

THE
OREGON TRAIL

AND
OTHER FAMILY TALES

BY

TWO SISTERS

SARAH McCORMICK OTIS
AND
AMANDA McCORMICK EISELE

"Oregon or Bust -- A Pioneer Epic" was received from Donna Rose Brandt who in turn received it from another Rose cousin.

Family names mentioned:

Mother = Nancy Ann Rose McCormick

Father = Joseph Coy McCormick

Writer, Sarah Ann Melinda McCormick Otis = sister of William Elijah McCormick

Uncle Jimmy = James McCormick, brother of Joseph Coy McCormick

Uncle Nathan = Nathan McCormick, brother of Joseph Coy McCormick

Uncle Enos = Enos W. Rose, brother of Nancy Ann Rose McCormick

Uncle John = John M. Rose, " " " "

Uncle Cahill = Aunt Dortha Jane Rose's husband, Peter Cahill (she was Nancy's sister)

Baby born in the Rockies = Enos Mathew McCormick, Sarah's brother

Sister Amanda = Amanda Jane McCormick who later married Fred Eisele

Virginia K. McCormick
October, 2001

Oregon or Bust -- A Pioneer Epic
Sarah Melinda McCormick

Audrey: for what it is worth, here is the Oregon or Bust. It is stale, hackneyed and long winded. IF the author left out one tired cliché, I missed it. Also she may have seen a movie or two. Everything is here, the cattle stampeding, the young wife thrown from the wagon and losing her baby, then dying herself-the old lady whomping the Indian across the bare rump when he tried to steal the bacon. There is murder, and a camp trial of the murdered, and his execution, beside his own open grave (at least they didn't make him dig it) but it was written by Calvin Elijah Rose's niece, when she was an old lady, and it probably was the most exciting thing she ever did. And isn't any worse than the blurbs we have from Aunt Mary Brown about her trip across. (I did get the feeling that they might have come across in the same wagon train-at least as far as The Dalles—oh I am kidding, of course, but the two stories are so similar, it is hard to believe that the Mills group came in 1853 and the Macormacks nearly ten years later.

PS. What memories these old birds had. If I took one of my ten year old kids on a safari like this one, all they would recall would be the long stretches between the Golden Arches.

In this article "Oregon or Bust" by Sarah Melinda Macormack Otis, wherever "Mother" is referred to, it designates Nancy Ann Rose McCormick. This is the daughter of Sarah Leona Rose and Abraham (Abram-Abrum) Rose - She is the sister of Calvin Elija Rose.

Uncle Jimmy and Uncle Nathan are Macormic brothers of Joseph Macormic. Uncle Enos and Uncle John are brothers of Nancy Ann McCormack. Uncle Cahill is Peter Cahill married to Dortha Jane Rose Cahill. Dortha Jane is sister of Nancy Ann Rose Macormack and to Calvin Elija Rose (C.R.)

The above was a letter written to Audrey from her mother Crystal Mills Rose (married to Burriss Estes Rose)

This article appeared in the Magazine section of the Sunday Oregonian, August 10, 17 24th 1941. (I will leave the spelling as it was in the story) C.R.

Oregon or Bust A Pioneer Epic

(In the "often fearful and tearful eyes of a 11 year old child, this is how the mighty overland trek to the Oregon Country appeared. The recollection of the great covered wagon migration have seldom been as sharply focused as by the pen of Mrs. Otis. In this narrative called Sarah Melinda Macormack, Mrs. Otis lived with her family in Portland until she was 15, moving to Salem. At Salem she was married to Theodore S. Otis, son of Daniel Otis, a Bostonian who migrated to Oregon in '51. Later with their five children, the Otis's returned to Portland. Their later years were spent at their home in Laurel Heights in Yamhill County, where Mrs. Otis died in 1929 at the age of 79. This is the story related to Mrs. Otis' daughter, Mrs. May Otis Stevens of Gazelle, California.)

As told by Sarah Melinda McCormack Otis --

Doubtless these pictures that I was more than 60 years ago, with the of fearful and tearful eyes of a child of 11, will seem faded and worn with age to you in the light of these later years, but I trust that you may be able to relive with me- oh, just to please an old lady of three score and ten -- some of the drama herein contained.

Oregon or Bust was what Uncle Jimmy then but a boy of 20 printed in bold black letters on the canvas of the big ox drawn provision wagon before we started on the long trek from Iowa to Oregon. Somehow, it was Jimmy, gay, daring and adventurous - but with the adventure comes hardship and endurance to the breaking point: and none but the might know the meaning of those three short words until the very end of the trail, and then we almost forgot the travail in the glamorous panorama of a land flowing with milk and honey spread out before our beauty starved eyes.

My first impression of Oregon, and more especially of Portland, was just like that, glamorous. It was to us what the Promised Land was to the Children of Israel, and doubt not that to my child's mind that six months spent in the hot summer sun trudging along behind an emigrant wagon was equal to the 40 years experienced by those ancient children of God.

If this great evergreen northwest, with its wonderful climate, scenic mountains, valleys and forests and flowers was beautiful to us, then time and cultivation and progression has only endeared it the more to the hearts of those sturdy pioneers, for in all the past 60 years I have never felt the urge to leave it.

Yes, we believed we had found a kind of fairy land when we came down the river the night of October 9 1862, and saw the lights in the homes along the Willamette and later in the town, and if I remember correctly someone suggested there had to be a mistake made in the name, it was not Portland, it was a Paradise.

Many mining men walked the streets of the then small, oh, very small town, men dressed in fringed buckskins, a six-shooter suspended from the side of the wide belt and a dirk knife in a scabbard on the opposite side, paying their needs in gold dust. Peaceful men, we were told, until roiled.

Would you like to return with me now, back to the little log cabin in Lee County Iowa, where I Sarah Melinda McCormack - was born? That was on a farm, owned by a brother of the celebrated Joe Meek who in earlier days help to wrest "Aragon" from the English conquest and became the first Territorial Marshall.

My father, Joseph Coy McCormack, was a musician and that is how he earned his living, both in Iowa and later in Oregon.

We will bide over the time between my birth and ten years later, for it was the life of any healthy normal - going wading in the Des Moines in the summer when the water was low, or looking for periwinkles in the shallow streams, going to school in Belfast, which was near, and picking wild hazelnuts and wooly gooseberries that grew back of the town and over a little hill: in winter, watching the Negro boys from the Wayland Plantation across the Missouri side as cut pigeons' wings on the ice when it was frozen over, and listening to the gay Negro songs as they hauled the corn across the ice in large schooner type wagons, cracking their big black snakes: and there were times when these same black men-slaves, they were then not so happy. When they were fleeing wide-eyed with fright, and gasping with exhaustion, from the avenging nemesis behind.

It was then that Father decided the border was no place to rear a family which had grown to 8 children, two older than I and five younger.

Oregon seemed a long way off but at least, Father argued, there would never be the question of slavery there. Mother was greatly opposed to taking the trip —over 2000 miles, and 700 of that on the Great American Desert, "surely" she said, "that is as perilous as living here on the border."

And then Uncle Jimmy and Uncle Nathan came over to visit us and, as there is strength in numbers, they soon over rules Mothers objections so in Feb. of 1861, plans were made to return to the old McCormack home in Malarkey County to get ready to make the long trek to Oregon the next year.

It was about March when we arrived at the old home, this must have been about a section of land, and found a portion of it tenanted by a southerner named Smith, peculiar spot for a rank secessionist, but there he was, and in the year that followed he remained there, and each time that he and father met there was danger of them coming to blows over the slavery question, for Father was a staunch Republican and could not abide Smith's copperhead beliefs, and his temper grew pretty short at such time, especially when the neighbor Smith decided our fine President Lincoln.

On April 12, the secessionist fired on Fort Sumpter and the charge of dynamite that our country and been sitting on for so long was now on the point of exploding: the call came for volunteers, and Uncle Enos Rose, Mother's younger brother, a fine looking boy of 21, was one of the first to enlist.

That summer, a company of home guards was organized for home protection: my father and Uncle Nathan and Uncle Jimmy joined this, going into Freemont every Saturday, wearing their uniforms to drill, their captain being John Kennedy, the same man who was to captain our caravan across the plains the following year.

There was a great deal of talk now of the Pioneer Grays -- I think this must have been the first Iowa regiment formed. Well, Father continued to drill on Saturdays and in the mean time, he went about to raise a good crop on the old farm, for we would need plenty of food on that long trip westward.

May I digress dear readers?? We have a whole year before we start on that memorable trip on May 18, I would be ten years of age and if you will be my guest we will roam over the old farm. First we will make a trip to the south forty which Grandfather had given to my parents for a wedding present: the little house that Father built of hewn logs, the big stone fireplace nearly filing the one end of the room. Dust was over everything but it still did not obliterate the smoothness of the deal floor that mother took so much pride in keeping white by scrubbing it with sand until it gleamed.

Now we will go to see the tree in the woods where years before the Indians had erected a scaffold on which to put their dead chieftain to keep away the wolves from him. His bones now fallen beneath the tree, lying scattered about over the ground. We dug beneath and found a lot of beads, very pretty they seemed to us then.

