your life work".

I must confess that her suggestion was a great surprise to me. I could not believe that I was cut out by nature for a preacher, if so I was most certainly spoiled in the making. I could not treat her kind advice lightly, hence to'd her that I would seriously consider the matter. I mention this interview as evidence of her earnest solicitude for the welfare of those with whom she was associated, especially the young people of the Mission.

—To be continued next week.—

Last week we misinterpreted some of the copy in the article, Reminiscences of Oregon, which read:

Some years ago Mrs. Victor, in a communication to the Oregonian, said that Whitman went on business connected with the Mission, and not for the purpose alone of trying to prevent our government from trading Oregon to England. Now if such was his only object in making the trip, why was nothing said about it until many years after it occurred?

I have given the purport of Mrs. Victor's language, as I remember it, and with all due respect to the lady, I must say she was mistaken about the matter, it not having been mentioned until many years after he made the journey.

But should read as follows:

Some years ago, Mrs. Victor, in a communication to the Oregonian, said that Whitman went on business connected with the Mission, and not for the purpose alone of trying to prevent our government from trading Oregon to England; that if such was his only object in making the trip, why was nothing said about it until many years after? I give my recollection of the purport of her language. With all due respect to the lady, I must say that she was mistaken about the matter not being mentioned until years after he made the journey.

CHAPTER XIV.

Standing in the door of our room one Saturday about noon, I saw 12 or 15 Indians riding toward the house, one leading a horse with a dead Indian tied in the saddle, head on one side and his feet on the other; his head and feet were flopping up and down like a rooster's wings before he crows. It was a very grusome looking funeral prosession. One of the Indians went for Dr. Whitman, who soon appeared in Sunday dress, and marched with them to the place of of burial and performed the usual services. When the doctor returned I asked what caused the Indian's death. "He shot Limself," said he. "Accidentally?" "No, intentionally," the doctor replied. "What caused him to do it?" The doctor explained that he had been in love with Lucy, daughter of the head chief of their tribe, and the rival of another young Indian for the hand of Lucy, that this fellow was the owner of 700 head of horses, while his rival was the owner of 1000 head, that a short time before the suicide, the owner of the 1000 horses remarked to some friends, in the presence of the young man who killed himself, that he loved the girl and would like to buy her but did not have enough horses to give for her. His rival thought he was making fun of him on account of his poverty, he being the owner of but 700 head of horses. The young fellow decided at once to resort to the desperate experiment of shooting himself through the chest and should he survive he would have no trouble in obtaining the big chief's daughter, he would be regarded as a great medicine man, bullet proof, and perhaps immune to death in any form. When the doctor had finished the above explanation I replied, "well; doctor if he was so foolish as to shoot himself about the girl it is well that he died. The doctor turned and looked at me with his garnet eyes, at the same time saying, "I find it one of the most difficult things which I encounter among those unfortunate people, to teach them out of, and away from their ignorant superstitions.

The doctor had a small grist mill for grinding corn and wheat into meal and flour for the Indians and others who lived in that section of the country. One day a sub-chief of the Cayuse's came to the mill to get some grain ground, the doctor told him that there were others ahead of him that he would have to wait until the other grists were ground, this seemed not to satify his royal highness and he attempted to force things. The doctor remonstrated but it only seemed to kindle the chief's ire to such an extent that he hit the doctor with his fist. The doctor shamed him for being so rude, without further resentment. James Howard, one of the imigrants staying there for the winter was present when the Indian hit the doctor he said, "Doctor tell that Indian that I will give him a dollar if he will strike me," "Why do you want me to tell him that, Mr. Howard," "Because if he will strike me as he did you, I will give his yellow skin the most severe tanning it ever got." I think that would be very wrong," said the doctor. "We have been trying to teach those people, ever since we came here, that fighting and stealing were great moral wrongs, that the Great Spirit would be angered at them for doing such things," and this closed the incident.

