ABNER HACKLEMAN'S 1845 TRIP TO OREGON

by

Glenn Harrison

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INTRODUCTION

Thurston Gilchrist was proud of the contribution by Oregon's early settlers and of his connection to the Hackleman family. Since I am especially interested in Linn County and Oregon Trail history, he was always willing to share information that he thought would be of interest to me. Once he gave me a copy of a page from one of his grandfather Thurston Hackleman's dairies. The February 26, 1905 diary entry included:

> "I met Mr. Firm Hackleman today. He was with my Grandfather (Abner) Hackleman when they came to the place where Albany now is. It was in February, 1846. Grandfather Hackleman taught school that winter at Mr. (Jesse) Looney's between here (Albany) and Salem. When they came up here, there were no white people West of the Santiam. He says that those in the company, on that trip, were: Abner Hackleman, Firm Hackleman, Wm. Hawk ____ (Jacob or Peter) Rynearson, Wm. Gore, and Wm. Earl.) They were looking for land. They concluded to take the place where we now live and also a townsite (Albany, Oregon). Also the Lebanon place, the Ketchum place and some others."

I wondered about others in the wagon train, who they saw, and the route taken on the way to Oregon. In August, 1992, Thurston Gilchrist phoned me to let me know of the plans for a Hackleman family reunion during the Oregon Trail Sesquicentennial. I thought of this diary quote and other family information and, since Abner was the first Hackleman to travel on the Oregon Trail, agreed to put together a piece related to Abner Hackleman's 1845 Oregon Trail experiences. I had just purchased a copy of Danna Wojcik Montgomery's revised edition of *The Brazen Overlanders of 1945*, and knew it contained a wealth of information and would form the basis for this piece. Since some of her extensive research was gained from Hackleman's family members, bits of this account may be full circle for some.

Thurston Pierce Hackleman points out in the *"Hackleman Family History"* that at the age of nine, Abner's father, Abraham, had moved with his parents from North Carolina to South Carolina. Abner's parents, Abraham and Margaret Hackleman, had emigrated by pack-horse from South Carolina to Kentucky. Abner Hackleman was born on October 16, 1802, at Georgetown, Kentucky. In 1903, the family moved to the Kentucky side of the Ohio River and that autumn Abraham traveled through the white-water country in the Indiana Territory. In 1808, the family moved to Little Cedar Grove and in March 1821 to the part of the Indiana Territory that became Rush County. (10:3A).

Abner married Elizabeth Lines in Rush County, Indiana. Each autumn Abner would camp out and spend several weeks hunting, killing two to five deer a day. " . . . he became much attached to the woods and was one of the most successful hunters and expert marksman in the west." (10:4). In 1832, after the Blackhawk War, the Iowa Territory was purchased from the Indians and Abner decided to move there. On October 27, 1835, after selling their sixty acre farm, Abner, Elizabeth, and their son Elijah, started out for Iowa, spending the first winter near New Virginia, Illinois. They settled on a 960-acre claim of which 400 acres was prairie. The first summer he broke 120 acres of sod and had a nice farm. The town of Pleasant Grove was laid out on the claim. He sold 200 acres of his claim and bought 760 acres in the immediate vicinity. He was twice elected to the Iowa Territorial Legislature (10:4). Abner Hackleman was a Baptist. "He was strictly a temperate man, never using intoxicating drinks of any kind." (10:7).

His brother, Elijah, recalled how Abner ". . . while visiting the extreme limits of civilization, ascended the highest eminence in the vicinity with a view of ascertaining what was yet beyond. Looking as far as the eye could reach he saw nothing but rolling hills and valleys as yet uninhabited by civilized man, a vast silent unknown wilderness, over which the wild Indian penetrated by a few trappers only." (10:4).

Much has been written about travel on the Oregon Trail in different years. Since this trip in Oregon occurred prior to the opening of the Barlow Road, the Applegate Trail, or the Free Emigrant Road, more information is included about the dangerous trip down the Columbia River.