That evening Father told us of another burying ground not far away, where the Indians had dug out a square, setting their dead all about the sides. Some, he said, had fallen over and others were still sitting

upright, some, he recalled, were women with papooses strapped to their backs. Their burial clothes, he told us were beautifully beaded and of the finest deerskins, and of all the evil smelling places, he said, that was the worst.

The Iowa tribes returned every fall to their old campgrounds to work for the settlers, bringing big bands of dogs with them. When one of these became old and fat that was killed and dressed for a feast, and Father said they even tried to barter for any fat dog a settler might own and if you refused to trade, your old dog might become missing some dark night. Father said we might encounter some of these same Indians on the plains the following year and it was wise to treat them well.

We will road over the old farm now, in search of wild crabapples and plums, for don't forget, this family of eight children and Father and Mother, with the addition of Uncle Nathan and Uncle Jimmy must be fed this winter, and preserved crabapples cut out of the frozen syrup are delicious eating when thawed out around the fire in the winter: besides we must have plenty to eat on the long trip, so Father raised some sugar cane this year that grew to the height of 16 feet.

Uncle Cahill, who lived near, owned a mill for pressing the juice out, as well as sheet iron vats eight or ten feet long for boiling it down. These were moved over and set up on our place, and we all helped in various ways, the green juice being placed in the vats and a fire beneath to keep boiling day and night until the syrup was thick enough for barreling up. For once we children were to have all the syrup we could eat.

The corn was now gathered and stored in cribs, and a fine lot there was of it. We had raised a lot of pumpkins and some of these Mother cut into rings and dried them on long poles overhead in the kitchen, and some was made into pumpkin butter, and the balance fed to the milk cows and hogs. Father said we would need plenty of bacon for the long trip. In fact, it seemed to me that about all we did, or talked about, as concerning that trip out to Oregon the following spring.

Mother was still terribly opposed to the journey, but Father, never doubting success in the venture, paid little heed to her protests, and went ahead making his preparations, and even purchased cattle which the men broke for oxen.

So the winter wore on. Cloth was bought for tents and the wagon covers and Mother spent many a day sewing these by hand with a stout linen thread that a neighbor woman spun on her little wheel. I can realize how hard this must have been for Mother when she had never become reconciled to the idea, but she continued her work of making our clothes -- dresses and bonnets for us girls and herself, and shirts for Father and the boys, as well as my two Uncles. Besides, there was always the endless task of spinning yarn and knitting it up into endless pairs of socks and stockings. Uncle Jimmy was always so gay and full of fun -- always making jokes -- that Mother had to laugh when I am sure she felt like weeping with apprehension over the thought of the trip. "In the spring, Nancy Ann", Jimmy would say, with his infectious grin, "we're striking out for the setting sun -- Oregon or Bust!"

Perhaps as my guess you are frowning, tired with all these preliminaries, but no matter what we do, we must make some kind of preparation for it and as Grandmother used to say, Rome wasn't built in a day. It was nearly spring then and almost everything was ready. But the roads were still bad and we had to wait for the weather to clear up, so it was close to the last of April before he had our auction. A big crowd came, many being old friends who had come to bid us farewell and wish us a good trip, for we started on our journey the following day.

Uncle Enos had gotten furlough to come home and see Mother before we started out on the long trek. He looked so nice in his soldier suit of blue and we were all proud of him and glad to see him for this short time. He bade us good bye with the tears streaming down his fine face -- indeed, I believe that every eye was moist at the parting -- and although we did not know it at this time, it was to be the last time we would ever see him again in this world. Uncle Enos returned to his regiment and in July we were out on the desert, he took down with disease that was then so prevalent amongst the soldiers - dysentery - and was invalided back home, but died before reaching it.

Our family, consisting of Father, Mother and eight children, was to ride in a light wagon drawn by two big mares, which Father would drive. We were taking an orphan girl, Elizabeth Rayburn, with us, as she wished to find a brother who had gone to Oregon several years before, and Father felt that she would be able to help mother in many ways.

Jimmy drove the larger wagon in which were stored our provisions - in fact- everything we now owned on this earth - food, bedding and clothes. Jimmy - proud as a peacock - would not think of giving up the drivers seat, and Uncle Nathan must submit to merely sit alongside, and, true to his former declaration, Jimmy had painted in big characters on the side --OREGON OR BUST.

I thought Mother looked pale and worried as she packed the basket containing the noon day meal in the

box of our light wagon, but I was so excited to think much about it: somewhere in the back of my child's brain, I suppose, I felt that she had a good deal to think about, with so many of us: I didn't realize that this was mostly her terror of Indians, accidents, sickness and death for her small brood.

Before starting the men of the train elected their captain, to manage and pilot us across the great space of mountains and desert. This must be a man in whom all had confidence, so Captain Kennedy of that little company of home guards was chosen. All now took their places in the wagons, Captain Kennedy gave some last orders, and then he shouted command -- On to Oregon. Wheels rolled, the caravan moved and we were off!

The roads were still pretty bad in spots, full of chuck holes, which made it very rough at first, and the grass was not yet as plentiful as we had hopes for, but we traveled on for several days, finally coming to a place where we were to lay over for about a week waiting for some more people to be added to the train, which now numbered over 125 wagons. I cannot now recall the name of this rendezvous but were still in Iowa. Among those who joined us, here were the "Captains" sister, Mrs. Hale, widow with a son 12 years of age.

While waiting here at this spot we had our first accident. Some of the boys in the train had made a grapevine swing, one evening the children were all out there swinging out over a little hill, at the foot of which was an old stump. Finally it came sister Amanda's turn and then the swing broke and sister fell onto the stump, dislocating her hip. She was taken to our tent and the doctor was sent for -- yes indeed, we had a doctor as well as preachers in our caravan -- the doctor had the dislocation tended to. That broke up the grapevine swing, and poor sister was on the lift for many days there after.

This was Captain Kennedy's third trip across the plains in a previous trip had lost a son in a skirmish with the Indians. The Captain had with him his wife, two daughters and a son, John. The youngest daughter Rachel was a beautiful girl, tall and slim with black hair and blue eyes and was so sweet and good to all us children. Mrs. Kennedy had three other daughters by a former marriage and these were too accompanying them, so the Kennedy's were well equipped for the journey, with plenty of teams, hired help, and a big thorough brace hack, besides a small one seated buggy in which Mrs. Kennedy generally rode with young John beside her. The big hack was drawn by a couple of fine dapple greys. The Kennedy girls wore riding habits much of the time, for they had horses to ride whenever they wished. The Captain was a tall, rawboned man looking as if he had been of powerful physique in his youth, and at this time seemed to be about 60 years of age. He was always pleasant and agreeable with me, but had a way of commanding that meant, "I will be obeyed". He was fearless, working hard for the benefit of all concerned, encouraging the train folks at every opportunity. He usually rode on ahead to find a good place to camp for the night, sometimes being away for hours at a time before returning to instruct the front wagon teams where to halt: I used to wonder why the Indians did not "pick him off" on those trips.

The method of camping was to drive the wagons so as to form a circle, the lead wagon falling back to the rear, thus giving each wagon a turn to lead. There was always plenty to do at each camping time = tents must be set up for the night and horses and cattle to be watered, and herders set over them. Wood and water must be gotten, cooking utensils unpacked, and supper prepared. All of the older children had chores to do, one of which was to take turns looking after the smaller ones of the family while Mother got the supper and prepared food for a lunch the following day -- and only a small camp stove on which to do all of this cooking.

I can close my eyes now and see Mother mixing and kneading the dough for the bread, first spreading a cloth upon the ground in order to do it, as we could not carry a table, not even a box for this: but wonderful light bread and biscuits Mother baked with the reflector which hung on the side of the camp stove. Done to a turn! When we ate -- well there was not much ceremony about that, we spread a tablecloth upon the ground in a clean spot, and with each of us equipped with a tin plate, cup, knife, fork and spoon it was just one eternal picnic meal after another. I have no doubt that we all ate our peck of dirt.

Immediately after breakfast, the horses and cattle were brought in by the herders, and then men and some of the biggest boys would harness the horses and yoke up the oxen then hitch them to the wagons. Soon the wheels of the lead wagon would begin to roll, and, with everyone in his place for the day, the big caravan would start up.

I was so young then to realize the responsibility that rested on the Captains shoulders, but he had everyone in that train on his mind, all looking to him for guidance and protection, as did the Children of Israel to Moses of old -- and his wife was a trying position, for he knew the dangers that would soon beset our journey. Redskins were to hound our trail, and my young eyes were to see massacred folks, children kidnapped, murder dealt with, stampeding cattle and want and woe before we should reach our land of

promise -- Oregon.

We had traveled now for about two weeks and were getting used to our hard beds and other drawbacks when we arrived in Council Bluffs with the rain pouring down. Here we crossed the Missouri River, which was very high, its water the color of mud. It seemed a long way across the river in the improvised ferry made from old discarded riverboats. We laid over in Omaha for several hours before going on.