During the summer of 1845 my father and family resided in Oregon City, from about the first of June until the last of August. Some time in July, and during the session of the legislature under the provisional government of Oregon, Dr. Whitman came down from Walla Walla and at Oregon City met Dr. White (who was at one time Indian Agent in Oregon). Some time prior to their meeting Dr. White had written a letter to an eastern paper for publication, in which were statements very unfavorable to Dr Whitman; censuring him severely for his bad treatment of the emigrants. Dr. Whitman demanded a retraction of what Dr. White had published concerning his treatment of the emigrants. Dr. White refused to make any amends whatever, saying he could establish all he had said, by testimony of witnesses. Dr. Whitman challenged him to a public investigation of the charges he had preferred. It was agreed that the meeting should be in what was called the "Red House," belonging to Mrs. Petigrove, situate on one of the principal streets of the town, at 7:30 P. M. next day. Promptly, at the place and hour agreed upon, the parties appeared, Dr. White being accompanied by his witnesses. The house was filled with citizens and members of the legislature, Dr. White's first witness was Mr. Geiger, who, if living now, is a resident of Washington County, Oregon.

The witness, testimony was just the opposite to what Dr. White had alleged. In stead of mistreating the emigrants, the witness testified that he, Dr. Whitman, had rendered all the assistance in his power, when needed. That was too much for the irate Doctor, he arose from his seat, placed one hand upon his breast, extending the other toward the witness, and at the same time making a polite bow said, "Mr. Gieger, you will please take your seat, sir; you are my witness, sir; but I will acknowledge, sir, that you can out lie me, sir; please take your seat." Mr. Gieger left the witness stand, and Dr. White called one or two more witnesses to testify, but they were no better for his purpose than Mr. Gieger, so he subsided, amid the audible smiles of the audience. A more signal failure to establish what he had published about Dr. Whitman could hardly be imagined.

Dr. White saw that he was defeated, and after trying, in vain to rally his forces was compelled to beat a hasty retreat, but not in good order. It was a complete rout. Dr. Whitman did not seem to be elated in the least over Dr. White's failure, but quietly remarked that he had tried to perform his whole duty, as an American citizen and a christian, toward the emigrants on all occasions. Thus ended an abortive attempt to blacken the reputation of the man who had done so much for Oregon in general, and for the early emigrants in particular.

—To be continued next week.—

CHAPTER XV.

During our stay at Dr. Whitman's he held Divine services every Sunday and prayer meeting one night(Tuesday I think)in the week. The meetings were well attended, especially on Sunday. He often preached to the Indians in their native language.

His sermons to us were more argumentative than sensational, his object seeming to be to convince one's judgment of the truth of what he said, He was not a very eloquent, but certainly a most earnest speaker.

Perhaps it may be as well to mention here an adventure of a young Missourian, who here took his first lesson in the art, usually called court ship. He was a total stranger to the ordinary conventionalities of society; in a word, he was "very green" and exceedingly timid and bashful when in the presence of young ladies.

One of the emmigrant families occupied a room in the adobe mansion and his eldest daughter, Miss——, was about fifteen years old and just budding into womanhood. She was one of those quiet, unassuming, sensible kind of girls, who command the respect and admiration of all who come in contact with them. She was medium height, fine form and what most persons would call a handsome young lady. Under the circumstances it was very natural that the young Missourian, being constantly in her sosciety, should become more or less enamored with her; and in his case it seemed, more. If what I have heard him say is true, he certainly had a very severe attack.