Abner Hackleman led a wagon train over the Oregon Trail in 1845, located a place to settle, and in August, 1846, started on a journey back to Iowa for his family. In his 1893 *History of Oregon,* Rev. H. K. Hines noted that Abner ". . . was employed in agricultural pursuits and also in the practice of medicine, which profession he followed quite extensively. In the spring of 1846 he returned to Iowa for his family, and during the fall of that year delivered many speeches to large assemblies throughout the State of Iowa, on the wonderful resources of Oregon." Unfortunately, he died at age 44 of typhoid fever on October 30, shortly after reaching his former home near Mt. Pleasant, Des Moines County, Iowa.

His obituary in the Rushville, Indiana *Jacksonian* included:

> "Mr. Hackleman was one of those indomitable spirits rarely met with now a days. It was the spirit, however, which has tamed the wilderness and pioneered the settlement and civilization from the Atlantic to the Pacific. But Mr. Hackleman possessed an undaunted spirit of adventure. He was a man of unbending morality and dignity. The losss of such a man will be felt as a public calamity to the Oregon emigrants. He had purchased and located two claims in that country to a large amount and was preparing to start in the spring to enter upon them.

> "And we understand that they, under the guidance of a son who inherits the fearless and undaunted spirit of the father, intend still to remove to Oregon, as soon as the requisite arrangements can be made. He, the son, goes in the spring to follow up the claims established by his father, intending to return for the remainder of the family as soon as they can settle their business." (10:7)

In 1847, Abram (Abraham) Hackleman, Abner's eighteen-year-old eldest son, traveled with his friend John B. Burkhart and the other Burkhart family members by way of the Barlow Road, and settled on his father's claim in Hackleman's Grove in present Albany, Oregon. Eleanor Davis, sister of John J. Davis, also 1847 pioneers married Abram Hackleman in March 1849.

Spelling frequently differs. For example, Mealey is sometimes seen as Maley, Smeed as Smead, Osborn as Osborne, Ritchie as Ritchey, and Rinearson as Rynearson. Other place names and words are frequently misspelled but have been printed as they occur in quotations.

I do appreciate the suggestions made by Kenneth Bolf, Margaret Carey, Mary Gallagher, and Donna Montgomery, who reviewed an earlier draft and offered the benefit of their writing skills or historical knowledge.

This article is dedicated to the memory of Thurston Gilchrist, who died on June 12, 1993. Although it took longer than anticipated to research and check facts, I hope that it may be distributed to the Hackleman family members.

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The excitement of leaving home and heading for a jumping off place, such as St. Joseph, Missouri, was recalled by Nancy Osborn: "Come Boys! Gee Dick! Haw Tom! the pop of the whip and we were off for Oregon. Oh how much it meant to each of us who were in that wagon then . . . With neither roads, bridges nor ferries, our wagon train began its journey toward the land of promise in the New Oregon . . ." (1:25,26).

On April 3, 1845, the *Sangamo Journal* reprinted an article from the Illinois *Rock Island Mississipian* that stated:

> "A company of Emigrants from Northern Illinois and Northern Iowa, will meet at Bloomington, Muscatine County, Iowa, during the first week of April, so as to take up the line of march from that place on Monday the 7th.
>
> "Those wishing to go to Oregon the ensuing season from the above named region will do well to make all possible dispatach in preparation to join the company at Bloomington.
>
> "The company expects to fall in with others from Burlington, Ft. Madison, and other portions of the south part of Iowa and Central Missouri on their way to Independence. They propose crossing the Des Moines river at Farmington, and then probably go direct to Independence, unless it shall be ascertained for certainty that a company will start from Ft. Leavenworth . . . (signed) E. Fisher." (2)

An issue of the *Oregon Mission* reported: "The Rev. Ezra Fisher is about to start on a mission under the patronage of the American Baptist Home Mission Society, to Oregon" (2)

A May 14, 1845, letter by Rev. Ezra Fisher to Rev. Benjamin M. Hill, corresponding secretary of the American Baptist Home Mission Society, written at St. Joseph Missouri, stated: "We left Rock Island (Illinois) on the 5th day of April. Spent the Sabbath in Davenport (Iowa) . . . and on the 7th, commenced our party. . . We now have 14 wagons in company and suppose there are at least 50 behind yet, lest we may be disappointed in failing to fall in with their company, we have judged it prudent to move over into the Indian Territory (Kansas) immediately. And now while I am writing in my tent, some of the teams are crossing the Missouri river. We find our route will be something more than 100 miles nearer and at the same time impeded with less water courses that it would have been by Independence. . ." (2 & 5:04).