Sometimes we traveled for days without anything out of the ordinary happening, but then perhaps, that was but the calm before the storm.

Captain Kennedy insisted that we "lay over" every Sunday to rest the stock, and then there was the preaching and the singing, for we needed our souls cared for as well as our bodies--- everyone taking a thorough scrubbing on this day, whether we thought we needed it or not, and Mother put out the weekly washing, as did the other women of the train. Also, she tried to get some extra baking done in order to facilitate the work when we were on the move. Of course, we knew we could not be so deliberate when we got to hostile Indian country--when we could have to move more carefully. Father still fetched out his violin of an evening to play it, when we wasn't too tired: but there were times when he would not dare to do this. I am sure the Indians could see the dust of our train for miles, but still we doused the fires in perilous territory, lest they see the flames and attack us at night. We were getting now where wood was scarce and must be supplemented with buffalo chips, which make a good fire, very hot, for baking altogether excellent if you could endure the odor -- also we used sage brush.

While traveling in the Platte River valley, death stalked across our trail. It was the 3rd of July that Mr. Bovee, one of the trail men, took his rifle and went about a quarter of a mile to see if he could shoot some game. Running into a wolf, he shot it in sight of the train. We heard the shot and saw him stoop over a big rock to scalp the wolf for a trophy. His six shooter froped from his pocket onto the rock, and shot him. Hearing the second shot, and seeing him fall, men ran out to ascertain what was wrong. They found him quite dead and brought the body in with them. We pitched camp there and the next day, Independence Day, we buried Mr. Bovee. His wife and children were terribly broken up over his death, as was the entire train. This was the first death -- but not the last, by any means.

Our train had now grown in size, for several smaller caravans had attached themselves to our larger one for protection, since we were now in hostile country. Previous to this, we had seen a train of wealthy travelers who told us they were going to California, calling themselves the "Independent Train": at times they would travel ahead of us for days, and when they stopped to rest their teams we would pass them. On several of these occasions our captain warned them they were taking chances to travel alone in this country, since they were but 11 families in their caravan. But at this warning they only smiled, saying they could not poke along in our dust and were so well equipped having mules instead of oxen and four to each wagon, but they kept on as before not even keeping in sight of us. Captain Kennedy dismissed it with a sigh and a shake of the head.

One day while we were nooning there came a messenger back to us, riding like mad. As he rode up we recognized him as a member of the Independent Train, and what we feared had happened. He told us. Excitedly, that their train had been attacked by Indians. Captain Kennedy ordered every available man and boy to shoulder rifles, and on horses, they went swiftly to the rescue. A lot of women and girls, myself among them, followed on horseback. About a mile ahead we entered a canyon and saw a knot of our men gathered about a young woman lying on the bank of a little stream. She had been shot through the upper part of the lungs and was bleeding profusely, the doctor trying to staunch the flow of blood by the aid of the men who were tearing up her blue calico skirt, an arrow on the ground beside the doctor bearing mute evidence of the marksmanship of the Indian. Some of the women stayed to help, but I continued on with some of the others for another quarter mile, and here the wagons of the little Independent Train were scattered in all directions, some overturned, and all stripped of their canvas coverings. There were no mules to be seen except the lead mule, which had been shot to halt the team that had evidently attempted to run away, up the hillside. The wind was blowing hard and feathers were flying in all directions, the Indians having ripped up the feather beds and pillows to get the ticking, and four sacks had been opened and emptied, the flour scattered all over the ground. There was great confusion: four of their men had been killed and scalped and the women and children were all crying and almost frantic from fright, meanwhile incoherently telling us about it. There was little we could do except to reassure them and help them to our train, which had now caught up.

Another girl and I looked about to see what we could find and we came suddenly upon their captain, lying behind a big rock, dead. I nearly swooned at the sight of the poor man lying there with an arrow sticking in his chest and his eyes wide open and staring. Miss Strong -- the girl who had been wounded --

died the next day. Her parents were nearly beside themselves with grief. She was the eldest of their three daughters.

In the two days we were camped here our Captain thought he might be able to recover the mules of the other train, so he called a council and the men decided that this was the right thing to do. Thirty men were chosen for this duty, with a captain over them, they saddled their horses, taking rifles and revolvers – father loaned his new rifle to one of them, and they followed the trail of Indians about 15 miles.

Coming to a little valley between two hills, they were completely surrounded by redskins who opened fire on them with bows and arrows – some having guns. Several of our men were killed; among them the brother of the young woman wounded the previous day. The captain of the party was shot through the bowels, the Indians riding swiftly away. The men managed to fetch their captain in by supporting him on his horse, and later in the day they brought in the body of Mr. Strong who had been shot through the breast. The man to whom Father had loaned his rifle was badly wounded and taking the Captains gun when he could no longer use it, he made for a clump of willows, telling the men to go on without him and he would try to come in that night—he never came. Captain Kennedy sent out after him the following morning, but no further trace was ever found of him.

It was a terribly sad for the wife and children of Mr. Strong, who were almost inconsolable, as well as the parents who had lost a son and daughter in one day.

The men were all buried in one grave. The bodies were covered with a comforter and the grave filled and left without a marker, for fear the redskins might return and unearthen them. The decking was taken from the wagons and a nice coffin made for Miss Strong, the women dressing her in a light colored laun dress, and with white stockings and black slippers, she looked very peaceful and sweet.

On the morning of our departure and with the animals already hitched to the wagons, we gathered around the grave and lowered the body of the young woman in the coffin, after filling the grave up, we all slowly filed back to the wagons, several of which were driven over the grave to efface all signs of it, leaving her there in her lonely tomb.

For many nights thereafter, guards were doubled about the camp. At all times the men had to take turns at this duty, there being the regular the guards, picket guards and outside of these were the sentinels, and for sometime the men slept with guns beside them and with most of their clothes on.

For some time the outriders had been seeing the tracks of lone a Indian, and the snorting and general nervousness of the horses at night convinced Captain Kennedy that there might be a plan to stampede them, so added precautions were being taken. Then came the horses were being guarded in the creek bed, where they might crop the lush grass. There were willows growing along the hill, covered with scraggly trees and brush. About 2 o'clock there was an alarm and one of the horse guards was brought in with an arrow in his arm, which had to be cut out.

Early the following morning dogs were put in the creek bottom and all men and boys followed after as the dogs took up the scent of the lone Indian trail. Just as the sun rose on the opposite hillside from the camp they routed the redskin out, scrambling up the hillside in pursuit. From the camp we could see the frantic Indian pulling up on sagebrush to strike the dogs and then rushing on again. He was perfectly naked looking.

Some of them men and boys gained on him- shooting in all, seven times—several of the shots taking effect. They overtook him, one man breaking a gun barrel over his head, killing him. They scalped him, and left him there, bringing the scalp to the guard who had been shot the previous night, which seemed to please him immensely, although to me the scalp was a frightful looking thing. The guard nearly lost his life, for the arrow was poisoned.

Before starting up that morning we saw two Redskins ride up to where the dead Indian lay and dismounting, they leaned over and examined him closely. We broke up camp immediately, and we were terribly fearful of more trouble, for all day long we saw their smoke on the hills around us.

We children were trudging along now, hatless and bonnetless in the hot dust and hotter sun. We had long since taken to walking barefoot, for our shoes had worn out a long time back, and those of some of the grownups had done likewise. We sometimes met people going back east, but most of those were pack trains and traveling fast.

One night we camped in a big open bottom land, where a stream of water ran over a bed of grave and willows grew alongside. Some of us children were playing there and wading in the stream, when suddenly a Redskin jumped out of the willows and picking up a beautiful little girl, bounded away with her into the willows, where he and some more Indians had horses hidden, and made their escape. By the time our men could get their horses saddled and race madly in pursuit, the Indians were well away. Our men pursued

them for days, but no further trace was ever found of them or this beautiful little girl, whose parents were beside themselves over her loss, knowing that she must be left. I have heard since that some of these abducted children, now grown to womanhood and married to Indians, were brought back to civilization, but others refused to desert their Indian husbands and half-breed children and take up the life they had completely forgotten.

Along here we came upon a United States stagecoach beside the road, the horses harness gone and the stagecoach full of bullet holes, grim reminders of what had transpired. Nearby was a fresh grave, a black shaggy dog, greatly emaciated, standing guard beside it. Our men tried to coax it away, but in vain: they said that a faithful dog like that was too valuable to be left here to starve, but we had to go on without him, tho leaving food for him.

As this was in the day of the buffalo and antelope, we came across many herds of them grazing beside the road. The men tried to shoot them, but they would just bound away, and I don't remember seeing any of them being killed. There were plenty of coyotes and prairie dogs that set up yapping and howling at night—especially when the coyotes got a whiff of frying bacon, then they would fill the hills around with their yelping.