Being a novice in the art of courtship it seemed difficult for him to make advances in that direction but at last he resolved to bring things to a crisis. One Saturday evening, the young lady being in her room alone, he boldly walked to the door. She invited him in and to take a seat. Of course he complied. His object in calling was to ask permission to accompany her to church the next day. At last the crisis had arrived but, minus language. After five or ten minutes of silence he remarked "very fine

day". "yes" she replied "I find it very warm ironing before a warm fire". "I suppose it is" he said in a stammering kind of way, wiping the perspiration from his face, for of a fact it was a very warm situation for the poor fellow. And thus the conversation, with an interlude of silence, continued until the young man, on the ragged edge of dispair, abandoned all hope of bringing the conversation to bear upon going to church next day or any other day for that matter, retired from the field but not in good order. However he determined to make up for his lost opportunity by going with her to the church on the morrow. Accordingly, at church time, in company with two other young ladies, they all walked off in the following order: the two young lady friends in front, his girl behind them and he behind her and thus they moved to the church some two hundred yards distant. Twice he tried to walk up behind the young lady, but each time there was such a rush of blood to the head and lungs as to almost stop his breathing and so he would drop to his position behind.

At the church he occupied a seat from which he could see his adored to his heart's content and after the services were over they marched off in the same order as before.

About midway between the church and their home was a worm fence made of rails and when nearing it he hurried forward and removed the top rails to make a gap for passage so the young ladies wiuld not be compelled to to climb over. He, being on the opposite side of the fence, extended his right hand to the first two and helped them over; then came his enamoretta and to her he extended his left hand, seizing her right with a grip like a drowning man to a pecan pole. The touch of her hand was to him like the application of a galvanic battery, causing an electric thrill through his entire system. Still holding to her hand he reached over the fence and with the right hand laid up the rails and in the operation he pulled the young lady in a position similar to what wrestlers call a hip lock, nor did he loose his hold until they were near the house. He feared if he let go his hold she would run away from him

Truly his was a desperate case but it is said that for all ills there is a panicea and it was so in his case.

—To be continued next week.—

CHAPTER XVI

On the way to the Willamette Valley the next year we camped together on the bank of the Columbia river The young lady's father had a large fire in front of their tent, giving a brilliant light all over the camp. Our young friend was along and he walked over and found the young lady and a small sister occupying a couple of chairs in front of the fire. He requested the younger to vacate her seat which he immediately occupied and commenced a conversation with the young lady about Doctor and Mrs Whitman, the school which they both had attended at the Mission and whatever else he could think of to say Time passed rapidly, as Robt. Burns says in his Highland Mary,

"The golden hours on Angel wings,
Flew o'er me and my dearie".

After a time the mother called to her daughter to come to the wagon Our young friend asked her if she would return to him and she replied "Yes", and he leaned back in his chair, viewing the stars in their magnificent splendor. Never before did the Heavenly orbs appear to him so beautiful and magnificiently grand as did they while he sat there awaiting the return of her whom he regarded as the all of life to him. And there he sat, perched like a turkey hen in a rain storm, waiting patiently for the return of his beloved. Just how long he waited he could never tell. Long enough, however, to be convinced that she had retired for the night and left him to his solitary reflections. Realizeing the situation he made a hasty retreat for his own wagon. He was cured! Kind reader that green Missourian was I, your chronicler.

Nothing out of the ordinary occurred during our stay at the Mission. The pupils attending the school were having a very pleasant time under management of Mr. Alonzo Hinman, who was our teacher. The weather was remarkably fine, there being no snow and the ground covered with a beautiful amount of green grass The horses and cattle were fat and sleek as though it were spring or summer

The winter being far advanced it became necessary for us to make preparation for the journey to the Willamette valley. The work men came down from the saw mill and soon all were busy gathering up the horses and cattle preparatory to an early start on the way.

Doctor Whitman furnish each family with the necessary provisions to last them to the valley in addition to what he had provided them while at the Mission, this compensation for their labors at the mill and about the Mission.