On May 18, 1845, Rev. Hezekiah Johnson wrote to Rev. Hill from St. Joseph. This excerpt was printed in the *New-York Recorder* on July 31, the Philadelphia *Baptist Record* on August 6, and *Cross and Journal* on August 8, 1845.

"I am thus far on my way to Oregon. I have traveled faster than the emigrants generally, in hope of overtaking brother Fisher at this place, but he has passed on to the Indian Agency, about 26 miles beyond, where the company will wait a few days for those who are behind. . . Several ministers of various denominations besides myself and brother Fisher are with us. The rapid increase of population in Oregon shews that we have not turned our attention to that Territory too early. I have two wagons, four oxen and thirteen cows. Like some others I work them all; a yoke of oxen and six cows in a team, and the other cow is used as relief to any that require it. Some of the cows give milk and I hope they will continue to do so throughout the journey. (4:19).

On May 22, 1845, Abner Hackleman was elected Captain of the New London Emigrating Company, the last of the five wagon trains to travel west that year. Rev. Ezra Fisher was selected as Lieutenant; and John R. Courtney, Sr., Sergeant of the Guard. (3:14.15).

The company Constitution was drafted by a committee composed of Rev. Ezra Fisher, Abner (A. or Abe) Hackleman, James Knox, William Gallaher, Rev. Hezekiah Johnson, William Buck, and Sam Eikenbury. One article in the Constitution forbade travel on the Sabbath except in cases of extreme emergency. Another warned that interfering with religious assemblies, which were to be held at every opportunity, would be dealt with harshly. An engineer was selected to clear obstructions in the road ahead and to select campsites. A fair judicial system was established with a procedure for appeal. (3:14 & 5:406-407).

On May 23 at 2:00 p.m., the company Constitution was read and unanimously adopted. A copy was sent by Rev. Fisher to Brother Hill, his missionary superior, to be printed in the *Baptist Advocate.* That publication was superseded by the *New-York Recorder* and the constitution was printed on July 31, 1845. (4:20 & 5:406-407).

CONSTITUTION

Article 1. This Company shall be called the New London Emigrating Company for Oregon.

Article 2. All persons uniting with the company shall be bound by the regulations hereinafter provided.

Article 3. All male members over the age of sixteen years shall have the right to vote in the business transactions of the company.

Article 4. The officers of this company shall consist of a Captain, Lieutenant, Orderly Lieutenant, Sergeant of the Guard, Engineer and a Committee of Five who shall be selected each four weeks, except the Engineer and Sergeant of the Guard,

who shall be appointed by the Captain.

Article 5. Captain to maintain good order and strict discipline and to enforce all rules adopted by the company. It shall be the duty of the Lieutenant to take charge of the cattle and to call out a sufficient number of men and boys not engaged in driving teams to drive and take care of the loose cattle, and he shall be subject to the orders of the Captain. It shall be the duty of the Orderly Sergeant to keep a fair roll of the names of all the men subject to duty. It shall be the duty of the Engineer to remove any obstructions in the road and select the most suitable places for encampment. It shall be the duty of the Committee to settle all matters of difference between two or more persons in said company, according to the evidence in the case. Any person or persons that may feel themselves aggrieved at the decision of the committee shall have the right of appeal to the company, provided that parties in dispute shall not be allowed to vote, and a decision of a majority of the voters shall be final except in criminal cases, which shall require a vote of two-thirds.

Article 6. Those who have loose cattle shall provide hands to drive in proportion to the number owned.

Article 7. Any person attaching himself to his company shall be bound not to take more than one quart of ardent spirits to each person in the family and in no case shall any individual let it be known to the Indians that there is any in the company; and it shall be the duty of the Judicial Committee to examine each wagon to see that this article is not violated.

Article 8. When the company may have opportunity to hold religious assemblies, any person violating the rules of decorum or disturbing such worshipping congregation shall be taken into custody by the Judicial Committee and shall be dealt with according to its decision; and it shall be the duty of the company to rest on each Sabbath, except in cases of emergency.

Article 9. This Constitution may be altered or amended at any regular meeting of the company by a vote of two-thirds of the legal voters." (2 & 5:407-408).