As we traveled through spots there were Indian villages, some of these Indians, on smelling the frying bacon from our campfires, would ride up on their ponies—sometimes 50 or more—and hang about, begging for something to eat. One evening as Mother was preparing to fry the bacon, she placed a skillet on the stone to heat and went about slicing the bacon, when a young Indian buck, naked except for a breech-clout, rode up and began pestering her for some of the bacon, when Mother grabbed the hot skillet from the stove and whacked his bare "behind", and with a howl of pain, he scrambled back on his pony and raced away, "heap bad squaw"!

A big band of Indians came to our camp one evening, bring their squaw with them, and one of the men had bright red hair, a half breed. Many white men took up the squaws, marrying them and raising large families of halfbreeds. I recall a white man in our train, he had a wife and four children, and he appeared to be quite respectable, who had crossed the plains some years before and fallen in with a tribe and married one of the young squaws, living with her some time while trying to find a better location for his family back east. And then he surreptitiously left her and returned to the family which he was bringing to Oregon this year in our train. When this man arrived at the place where he lived with the squaw, he began to act strangely, seeming nervous and apprehensive, although no one knew why. Well, the young squaws' tribe was watching for him, and just remember, an Indian never forgets the face of a person he has once known. They told him he must return to his squaw and live with her. This he refused to do, so the chief and some of them Indians went to Captain Kennedy, telling him that their tribe would kill all the people in our train if he would not give the white man up. Our Captain consequently, told the man he must go with the Indians, which he did not, but, oh what a shameful thing it was for his poor wife and children. They were a nice family and came to Portland without him, and I was well acquainted with them here. I never heard them mention him again and do not know if they ever heard from him again.

The cattle now began to die from the effects of the alkali poison, until some of the emigrants had but one yoke of oxen left to pull the load. The feet of the cattle became so worn that they had to be shod with shoe leather. We children sometimes played about on these dead swollen cattle of an evening. They looked like barrels, having dried that way in a puffed up condition, and there was no smell to them. When horses and oxen were wore out, the women and children had to walk. Oh, how tired we used to get from plodding all day in that hot sand and alkali dust that seemed to burn our faces, no one knows but those who did the plodding! Nothing could have kept our spirits up except for the fact that we were going to Oregon, the Promised Land.

There were five confinements in the emigrant train, one of those being my Mother. Child that I was, I hadn't realized until now what this trip meant to Mother, nor why she dreaded it, until my baby brother was born one hot day in the middle of July, right on the tip top of the Rocky Mountains. The Captain ordered the caravan to lay by at noon for the balance of the day, and that was all the rest that Mother got, for we started on the next morning over boulders, to descent the side of the mountain. When we arrived at Green River, my mother with her young baby beside her was still laying in her improvised bed in the back of the wagon. As their was neither bridge nor ferry and the banks were full of high water, the men made a big raft and after (cauling) the wagon beds, they took the wagons apart and set them on the raft, ferrying across, each man taking his turn to cross, it seemed for a time that the raft would rush downstream in the rushing waters. My mother, with her young baby beside her, lay in the bottom of the wagon bed, and Captain Kennedy stood on the opposite shore shouting, "Let her go, Macormack, you can't save her! Swim

ashore." But this my brave father did not do, and after a manfull struggle the raft was brought safely to shore.

One of the women died in childbirth, leaving her baby—one of eight children. The two older girls helped to take care of the young ones and we all did what we could to help, for this was a sad plight for these children.

But poor little Mrs. Townsend, the cattle had been stampeding at night for some time and this day we had only started up after noon rest and gone but a short way when the oxen began to stampede. Mrs. Townsend jumped out just as the stream started, falling beneath, the wagon ran over her—that night her baby was born dead. The mother lived until morning and she too died. They made her a neat coffin from cedar they split. Lying in her coffin with her little girl babe beside her, they looked like they were just asleep. And then we buried them at the foot of a cedar tree and the men tacked up a poem on the trunk of the tree, "Between two mountains she is laid / A mother and her little babe/This Tree o'er them softly waves/ And angels watch around their grave. Mrs. Townsend left a husband and a dear curly headed little boy of two years, and it was heart breaking to hear him cry for his Mother. I ha taken care of him before this, but now I could not pacify him. Mr. Townsend carried him for hours, the tears streaming down his face.

Well the cattle kept on stampeding, but now only at night, and one night the cattle guards tried to herd them in a pine grove near by, but they started to stampede away in the night and everything was bedlam with all the noise of their pounding hooves, and the men turning in all directions calling, "Suki, Suki, managing after some time in getting most of them rounded up.

Another time they tried herding them inside the wagon circle and at midnight they stampeded and nearly ran over the tent where several of us children were sleeping. Father dragged and carried some of us to safety but we didn't awaken, except that I remember hearing an awful tramping that to my dead tired ears, sounded like thunder. It was a foolish thing for them to try to hold them in the wagon circle, for when they took that fright there was nothing on earth that could stop them. Some thought the stampeding was caused by the dogs in the train were ordered shot. All but one family obeyed and they said they would leave the train before killing their dog. The dogs were shot one night so the next morning this family left the train, their dog tied beneath the wagon. They had gone but a short distance when the team with the dog stampeded, so their dog was shot and they came back to the train. But the final supposition was that the Indians were causing the stampeding in order to get the cattle.

We were just crawling along now with foot sore cattle, with feed getting short, our milk supply diminishing and our cows and oxen reduced in number from alkali poisoning. The oxen just crept along through the hot sandy desert with their tongues hanging out. Some of the people abandoned their heavy wagons for lighter ones- and there were plenty to chose from, left at the roadside by those in advance of us. Father did likewise, leaving many articles with the heavy wagon because of lack of space in the smaller one.

At times we had to make dry camp, and when Captain Kennedy knew this would happen, he would order us to fill our kegs and be ready for it. Some had not provided themselves with water kegs and there were obliged to beg water from others or forego their coffee. The emigrant used bad water many times unknowingly, and the cattle would lie down and die in streams from alkali poisoning.

Father went one morning to a stream, and after filling our water keg, walked a short way upstream, and their lay a big steer in the water—dead! The train was ready to start so we had to use the water. But anything could happen on the plains and most anything did happen, even cold- blooded murder, and that in our own train.

Two men named Cook and Young were traveling together, owning their outfit in partnership. Often they traveled alone, but generally kept near our train. One afternoon some of those walking noticed a new grave on the roadside, so waited until the train came up. The captain ordered a halt and the men shoveled the fresh dirt away and found the body of Mr. Cook, shot in the back, and the body still warm. We knew their long wagon was in advance of us all that day, so Captain Kennedy with several other men, went on ahead to investigate, finding Mr. Young making camp beside a little stream all along. The captain arrested him at once on suspicion of murder: and with the arrival of our train, the captain had a tent set up for Young, placing a guard over him for the night. Later a jury of 12 men was impaneled to try him for murder of his partner.

Young seeing that he was in a corner, confessed saying that they had quarreled over the horses, Cook wanting to do all the driving. This sounds childish but nerves did grow taut on the plains fro such trifles. Some, however, believed that this was nothing but a pretext, but accepted it along with the confession. Mr. Young declared he had got so angry he had pulled the gun from the wagon bed, shooting his partner in the

back. Then seeing the dust from the train so near, he had scooped out a hole as best he could and rolled Mr. Cook into it, covering him with dirt and hurrying on.

Acting as judge, the captains' advice to the jury was that as Mr. Young was guilty of murder by his own confession, their verdict should be the death penalty. This it was, and Captain Kennedy passed the sentence, that he was to be shot at sunrise. Young was returned to his tent and with a guard over him, by the light of a lantern, we wrote well into the night to his family in the east.

Next morning 12 single were selected for the execution—one of these being Uncle Jimmy—with the teams already hitched to start up, Mr. Young was marched over a little hill, and down to the other side a short way, where a grave had been dug, a number of the train men accompanying them as far as the hilltop, leaving the women and children standing in shuddering groups. Here and there the women wiped their eyes on the corner of the apron, turning fearfully to glance at the little knot of silent men on the hilltop, their eyes glued to the grim proceedings below.

Mr. Young was marched to a position beside the open grave and the 12 men walked back a few paces, turning at the captains command to "halt", which we heard distinctly, all eyes staring at the first rays of morning sun showing over the mountain peaks. "Ready - Fire", the volley boomed out, the men on the hilltop looked at each other silently, they turned back toward the train, while those on the other side of the hill, rolled Mr. Young unceremoniously in his grave, covering him up and leaving him there.

We all looked at Jimmy as he came toward us, his gun in his hand. Then he leaned over and whispered in Mothers ear, "Nancy Ann, I didn't have a cap on my gun." "God Bless you, Jimmy" mother said.

I saw father look after Jimmy as he stepped to the high seat of the provision wagon-in the lead again today-and popped the long black snake over the lead oxen, "Oregon or Bust", Jimmy knew the meaning of that now.

And then we came to the big "Y" in the road- one led to Oregon, the haven of quiet home sights, peach and plenty; the other to the land of froth and furry, where we were told men bartered their very souls to amass a quick fortune. Most of those turning off on the southerly prong of that "Y" were the small trains that had attached themselves to our caravan in fear of the Indians. Many of the women wanted to keep on with us to Oregon, not seeming to share the gold fever of the husbands and sons. There were many exciting scenes here, with the women crying and coaxing their men folk to continue on to Oregon, but their men were obdurate- the trail of the gold seeker lay to the west and they were taking it. So we bade them farewell and continued on, our train much smaller now.