All preparation being complete, on the 18th of February, 1845, after bidding the Doctor, his wife and those remaining an affectionate good bye we were soon on the trail again and away we moved with a slow silent tread for the beautiful Willamette Valley. The first day we traveled about half way from the Mission to the Umatilla river and camped on a small creek and the next day we crossed this river and camped on the south bank just below where Pendleton now stands The next night we camped on the Columbia river below the mouth of the Walla Walla river. Next morning all hands were up early and ready for travel. Our route lay down on the south bank of the Columbia and the road had no mud but Oh my! Sand in plenty! This was occasionally hurled into our faces with such force as to create a feeling like our faces were being pricked with sharp needles. It was something of a novelty but not agreeable. On arriving at Deschutes river and being told that we could ford it only below the rapids and near its entrance into the Columbia I was seized with a feeling of trepidation that caused my knees to tremble as did Belshazzar when he saw the hand

writing on the wall. In order to keep in shallow water we had to make a curve down stream, starting in at an angle of about 42 degrees, which if continued would take us into the Columbia river, but near the middle of the stream we were crossing we made a sharp curve to the left and up stream to the opposite bank. To guide a yoke of oxen, under these circumstances, with nothing but a whip and the words one could use, and which of necessity were mild, for no man would use cuss words when eternity stood just to the right of him, was not the most pleasant thing to contemplate. However with the assistance of an Indian acting as pilot and riding below the teams while crossing, we all got over without an accident and like the Apostle Paul when he saw the three taverns, took courage and drove on.

—To be continued next week—

CHAPTER XVII

After crossing the river we drove up and through the gap in the hills south of the present rail road bridge and down the Fifteen Mile, where we camped. The next day we landed in The Dalles and here we found some of the emmigrants with whom we had traveled across the plains the year before and they were also making preparations to go below,

The families with their household effects went down the river in boats and canoes, while the horses and cattle were driven down on the south side until they reached a point below the Cascade Falls and then swam over to the north side and were driven on down to Vancouver and then swam back to the south side and were then driven on to their final destination.

There were few boats or craft on the river at that time so we had to wait our turn like going to mill and waiting for a grist. My father and his family remained at The Dalles something over two weeks and during this time father and I made a kitchen cupboard, table etc. for Mr. Brewer and family, who were stationed there as missionaries.

I was passing Mr. Brewer's house one day and Mrs. Brewer was standing in the door talking to a big "Buck" Indian in what is commonly called "Jargon". I had never heard that kind of language before and to say that I was shocked don't express it. She was a fine looking woman, in fact a pretty woman and a perfect lady, but, viewed from my stand point at that time, her language did not indicate it. I passed on to the work shop thinking how strange it was that such a fine looking woman should become so abandoned. Subsequently I learned that like Peter's vision on the house top, I should not regard such language as "common or unclean" for it was the principal language used in conversing with the Indians.

One day when Mr. Walter's, father and I were in the work shop Mr. Walters told father that when he first came to The Dalles years before a very old Indian told him that when he, the Indian, was a very little boy, many years before, his people crossed the Columbia river on the ground at the point where the Cascade falls now are and that then all the water flowed underneath the bridge of earth but that after that Mt. Hood and Mt. Adams had a big fight and that both mountains emitted great volumns of smoke and hurled great bolders and rocks at each other; that there were a large number of reports like big guns and that ashes fell all over the ground and that there was so much smoke that they could not see the sun for many days. The whole earth was shrouded in darkness and gloom and that the earth rocked to and fro. During this terrible commotion a great large man, with an iron head and no eyes, came flying down the Columbia river near the water and, having no eyes, he was unable to steer his way over the bridge but flew against its head first and threw it down in the river.

The legend bears evidence of truth in the matter of the natural bridge across the river at the Cascade falls at and before the time mentioned by the old Indian for there is unmistakable evidence of the prior existance of such a natural bridge at that point. That there has been eruptions of Mt. Hood and also, probably, of Mt. Adams there is also ample evidence and this doubtless caused a severe earth quake which was probably sufficient to destroy the bridge and precipitate it into the river. But in regard to the big man with a cnickamon (iron) head flying down the river and against the bridge and butting it down I am decidedly skeptical, in fact I do not believe it. I presume the Indians had no other way of accounting for the fall of the bridge. At least you have the legend of the Indians in that regard.