It was getting along the last of September and the nights were growing much colder, I recall seeing an old lady sitting on their wagon tongue crying with the cold. "I just know", she wailed, "that we'll all be frozen to death before we ever reach Oregon".

Some were now getting short of rations and to those the soldiers at the forts furnished some food. Father had sold some flour and bacon further back at the trading post, thinking we had over anticipated, so we too were getting short on both food and money. A minor came to out camp one evening and, finding we were nearly out food, gave Father some money with which to purchase some at the next trading post.

Then we crossed the Snake River and found ourselves in Oregon---Oh Joy! This was cause for rejoicing. Oregon at last. Our main thought now was the end of the trail.

How glad we were to get into the Blue Mountains, for, although it continued cold, we could now have a big bonfires of fir and pine at night around which we happily sat, most of us chewing the pine gum of which we found plenty. There was a tangy smell of fir balsam and pine in the air and Uncle Nathan, who had gotten to be nothing but skin and bones, with his eyes seeming twice their normal size, began to feel much encouraged, with the use of the good mountain water. Little Herme, my brother of two, who had been sick for some time with the summer complaint, was somewhat better for the time being. We were overtaken at Malheur by some men with a few of our cattle, which they said they found beside the road some way back.

How we longed for fresh fruit and vegetables, which we were now seeing in the big freighters on their way to the mines, but the drivers only looked crossly at children gazing hungrily at the big juicy apples that showed between the slats of the false bed of the wagon. One blessing - our almost empty provision wagon Offered a space to creep into and fall into an exhausted sleep.

The sight of fish in the river also made us hungry, but the captain said they were not fit to eat, having come up river to spawn; Father however traded an old butcher knife to an Indian for some dried salmon which mother cooked, and we found it a treat after the months of eating bacon.

Some of the folks left the train at Walla Walla, others at Grande Rounde, a lovely little valley were for the first time we saw white folks living in houses with yards and chickens, and clothes hanging on the line and gardens with onions and pumpkins and other vegetables. We found the settlers very friendly. Then we

passed the Umatilla Indian Reservation where we saw Indians farming instead of wearing war paint. One of our men who was a Mast Mason, was walking through the reservation when he met an Indian who gave him the Masonic Sign, an act that, he told us later, fairly made his hair rise up on his head.

At Hepner, although only Mr. Hepner lived there at the time, we were asked \$1.50 for one stick of cord wood with which to cook our supper and breakfast, so we hastened on, glad to get out of such a high priced place, arriving at The Dalles to find many emigrants waiting their turn to go down the Columbia to Portland. The riverbank was lined with camps. A boat came each evening, laying over for the night and loading with emigrants. We waited there for a week. Father selling our light wagon for \$30, which was enough to pay our way to the Willamette Valley and Portland—the land of promise.

We were very glad when it came our turn to go on board the boat—all the family went except Jimmy, who took the cattle over land. Our boat went only as far as the Cascade Falls—there being no locks there—and they portaged the freight on flat cars for about 2 miles, the men and boys pushing it over the tracks while the women and girls walked. We came to a big warehouse on the bank of the river and found another boat waiting for us.

Someone had waved a wand. It couldn't be real, that boat! It had beautifully furnished cabins, immaculate linen on the dining tables, crystal-clear glassware and white shining dishes! Somewhere back in the dim past, it seemed 40 years before, we had seen such things, but dust and grime and sand and sickness and death had obliterated all such beauty from our tired minds. Our clothes were faded and torn and old: most of us were barefoot with our skin the color of an Indian and the manners we had once possessed had vanished along with the rest. But here were colored waiters, smiling and deferential, wearing crisp white aprons, to dance attendance on our slightest wish, and there seemed no end to the food they brought to us.

Afterwards, in the cabin one of those smiling blacks helping my mother—one arm around the ailing Herme, the other holding up my tiny baby brother, to be so more comfortable for the ride down the river, spied the violin case on the table where Father had carefully placed it. "Boss, does you'll de fiddle suh?"

Father drew a long breath, glancing down at his once fine hands, "I—I don't know", he replied with a dubious shake of his head, "whether I could play it now or not"—he glanced in its direction, but I saw a wishful look in his tired eyes and my bare feet quickly scampered across the floor and picking up the case I laid it on his knee.

Play it Father I coaxed. "Why, you haven't played for—for" "not for years and years" finished Uncle Nathan with a big grin.

And how father played that violin. To the accompaniment of the churning of the boat and the splashing of the water beneath us, all the gay rollicking tunes then so popular: "Oh Susanna, Yankee Doodle, Turkey in the Straw, The Devils Dream, Sailors Hornpipe, and oh, many others, slipping easily from one to another and not forgetting Mothers favorite, The Blue Danube."

Oh it was wonderful, all the joy and laughter came to life and Uncle Nathan big eyes followed father's fingers and Mothers never left his face—he never played so before! We all forgot the heartaches and tears and Father ended up on "the Campbell's are Coming". All our hopes and fears were ended. We had come to our safe haven at last—to Oregon, a Land of Promise.

Amanda Jane McCormick Eisele's story was received from Donna Rose Brandt.

Family mentioned:

Mother - Nancy Ann Rose
Sarah Rose - Nancy's sister
Lidge Rose - Calvin Elijah Rose - Nancy's brother
George Rose - George W. Rose - Nancy's brother
"Eanis Rose" - Enos W. Rose - Nancy's brother
John Rose - Nancy's brother
Father - Joseph Coy McCormick
Grandfather - Joseph D. McCormick
Mrs. Luecanda Wickerd - Joseph D. Mc's 2nd wife
Elma McCormick Teal - J.D. Mc's & Luecanda's child
Grandmother - Frances (Fanny) Coy - father's mother
Grandfather - Abram Rose
Grandmother - Sarah Leona Mooney - mother's mother
Great Grandfather - Mr. Mooney - Sarah's father
Younger brother Bill - William Elijah McCormick
Brother Lewis - Lewis McCormick
Aunt Phoebe - Phoebe Owens - J.C. Mc's sister
John Owens - Phoebe's son
Uncle Nathan - Nathan McCormick - J.C. Mc's brother
Uncle Jim - James McCormick - J.C. Mc's brother
Uncle Bill - William H. McCormick - J.C. Mc's brother

Family in the Civil War:

Enos (Eanis) Rose -- died from dysentery on his way home
John Rose -- died -- starved to death in Libbey prison
John Owens
? Mooney -- died

Non Family mentioned:

Negro George (of Wayland Plantation)
Mr. Early (farm owner)]
Melinda Fleming (teacher)
Mr. Washburn (farm owner)
Joseph Smith (Mormon leader)
Mr. Smith (bought Joseph D. McCormick's farm)
Captain Kenedy (wagon train leader)
Mrs. Hale & son (Capt. K's sister)
Haskins -- Mormon neighbors
Polk -- " "
Slowers -- " "
Miss Strong (killed by Indians on trail)
Mr. Strong -- her bro. also killed
Mr. Newman -- killed by Indians
Mrs. Townsend -- gave birth on trail
Mrs. Stott -- "
Mrs. Paul -- "
Mr. Cook -- murdered by
Mr. Young -- shot by appointed wagon train members
Snake Indians
Mr. Hepner
Mr. Sunderland
Mr. Star
Homesteaders on Columbia Slough (OR):
Quimby, Powells, Pullen, Long, Whitaker

Places Mentioned:

Knotts Ferry (Portland, OR)
Orafina theatre (Portland, OR)
Columbia Hotel (Portland, OR)
Columbia Slough (on Columbia River)

Places mentioned:

Libbey prison (Civil War)
Wayland Plantation (Missouri)
Salt Lake (City, Utah)
Keokuk, IA (J.C.McCormick's homestead near Fremont)
Fremont, IA -- sunday school
Lee County, IA
Chilicothe (?)
Francisville(e)
String Prairie (several miles from Belfast, IA)
Hoosier Green (on String Prairie) - school & farm
Montrose, IA -- across river from Nauvoo, IL
Mahaska County, IA
Council Bluffs, IA
Missouri river
"big" river -- Mississippi
DesMoines river
Omaha, NE
California road
Rocky Mountains
Blue Mountains (OR)
Hepner (OR)
Kizer (sp?) Creek (OR)
Malhuer river (OR)
LaGrand(e) (OR)
Butter Creek (OR)
Rock Creek (OR)
Umatilla Reservation (OR)
Deshutes hill (OR)
(The) Dalles (OR)
Portland, OR
Willamette Valley (OR)
Chehalem Mountain (OR)

Keokuk

Amandy McCormick - I was born October 15, 1849 in Keokuk County Iowa on my father's homestead. They lived there till I was two years old then moved to Lee County father was a poor man in them days he worked on the

His name is Joseph Coy McCormick he was of Scotch descent on his Grandfather side and my mother name was Nancy Ann Rose. She was Pennsylvania Dutch

Father's mother was born near the blue lakes in Kentucky I have heard father say that he had heard his mother tell about the wild animals that roamed about her home in Kentucky - I do not no mutch about my Grandmother McCormick she died when I was two weeks old.