At last our turn came to go below. Father, mother and my three sisters, Martha, Elizabeth and Jane and my self embarked in a big canoe, owned by Joseph Caples, and rowed down the river. On arriving at the Cascade we landed in the bason on the north side of the river and just above the falls. Standing in this bason were quite a number of stumps of fir trees, the tops near the surface of the water. The question of how they came there was not easy of solution for it was evident that they did not grow up in the river. Some of them were all of two and one half feet in diameter.

—To be continued next week.—

CHAPTER XVIII.

We had two theories about it; one that a land slide had carried them in, the other that when the bridge fell, with its immense amount of rock and earth, it dammed up the river and caused the water to flow out and over the low bottom land where the trees originally grew and the ice drifting out of the river in the spring season had cut or worn off the trees at about that stage of the water and left the stumps standing in the river as we found them. I think the latter was the correct theory and solution.

Upon reaching the falls we had to carry all of our bedding, clothes and other effects, three miles below to a point to where we could embark again. The canoes we let down over the falls

by aid of a rope. With every thing aboard again we rowed on down the river to Washoukie. Here we camped and Uncle Joe Caples (as familiarly called) and I went back with the canoe for the remainder of the plunder. We were twenty days making this trip, during which time I learned to talk the "Jargon" with which Mrs. Brewer, at The Dalles, had so shocked my morals.

During the absence of Uncle Joe and myself, two Indians came to father's tent and, seeing a loaf of bread, made signs to my father to give them some of it to eat. He cut off a piece for each and gave it to them. They took the bread and said "Hias close tum tum mika" "Yes" replied my father, "I know it is close but my wife's yeast didn't rise well and consequently the bread is heavy". "Now witka six close mika tum tum". "Well I told you why it was close and heavy, and dod rot you, if you don't like it don't take it." G. W. Shaw (son of Captain Shaw) who was present and who had learned the Jargon came up and said "Uncle Ben, the Indian is telling you that you have a very good heart. That is his way of thanking you for your kindness": "Oh is that what he means? Well, well!" replied father.

Soon after the return of Uncle Joe and myself, we boarded the Callapooia, a small schooner owned and operated by Captain Cook, a jolly old tar and an intimate friend of Captain John Couch. We sailed on this vessel for Oregon City, where we landed about the first of June, 1845.

Here we found several of the emigrant families of 1844.

Oregon City at that time was the only town on the North Pacific coast and a man named Moss was keeping the only hotel in Oregon.

There was no Portland then. Captain John Couch was merchandising in Oregon City and employed Thomas C. Shaw and myself to go down to his Brig, anchored in the Willamette near where Morrison Street Bridge now stands, and freight up to Oregon City by row boat such goods as he ordered the mate on the vessel to send him and we made several of these trips for him. At that time (July 1845) there was not a house where Portland now stands except a little log cabin built by a man named Johnson, who had an Indian wife. Johnson had formerly occupied the cabin which stood near the bank of the river not far from where the West Side rail road depot is now situated.

We would leave Oregon City, on these trips, with our boat and Captain Couch's order for goods, row down to the brig, load up and row back to the city the same night. When we were heavily loaded we would wade and pull the boat over the Clackamus rapids. One evening being tired from our heavy haul over the rapids we pulled in to a small island to rest but we did not rest much nor stay long There were more misquitos to the square yard on that island than were ever congregated at one before or perhaps since. They could raise the lower part of their anatomy with more grace and seeming dignity, when inserting their proboscis into a vein of blood than any of their species that I had ever seen. We left the island in a hurry and rowed our boat up to the city.

At this time Oregon City was a thriving little town. It was the metropolis of Oregon and the Legislature, under the Provisional Government, was in session while we were there the last of June or first of July.

As there was no circulating medium, or money, with which to transact the business of the country the Legislature came to the rescue and enacted a law declaring wheat at a dollar a bushel as legal tender for all debts, public and private. If one was indebted to another the debt could be paid by delivering one bushel of wheat for every dollar due. Often by contract the wheat was to be delivered to either McLaulin' or Abernathy Mills at Oregon City, hence after harvest wheat came tumbling in to pay for indebtedness. The people became accustomed to that manner of doibg business and I think they enjoyed it, and why not? All that was necessary to get money was to plant or sow it and it would produce an hundred fold. We had another kind of money. It was called Abernathy and Ermatinger Script. Those who worked for the Hudson Bay Company received an order on Ermatinger's store and those working for Abernathy got an order on his store. All orders were payable in merchandise. Often the orders were not presented for months after issued but were used as a circulating medium in the Valley among the citizens Ermatinger had charge of the Hudson Bay Co's. store. Abernathy was in charge and perhaps owned what was usually called the Missionary store.

During our stay at Oregon City father and I put a cabin on Capt. Cook's little schooner; and I dressed, matched and put down a floor in a large store house for the Hudson Bay Co.

—To be continued next week.—

CHAPTER XIX.

James W. Nesmith was working at the carpenter trade at that time and was by act of the Legislature made Judge of Oregon. He performed the ceremony which united my oldest sister, Martha, to William Sebring, whose first wife had died at the Platt river as we crossed the plains the year before. Judge Nesmith, who performed this ceremony in Oregon City in July, 1845 was subsequently one of Oregon's first U. S. Senators.

Old Dr McLaughlin, whose acts of kindness to the early immegrants have been so ably chronicled by Mrs E. E Dye, was on the streets almost every day looking after the general wellfare of the town in which he seemed to take a great interest. There were many others in those early days, who were at Oregon City during the summer of 1845 Among the number were General A. L Lovejoy, Pettigrove, Moss Pomroy, Ware, Dr. Newel, Bill (William) Macay, John P. Brooks with frequent visits from Joe Meeks, who lived near where Hillsboro now is Besides these were many others whose names I can not now recall.

One of the most interesting sight at that time was the jumping up of the Salmon at the falls in their efforts to go up the Willamette. At the

height of the river there was not one minute of time for hours that there was not a salmon in the air.

About the last of August 1845 father and family, left Oregon City and went by boat to LaBontus, two miles below LaFayette, Yamhill county, thence in an ox wagon to where he took up his donation land claim on the Lacreole, one mile above Dallas, Polk county, and here he lived until his death in 1858.

During the winter of 1844–5 and the followeng summer all of the immigrants of 1844 were settled on lands, principally in the Willamette valley. Some of them, Mike Timmons, his father in-law, Geo. Bush and others settled near Olimpia on the Sound. General Cornelious Gilliam and his brother Mitchel, settled where Dallas, Polk county now stands.

In May, about the 12th, 1845 General Gilliam seeded ten acres of bottom land near the creek to California Spring red wheat, from which he threshed and cleaned up one hundred bushels of red wheat. The next crop was volunteer which yeilded over 25 bushels per acre of California white fall or winter wheat. The next crop, also volunteer, yielded 32 bushels per acre. The white wheat that was mixed with the sowing in the first place did not mature but spread out over the ground and allowing the spring wheat to be harvested the first year and leaving the other to grow and mature for the next year. The third crop was the largest of all and all from one seeding. This was truly wonderful to those who had come from the cold bleak praries of Northwest Missouri and Illinois, where the ground is covered with snow from 12 to 15 inches deep for from four to six months of the year and where the mercury drops to 35 degrees below zero quite often during the winter This valley seemed to them an earthly paradise indeed. The grass 12 to 15 inches high and green all winter and waving in the breeze like wheat of equal height in the field. The native grass there is an evergreen. The Oak hills which extend from the low prairie lands to the fir timber on the eastern slope of the Coast mountains were covered with beautiful spreading top oak trees, presenting to some extent the appearance of a well cultivated orchard. There was no under brush except in the hollows where there were groves of fir timber. On the eastern slope of the Coast mountains and along the foot hills was the home of the panther, wolf and black tailed deer. Often small bands of deer would feed within gunshot of our cabin. Wild geese and ducks were there by the thousands: Grouse, native pheasants and quail were plentiful as chicken around a barn lot. All that was necessary to satisfy one's appetite was to "arise lay and eat". We used in great part the wild game for meat and boiled wheat for or instead of rice and by the way, the large plump grain, of the California white wheat cooked as corn is treated to make hominy, is no mean substitute for rice and I think decidedly more healthful.