Mother father was a weaver by trade his name was Abram Rose

My grandmother maiden name was Sarah Leona Mooney her mother died when she was nine year old then her father was called to the Revolutionary War and was kild he found her out to a German family before going untill she was eight-teen milking cows and all kind of farm work. She stayed till she was nineteen she then was married to grandfather Rose. They lived in Ohio at Chilacotha Mother often told us about her early home in Iowa they did their cooking on a open fire place and had a brick oven witch they baked there bread in they did not no enny thing about canning fruit in those days they made preserves and butter out of the fruit and then they would make punkin butter in the fall of the year. They dried there fruit on poles over the fireplaces my father and mother emigrated to Iowa with there parents having heard of the great

chances to git larger tracks of land so they sold the home and all they was loaded into a wagons and there loose stock driven behind some dozen or so of there old neighbors went with them when they arrived in Iowa they did not find things like they expected but went to work and cleared there land and built there houses. Everything was new at first but soon they got a start. Father and mother were married in August in 1847. Father was nineteen and mother twenty. Father rec. a wedding present of 40 acres of land from his father they then lived in Keokuk Co. Iowa near the town of Freemont. It was in this one roomed cabin t at there first baby boy was born and they named him Lewis and a year from then I was born in this same little cabin and they named me Amanda J and in the fall of 1850 when we moved to Lee Co Iowa near the Deamoin River we lived there for several years. I grew up with this little village this place was about 14 miles from Keokuk it is now a thriving city. My early days were passed like most other children playing with our brothers and sisters going after wild berries and nuts and wading in the fiver catching minnows and hunting perry winkles in the sand. We would go with father some time on the misoura side of the river. He hunt wild turkeys we children would gather wild grapes. My mother brother George Rose come from Kansas to visit us one day Uncle George and brother Lewis were fishing and Uncle George caught a big black catfish he sent Lewis home after father to help him with the fish. They carried it home on a pole it was about 4 feet long it had horned Uncle George in the haad he had a pretty sore hand for a while.

Just across the river was a big plantation owned by a Dr. Wayland he keep a grate monny slaves this was before the war in 1860. The town boys would skate away down the river on Saturday

evening to meet negro George as he come home from his work at St. Francisvill they would skate back with him. My Uncle Bill McCormick was one of the boys. He is an old man now (1922) 82 years old and now lives on Chehalem mountain with his son. Across the river from our town there was a sugar camp father and some of the other men would go over there to make maple sugar. They would be gone for a week or more at one time when they went the river was frozen over solid so they could walk across but while they was there it broke up so they had to wait a few days longer till the ice had run down. They all had all the maple sugar they could carry.

I do believe my father owned the meanest cow when she was fresh no one could go near her to milk except mother. Father couldn't milk in fact very few men did in our early days. They thought it was the women job. I remember one thing about this old cow I had my knee cut so I was standing on the steps watching mother milk and along come the dog and knocked me off and I rolled under this old cows feet but mother got me away febour she kicked me. My knee was quite sore after that for I hurt it over when I fell down the steps there was lots of wild bees and father would sometime find a tree then we would have a regular picnic for the whole family would go especially mother for she would be the one that tuck the honey. Father was allus afraid of bees we would sometime git a tub full of honey some of us children could not eat it for it made us sick and I was one of them. There was a big excitement raised about Emegrating Kansas but father did not go. Grandfather McCormick had married again to a Mrs. Luecanda Wickerd they had a little girl Elma her name is now Elma Teal she lives in Humbolt California she is the only Aunt on father side that is living. I can remember the first railroad beaning built and when it was finished in our little town of Belfast I was about 8 years old. Everybody went to see the first train that come in our little town the locomotive was small nothing like what they are now days and the coaches were small two and painted red. They run awfull slow it stoped and some men got off and talked to the people. Everyon seemed to be excited us kidlets were afraid it would run over us but we soon got over that. We would go under the bridge and let the grain go over us. Father sister and her family and three brothers had got to Kansas so we were now comparatively alone. Just our own family, father, mother, and 6 of us children. Father now was tired of town life and though he would rent a farm so he sold our home in town and we moved on a farm at String Prairie several miles from Belfast. This place was owned by an old man by the name of Early we lived near a place called Hoosier Green and this was my first school. I was nine years old the only books was the McGaffie reader and the elementary spelling book and my teacher name was Malinda Fleming. On this place at Hoosier Green that father had rented from Mr. Early had a big apple orchard. We children had not ~~seen~~ so many apples befour. We started to eat them just as soon as the blossom droped off. Then was no such thing as worms in the apples then father had raised a good crop that year. That fall he killed nine fat hogs so we had lots of good things to eat.

Mother was a good cook I can remember the good things she used to prepare for us hungry ones for we were always hungry. Well ~~W~~ winter come on and a big snow fell, as it always did there, so on Dec. 14 us three older children were rushed away early one morning to stay at one of our neighbors while the stars were still shining but when we went back home in the evening mother was sick in bed we were shown a wee bit of a baby in red flannel and pink dress she now lives in Portland. There was now quite a family of us three of us went to school and four stayed at home. The next place we lived was about a mile from this place on a farm owned by a man named Washburn. He had two houses on this place. He had a large place for he run a distillery and made whiskey. There was lots of peaches on this place so father tuck some of them to town and wanted us three older ones to go with him and see the big river so we were dressed in our best early one morning and our best was a pink calico dress and white sun bonnet all ruffled. Mother had put up a big lunch for us so we got started about the time the sun showed its first rays to go about four miles to Keokuk we arrived there about nine clock we saw many fine farms and big houses then we passed the poor farm and finally we arrived in sight of the city and the big river. I never seen such a river since seeing the Mississippi. Two of father's brothers come to us the ones that went to Kansas some years ago. We all went to a celebration on the fourth of July to a place called Montrose. They had a big barbeque there and had plenty of half cooked beef. This little town was just across the river from Nauvoo. Father showed us the old mormon temple a good deal of it was still standing. It was here that Joseph Smith was shot not so many years before this for I remember hearing my folks talk of the rade witch was made on the mormans. We lived neighbor to some families that were mormans there names was Haskins, Polk, and Stowers. They didn't go with the rest of the mormans when they went to Salt Lake. There was another baby that come to our home in Oct. of this year 1860 there were eight of us children now four girls and four boys.

Father and his two brothers had been talking quite a long of emigrating to the Oregon country for some time so early in the spring of 1861 we moved to Mahaska Co where we were to get ready to immigrate to Oregon the following year. Grandmother Rose my mother's mother still lived on her old place with three of her sons George, John and Eanis and her daughter Sarah who was the youngest. One son Lidge had got to Kansas and afterwards to Oregon in 1859.

Father's oldest sister lived in Fremont so we stopped at her house for a few days then we went to Grandfather's place which was now owned by a man named Smith. I can remember hearing neighbors talking of trouble they expected between the north and south over the slave question. The call for volunteers come mother's two youngest brothers went Eanis & John {Rose, and Aunt Phoebe Owens} only son John enlisted while at college.

It was here in Fremont I attended Sunday school for the first time with uncle Nathan, father's brother. He would take us three older children to Sunday school and church with him then we would go to Aunt Phoebe Owens for dinner. Mother's older brothers wrote home often and told of the war and its progress. They had been stationed at different places but hadn't been in any heavy engagements.

This man Smith with father had rented his place of was a radical recessionist and many was the hot arguments father and him had over slavery. Father two brothers uncle Jim and Nathen were with us most of this winter and most of the talk was about going to Oregon. They bought some unbroken steers and broke them to work so the winter wore on Mother did not like the idea of starting out to make such a long journey across the plains with eight children and most of us were small but father never doubted anything but success so we keep right on preparing for the journey. Cloth was bought for a tent and wagon covers so mother spent many days making these things. She made them with linen thread which a neighbor woman spun then our clothing was to be made - dresses and sunbonnets and shirts for the men and boys. At last all was done and it was nearing spring. Mother two brothers got a furlou to come home on a visit and to see us before we started on our journey to the west. We were then getting ready to have a sale many of our old squaintances had come to say farewell before we started on our long journey. The next day mother brothers bid us good bye for there time was up to go back to there rement that was the last time we seen them. Uncle Enos tuck the dysintery that summer and died on his way home. His sister Sarah went and got his body and he was layed beside his father and the other brother uncle John starved to death in Libbey prison.