We wore moccasins made of dressed deer skins and pants of like material

—To be continued next week.—

CHAPTER XX.

A young fellow of my acquaintance, who was about seventeen years old, had a pair of new buckskin pants, which his mother had just made him. He and his chum went duck hunting, my friend wearing his new pants, and of course they waded in the water and Lyte's new pants were soon soaking wet up to his knees and of course were then too long. He rolled them up. The roll became very heavy and much in his way and his chum advised him to cut them off and he did so. It was not long until they were too long again and he cut them off a second time,

By this time night was approaching and they headed for the house of his chum, where they arrived near night

After supper they retired to bed and Lyte requested the lady of the house to hang his pants on a chair before the fire to dry. Next morning the man of the house came to build the fire and Lyte asked him to throw his pants to him, which he did. When they fell on the floor they rattled like a lot of shingles Lyte was up instanter and forced them on but to his utter discomfiture they were too short, reaching but little below his knees. To add to his chagrin his best girl was there and liable to be in soon

Realizing the ludicrousness of his position he grabbed for his gun and made a hasty retreat, unobserved by any of the family.

Col. Nathanial Ford, who commanded the company of immigrants in 1844, known as Ford's Train, lived four miles below on the north bank of the Lacreole creek, brought with him a family of negroes. His family consisted of himself, his wife, one son, Marcus A., Mary Ann, Josephene, Caroline, Sarah and Miller. Col. Ford was born in Virginia and possessed all of the elements that constitute the make up of a refined southern gentleman. His son and daughters, especially the three eldest girls, were highly educated as well as trained in the conventionalities of refined society. To visit at Col. Ford's was like going to the Governors.

Judson, a minister from Salem, had an appointment to preach at the Colonel's on Sunday and I went down to attend the meeting. I had met Mr. and Mrs. Ford at Oregon City the year previous but had never seen any other members of the family. On my arrival the Col. introduced me to his son, a college graduate and also a graduate from a law school.

After the meeting had adjourned I said to the Col. that Mr. Sebering had requested me to get a pair of blankets he had left there. "You can't get them now young man, you must wait until after dinner and then you may have them" said he. Shades of the departed Martyrs! The idea of me, born in the western wilds beyond the precincts of refined society, sitting at Col. Ford's table with his family, was an ordeal the thought even of which seemed almost beyond

endurance but rather tame when compared with my experience a little later on. Mark (as the son was called) and I were informed by the Col. that dinner was ready. Led by the Col. we marched to the dining room. Standing on the opposite side of the table were the three daughters and their cousin, Miss Pauline Goff. The Col, in his usual genteel manner, performed the ceremony of an introduction. We were seated at the table in the following order: The Col. at the head, Mrs. Ford at the foot and the four young ladies opposite Mark and me. The Col. did the honors o. the table, filling our plates with all manner of edibles and with a copious quantity of thick milk gravy and a piece of dried beef, stewed The crisis had arrived. The eating was to commence. I placed my fork on the beef and with my knife tried to cut it but, by some awkardness, scooped the entire contents of the plate out and into my lap. The white gravy, falling on my black corded pants, exhibited quite a contrast in color Mrs. Ford, procuring a cloth presented it to me saying, "Mr. Nichols take this cloth and wipe the gravy of your pants". To describe my embarrasment at that time is utterly impossible and when I arose from the table and looked down at my pant they were black and white striped for several inches above the knees Nothing saved me from collapse except the dignified manners of the young ladies during my mishap.

CHAPTER XXI.

I hope the readers will pardon the extended narration concerning the birth, life, character and death of General Cornelius Gilliam, who was the ranking officer in our company that formed the emmigration of 1814.