We left home on April 29 1862 to cross the plains with a large company of people around Fremont. The roads were still bad in places and the grass was not very good yet we traveled several miles then we joined a big train of wagons that we were to meet at a setaan place. We had a large wagon that was stored with provision and our clothing and bedding in fact all we had was stored in this wagon. There was four yoke of cattle hitched to this and my two uncles drove this wagon then there was a light wagon that was drawn by two big mares that father drove the family roade in this and our lunch was stored here for our dinners at noon. In our family was father Mother and eight of us children and two uncles and another girl with dune the cooking for us. She was an orphan and she was coming out here to her brother with had come a few years before. Her name was Marry Rayburn. I can remember the nooning we had and to see so many strang people. This train was made up with oxen horses and mules and some of them had there milk cows. we traveled along for several days then came to a place where we layed over for a week waiting for some more to join our train. A Mrs. Hale and her son was one of them she was our captains sister she just come this far and went back home. This was near the Iowa line. While we were here I had my hip dislocated. The Dr. sit it but it was a long time before I could walk on it. All arrangements were made now for our long journey. Our captan John Kenedy was the same captan that had been for our home gards at Fremont. This trip was his third across the plains. He had lost a son on one of there trips he was killed by Indian in a fight with them. We had now traveld for several weeks to we was giting use to hard beds at night. We camped at Council Bluff untill we were all ferryed across the Misouria river. It was high so it tuck sometime to ferry so many over. We landed in the town they called Omaha. We stoped here for a few hours then started there were some more wagons joined us so now there were over a 100 wagons of us there were a few small trains would joine us now and then for they were afraid to travel alone for we were in the Indian country now.

The weather was now getting better and so was the grass. We made good time for all seemed happy prosperous. We were traveling in Nebraska now one day we came to a well by the road side and Uncle Jim went to get some water and while he was after the water my younger brother Bill was riding with Uncle so while he was after the water he hit the oxen with the whip and that over balance him and he fell out under the wheel. The wheel went over his foot and broke it. Father would half to walk and carry him quite often the jolt of the wagon hurt him

to of the boys in the train went head and hid in a ditch along the trail and when a yoke of oxen come along they jumped up and scared the oxen and one broke his neck by falling. It was near evening so the train camped and some dressed the dead oxen for meat. Father would not get enny of the meat for he said the oxen was hot from working so the meat would not be good to eat so that night after mother & father went to bed Uncle Nathan got some of the meat and I cooked it and we all eat it that Uncle Jim & Nathan and brother Lewis and myself but it made Uncle Nathan sick. He was sick the rest of the way to Oregon with dysentery. Everybody did all they could for him but nup of there treatment did him any good. He was alles able to wait on himself but could do nothing about camp. There was always plenty for everyone to do at camp time the tent was to be sit up the cattle and horses to be looked after so they could be put with the herd at night. Then wood and water had to be brought in cooking utensils to be unpacked then supper. Meny other things had to be done by the older childern such as caring for the little ones while the mother's were busy at supper. Enuff would be cooked for the next day noon witch took a grate quantey for our family as that was not in the days of caned goods. We had only food stuff that was dried ore cured in some way. We had bacon flour rice beans sugar coffee and dried apples but oh we got so hungry for green vegetables. We found many kind of wild curents witch was made in pies most everyone had milk cows some coming fresh on the praire. They could not bother with the rew calves so they were left for the sayotes to eat. The weather was giting warmer every day the 15 July this month a little brother was born right on the top of the rocky mountains. They stoped at noon for the rest of the day for this occacion. That was all the rest mother had they started on the next morning over boulders to desend down the ~~up~~ mountain. Just befour this happened there was some truble with the Indians we were now among the hostile Indians. There was a train which called themselves the Independent train. They were going to California they had all mules and were well equiped there w were several families eleven in all I think they had been warned by our captain not to travel alone but to keep close to our train for safety but they did not heed this warning but would drive by us then we would pass them. They had found a good place to camp and had stoped there for a while to rest up one day there came a messenger back to us telling us there train had been attacked by the Indians. Every man that could went to there rescue. It was about one mile ahead of our train by the time our train come up everthing was over. The Indian stripped the wagons of ever thing and tuck the hosses and mules. We camped here for two days berying the dead. Our captain thought he might recover there mules by

by following the Indians he called a counsel and it was settled that this was the best thing to do so there were 30 men called and saddled up as menny horses and tuck there rifles and revolvers and started after them. They followed there/ trail for about 15 miles then they come to a little valley there suddenly surround by the Indians. The Indians opened fire on them with there bow and arrows and some of them had guns they shot and killed Mr. Strong a brother to the Miss Strong that was shot the day befour. They shot the captain in the side but not bad they also shot a man by the name of Newman. He had father rifle when he was shot he was making for a clump of willows. He told some of the men he would come in that night but he never came. They sent out after him the next day but could not find him any where. We stayed here two days then we started but never seen annything of the mules. We were f~~ollowed~~ by an Indian for days he shot one of the horse gards one night with an arrow. It stuck in his arm. The Indian was trying to steal a horse the larm was given and there was doulbe gard sent out and no one slept the rest of the night. It was long turds morning they put all the dogs in the creek bottom and a lot of men tuck there guns and went after this Indian. They routed him just as the sun come up on the opposite side of the hill from us the men and dogs soon had him. He would pull up sage brush and strike at the dogs then he would run again. The men gained on him they fired seven times at him several having hit him one man broke his gun over his head. They all had a piece of his scalpe when they come back. When we got to green river we couldnt cross it there being no bridge or ferry so the men made a raft and coked the wagon beds and set them and this raft then took the wagons to pieces and ferryyed everything across. We were two or three days getting over there was other trains come up and crossed the same way as we had. They swam the cattled and horses. There were some lively times here, and all worked with a will tearing down and setting up of wagons and thing for each man had to take his turn as they were in the train. The oxen teams were first in the train then com the horse train behind the team that had been in lead yesterday dropped back to the last team today and so on all through the train both oxen and hors train the same so every one took there turn at the head.

When we camped at night we drive around in a big circle and fire were made around camps some had stoves these were the days of Bugfalo and antelope. I have seen hundreds of the Buffalo in herds some distens away. There were plenty of coyoes and prairie dogs the coyotes would howl at night they would smell the bacon frying at supper time and set up there yelps on the hills around us. We com through and indian village one day and the train halted for a rest so some of the men women and girls would pay the place a visit. I remember seeing an old Indian copped up in a pen like a chicken one of the squaws told us he was 100 years old. She counted by holding up her hands she said they had to keep him shut or he would run away. He had no teeth and his hair hung down in his eyes. He was all dried up he had some water and a piece of tobacco he would dip the tobacco in the water and suck it. We saw many curious things on the plains. Our cattle got the alkali ~~was~~ water and died off untill some had but one left to pull the load there feet wore out after traveling so long a time. They were shod with sole leather. We lost one oxen but still had three yoke left. The oxen and horses begain to wear out and we chilern had to walk the most of the time. Oh how tired we used to get after plodding along all day through the hot sand. No one know what it was like only those that had to do the walking I and a nether girl stoped behind the train one day to traid our beads for some of there collard ones. We did not stay long

our fathers come with the black snake. We did not stop at enny more Indian camps there were five confinements in our train one wat the captains daughter an a Mrs. Townsend a Mrs. Stott my mother and a Mrs. Paul died when her baby was born. Mrs. Townsend had an accident along about this time. The cattle took to stampeding at first they did this only at night but one day just after we had stoped for noon they had hitched up again and had only went a short distance when they started stampeding and Mrs. Townsend jumped out of the wagon when the there team started and a team behind run over her. She lived till morning her baby and Mrs. Paul was berred with her. This Mrs. Paul died when her baby was born. The cattle kept on stampeding at night I don't baève they did any more in the day time. Some though it was the dogs which couosed the stampeding so all the dogs were ordered shot and all but one family obeyed the order. They said that they would leve the train rather then kill there dog. The dogs were shot that evening and next morning these three teams started to leav the train. They had the dog tied under there wagon they had gone only a short distance when the team stamped they took the dog out and shot him so they come back in the train. I remember one night there was a shot fired by one of the guards this was against the rules they was siting playing cards when thay seen something in the grass so one of them tuck ame and fired. Uncle Jim was one of the guards but not the one that fired the shot. The men all had to sake there turn at stand ing gard there were the regular guars the pickit guards and the sentinals out side of all

We were crawling along with sore footed cattle and the feeding was getting short. the women and childern were giting tired out from walking and the hard ships. Our shoes had worn out a long time ago the cattle would just croul along through the hot sandy desert with there tonges hanging out of there mouths. There had been so meny deaths by alkali water the cattle were greatly reduced in number some of the people had left there heavy wagons for lighter ones. There were plenty to chñse from for at almost every camping place there were wagons that had been abounded some of these were better for us so they would leav there big heavy ones and hitch up to a lighter one. Some had covers on them. Sometime we had to make dry camps we couldn't make it to water then they were ordered to fill there kegs and be ready for it. Some didn't provide themselves with kegs for water and they would have to geg from the rest. Father had taken a five gallon keg ful of syrup and by the time we had emptied it w were where it was needed for water. We met a few men going back East. They had pack horses and could travel fast. There were two men coming to Oregon there.name was Cook and the other Young. They owned there outfit together. They travel sometime alone but they always keep near some other train. We were traveling along in the afternoon those that were walking were ahead they noticed a newly made grave by the road side so they waited until the train come up and told them about it. The captain orded a holt and they got out a shovel and dug down just a little ways and found this man Cook that we had seen with Young, he was still warm. The captain and a few of the men went ahead to invistigate and found this man young camped on a little stream and he was alone. The captain arested him at once onsuspicion. Well we camped there for the night the captain had a tent set up and a guard put over young and a little latter they had a jury of 12 men so they give him a trail so he owned up to the killing of cook. He said they had quarreld over the horses and that cook wanted to do all the driving so it made young mad so he up and shot cook while he was driving. They had his trail and it was through the advice of the captain to have him shot the next morning.

. They both had families East to Young ~~note~~ letters most all night back to his family. The next morning just as we were ready to start they marched young up a little hill and just over the other side they had dug his grave. There were 12 single men picked to do the shooting they stood him so menny paces away and at the captain comand they all fired and he fell. The rolled him in this grave, covered him up. Uncle Jim was one of the 12 men that did the shooting but uncle said he didn't kill him for he never put any cap on his gun. There were a grate many different tribes of Indians on the plains. Every fue days there would be a differnt tribe pass us some wer friendly and some were not and some look cleaner then other would. Father traded to an Indian an old butcher knife for some dried salmon. There was no salt in it but mother cooked it and fixed it up some way and I tell you it tasted good. This was our first salmon we ever seen we found some fish on the Malheur river which had gone up to spoun and were in big holes of water. Some of the men caught them but our captain said they were not good to eat.

It was ~~gittin~~ giting pretty cold now at nights on us barefooted ones but we were pretty well toughened to it by this time. Some of our people were giting short of rations the soldiers meet us on Kizar Creek and there thay gave us rations. A good many had turned off when we come to the California road so our train was small now. We were glad when we got to the Blue mountains we had big bonfires at nights made out of pine and fir wood. Our wood had been scarce along some places we used buffalo chips to cook with. They burned very well but made a bad smell in the camps. The peole got used to most everything on the plains our main thoughts were to git through to Oregon. We were gitin very anxious to see houses they told us at the post that we could find houses along

We were now in the Blue mts. so/ we found plenty of fine gum and nearly everyone had a big pice of it chewing it for lost time.

The water was much better then what we had befour my little brother two years old was sick with the summer complaint. Uncle Nate which had eaten the hot beef was nothing but a pile of bones but he felt much better after we got in the mts. I rember back on the Snake river where we camped one Sunday after making a night drive we were amond the Snake Indians now they come to pay the usual visit. One young buck had a lariette made of hair and one of our train boys wanted it so he traded his red flanel shirt for the lariette. The Indian went away but came back later and wanted his lariette back. The pow-wow over this finally the captain told the boy to give him back his lariette so the Indian got the shirt to. It was against the orders to trade with the Indians but they did sometimes.

I rember the night we camped on burnt river there had been some miners camped there the night befour and they had onions we could find. That was the first onions we seen since we left Iowa and they ~~just~~ ~~was~~ was just the peeling but they tasted good just the same.

We arrived at Lagrand this was the first settlement of white people we had seen. They wanted to know where we were from and what our names were and all about our trip across the plains. They wanted us to stop there and take a homestead but our destination was Portland so on we went. Uncle Jim had writen on the wagon cover to Oregon or bust in big black letters. We could begin to realize what that meant now. Well our wagon was pirty well empty of provisions so us larger ones could ride more some of our train went to Walla Walla and some

at Lagrand. There must have been some 25 wagons which came on to the Dalles we crossed what they called Butter Creek and Rock Creek but before reaching there we passed through the Umatilla reservation. The soldiers were stashed there at the fort we camped one night at a ~~that~~ place where Heppner now stands. Mr. Heppner lived there but there was no town there then he had some cord wood piled up close by and wood was scarce here for the campers so father wanted to get a few sticks of wood from him to cook our supper and breakfast with and how much do you suppose he wanted for it \$1.50 for each stick so we managed to pick up enough wood to make out for the night.

Well the Deshutes Hill and river was our next place and such a long hill the river was very swift they had to make shift of a ferry here. They swam the stock over the river ~~was~~ full of bowlders. We were delayed for some time for it was slow work to ferry one wagon over at a time. At last they was all over and we were ready for our onward march. Portland and the Willamette Valley were to us what the promised land was to the children of Isreal only we hadn't journeyed quite 40 years in wilderness but it had seemed a long time since we had left our house in Iowa when we had bid our old friends and relatives farewell that April morning. and started on this long journey across an unknown country where savages roamed and were waiting to take our scalps. We did not have a table to eat on so we spread a table cloth down on the ground and placed our tin plates around. Each had a tin cup a knife fork or a spoon to eat with. There wasn't much ceremony about eating we had to come to the table at once and be through when the rest were for immediately after eating the tins were washed up and packed for the next drive. The bedding was rolled up and placed in the wagons the camp stove emptied of fire and ashes and allowed to cool. It was then tied on behind the wagon with the stove pipe the tent was taken down and the poles were strapped to the side of the wagon bed then it was where is my bonnet, see that everything was picked up for stometime things were forgotten and left behind. Soon the lead team would start and every one would take there place for the day in the big caravan after breakfast the cattle and horses were brought in then the men and big boys would begin to yoke up there oxen and harness there horses and bring them up to the wagons to hitch on. There was no time for sleepy heads all had to be up and doing at the captain call. He generally called early we started on making good time now for it seemed like we could see and feel that deliverance was nigh even the cattle and horses seemed to know this. The load of big red apples we had seen inspired hope within us and we longed to see where they come from. We arrived at the Dalles and found a grate many emigrants there waiting to go down the river to Portland. The Dalles was only a small place then but it was the main town of that upper country. All the supplies were shipped from Portland which furnished the miners with food and the early settlers to the the banks along the river was lined with camps. It seemed like a busy place there was a boat which come every evening and lay there all night and loaded wagons of the emigrants. The next morning they would go back. We were up here for about a week befour we got a chance to go on down the river. Father sold our light wagon for 30 dollars, and that gave us enough money to pay our way on to Portland. It was now the last part of September and the nights were getting cool. I never will forget the stay at the Dalles for it was such a resting place after such a long hard journey. We were glad when it come our turn to go on the boat for Portland. I believe all of us went together except Uncle Jim

he went with some others which had taken the cattle overland over the Cascade route to Portland. We went as far as the cascade and there we made a portage for there were no locks and the boat only went as far as the falls. They had a track here they used some flat cars to have the freight and people if they wanted to ride. The men pushed the cars along we all walked and carried the little ones. The men and boys all were helping with the freight on these cars. It was about two miles that we had to walk then we come to a big warehouse on the bank of the river and here was another boat waiting for us. Our traps were loaded on this boat and we all went aboard everything looked good to us after being dragged along over that hot dusty road for so many months. Our clothes were worn out and faded we were tanned until we were about the color of an Indian. Father got us shoes at the Dalles. We arrived in Portland that night after dark the lamps were all lighted along the river when we landed we had a hard time to find a place to stay. That night at last we got permission to make our beds down in a big empty room in a hotel. We had lunch and then all went to bed. This was the 8th day of October in 1862. Next morning we had breakfast then father started out to look for a house. There was a man by the name of Star that had a tin shop and he said he had an empty house of several rooms we could have so we moved. There were four families each one had a room to themselves. We was glad to get this much room and to be under a roof once more. We stayed here for a couple of weeks then father looked around and found a small house on 4th st. owned by Mr. Sunderland and he let us have this house free of rent. We lived here until spring. One of my little brothers died here one which had been sick on the plains. He died the 9th of November that was the first death in the family.

Portland was just a small place then there were no cars at all no bridges to cross the river. there was a ferry they called Knotts ferry there was but one school and it had only 4 rooms. I went one day to this school that was all I ever went in Portland.

The miners were plentiful in Portland they walked the streets dressed in buckskin suits all fringed they had on wide belt and on one side hung a sixshooter on the other side was a scabbard with a dirk knife in it. There were plenty of Indians around town the first winter. They had a camp up in South. One day there was a drunken Indian that chased a woman near our house she was running to get to our house and father seen her coming and opened the door to let her in. The Indian ran right up to the door and father kicked him in off the steps. That night he fell in the creek on going to his camp and was drowned. There was one theater here they called it Orafina

The old penitentiary was in South Portland and there were a good many convicts for the size of the town. They wore striped clothes and they worked on the streets. There were several churches the Baptist Methodist Congregational and Presbyterian and the Catholic. They had a school on 5th st. There was no seamstresses then days they was all bord walks. There was two hotels one called Columbia Hotel and the other was called the miners home. The first place I ever worked was in the miners home waiting on table 2 dollars and a half a week. I was only 14 years old. Would go to bed at nine and get up at four. I did not work so very long here then we moved on the Columbia Slough we had a dairy farm there were mostly old homesteads along the slough at that time Quimby, Powells, Pullen, Long and Whitaker were some of the old residents.