He was born near Ashville, North Carolina on the 13th. day of April, 1798 and migrated to Missouri in 1816 and was married to Miss Mary Crawford in that state in 1820.

A short time prior to the marriage Miss Crawford was at her uncle's, in company with an other young lady, when five Indians made an attack upon three white men who were in the yard in front of the house. It was a fight for life, a hand to hand struggle. The white men cut the Indians' bow strings and slashed them so severely with their pocket knives that they succeeded in standing them off and finally causing them to flee During the fight one of the Indians saw the two white girls standing in the door and made a desperate rush for them, knife in hand, intending doubtless to kill and scalp them. They saw him coming and ran into a corner of the room and under the bed. The bed covers hung down in front and near to the floor. The Indian saw them run in that direction and supposed they were covered up on top. The Indian approached and with his bloody hands pressed on the bed, his big ugly feet being so close to the girls that they could have taken hold of them. At this particular crisis a loud yell was heard from without and the Indian left his intended victims and rushed out of doors and he and his companions ran for the woods at the top of their speed, leaving the white men victorious.

The news of the Indian raid flew over the little settlement like wild fire and Cornelius Gilliam, who was at that time engaged to be married to Miss Crawford, on hearing of the Indian raid went with all speed to the scene of the battle. Finding all alive, the young ladies unhurt and the men but slightly wounded, he at once started in pursuit of the Indians. He followed them beyond the white settlements and into their own country and succeeded in killing all but one or two of the party before be returned.

Gilliam was captain of the State militia of Missouri and fought the Seminole Indians of Florida, under Colonel Zacary Taylor in 1838. He was twice elected to the Legislature in Missouri, the last time a member of the State Senate, where he proved himself to be no less a wise legislator and statesman than a patriot, soldier and fighter.

Notwithstanding his almost unparallelled bravery and heroism he was tender hearted as a woman, ever defending the weak and oppressed, making no compromise with wrong doing in any manner. His life was devoted to acts of benevolence and charity.

When the news of the Whitman massacre was received he at once raised a company of volunteers and proceeded into the country of the Cayuse Indians to avenge the death of the slaughtered victims. After driving the Indians from their country about Walla Walla and erecting a kind of fort or stockade at the Whitman Mission, he left Captain Waters (afterward Colonel,) with a sufficent number of men to hold the country against the Indians and with the remainder of his command started for the Willamette Valley, to counsel with Govenor Abernathy with reference to the further conduct of the war with the Cayuses.

On the way down they camped at Well Springs, situated in what is now Morrow county. The Colonel stepped to the hind end of the covered baggage wagon to get a rope with which to stake his horse to grass. A man named Evans said to him "hold on Colonel, I will get a rope for you" and went to the forward part of the wagon stepped upon the tongue, caught hold of one end of a rope to pull it out from under the baggage, guns, et cet and notwithstanding that the Colonel had given strict orders that no loaded guns should be placed in the baggage wagon it seemed that some of the men had placed a gun in, which was loaded, capped and the ram rod in the gun with one end resting on the ball and the other end extending

an inch perhaps beyond the muzzle. When Evans pulled the rope it caught on the lock of the loaded gun, pulling it back some distance and then slipping off, ther by firing the gun. The ram rod entered the Colonel's forehead a little above the right eye-brow and near the center of the forehead, resulting in instant death.

The accident occurred on the 24th. day of March, 1848 and the body was conveyed to the Dalles, by wagon and from there by boat, to Oregon City and I think by some conveyance on to Salem and from there to the home of his brother, Mitchel Gilliam, at Dallas, Polk county. He was a man about six feet high and in the later years of his life he weighed about 250 pounds, his hair was light and his eyes blue and constantly beaming with intelligence. Nature had done more for him than for most men. He was buried in what is now the Dallas cemetery.

This ended the life and career of one of nature's noblemen. It has been said that three words close the biography of all men "and he died".