As part of his duties as Secretary. Jacob Rinearson compiled a lst of the New London Wagon Train. On May 23, while at Nemaha Agency, Rev. Hezekiah Johnson

and Rev. Ezra Fisher wrote letters to their Baptist Church superiors, Brother George Cole, editor of *Cross and Journal*, and Brother Hill, giving slightly different counts (listed below). Johnson wrote: "We crossed the Missouri river at St. Joseph, and followed the trail of a former caravan to this place. Ours is the fourth caravan that has come this way. The three that have gone before us contained 175 wagons, 1000 persons and 2000 cattle . . ." (One other wagon train had started from Independence, Missouri.) (2 & 4:20).

Rev. Thomas S. Kendall recorded some counts and religious affiliations: ". . . 30 Baptists, 5 Methodists, 2 Presbyterians, 1 Associate Reformed, 2 Seceders, and 3 of other Baptist Sects in the company." (6:3). He reports, "We have in our company 30 Baptist Professors, including Mr. (Brother) Johnson's family and my own, 5 Methodists, 2 Prebyterians, 2 Seceders, 1 Anti-Missionary Baptist, 1 Combellite Baptist, and 2 Drunkard Baptist." (5:08 & 2).

	Rinearson/others	Johnson/Fisher	T. S. Kendall
wagons	4.6	50	50
men	9.8		
women	4.0		
children	5.7		
people4	(195)	214	215
loose cattle	300	666	666
horses & mules	19		
firearms	100		

(3:14-15; 4:20; 5:408; & 6:3).

The Bonney family was a different 1845 wagon train which was led by Sam Barlow. Benjamin Franklin Bonney, seven year old Jarvis Bonney, recalled, "Another company with over 50 wagons left from St. Joe. The captain of this wagon train being A. Hackleman.: (7:2).

John McCoy's family visited relatives in Iowa and completed the final preparations:

> "The outfit consisted of a good stout wagon, well covered, into which was loaded provision deemed sufficient for the trip, their bedding and the least amount of furniture throught possible to get along with, a few books and a chest containing quite a complete kit of carpenter tools. His stock comprised two cows and four yoke of ozen. . ."

They traveled on muddy roads across Iowa to Council Bluffs, joined others heading west, crossed the Missouri River by ferry into Nebraska near what is now Omaha, and joined the Hackleman train. He recalled that "The company in which we traveled, consisted at the time of starting of fourty-eight wagons with their ox teams, all oxen; some cows and young cattle, and among the other contingencies, sixty-six dogs. Some of these latter were found useful in guarding the wagons and stuff from the

pilfering Indians encountered on the way." (8:3).

The Oregon Historical Society collection contains the *Robert Earl Reminiscenses,* which includes an insert on a fragment of paper: "wer at St. Joe Mo we ent by ft Larmay we had 100 wagons in our Company we traveled No(rth Platte) our captain name was Hackelm(na)." (9).

It was probably difficult to count people and wagons as they moved around. During the journey births and deaths changed the counts. William Buck wrote, "We left St. Joe in May 1845. The Captain of our Company was Dr. Hackleman. There were 52 wagons. . ." (Wm Buck's Narrative, Oregon City, June 18, 1878; Microfilm 2, Bancroft Library). (2) (The *Transactions of the Oregon Pioneer Association* reunion held on June 15, 1887, note that William W. Buck was born in Ohio and moved to Illinois. He became a Methodist Episcopal minister, married Jane Hurd in 1843, and they came to Oregon in 1845. Buck became a judge, territorial legislator and businessman. Bancroft notes in Vol. 1 of *History of Oregon* that he was a harness maker and author of *Enterprises at Oregon City*).

The Hackleman wagon train assembled in the St. Joseph, Missouri area, then traveled from the ferry landing to Nemaha Subagency. On May 24, they started west from Nemaha and crossed the Big Nemaha River about seven miles north of the present Seneca, Kansas. (3:15).

Nancy Osborn from Henderson County, Illinois, recalled:

> "As I remember, the emigrants that year were mostly from Illinois and Iowa. On May 24, 1845, we crosssed the Missouri River on a ferry. I well remember how frightened was I when as we are about mid-stream, a yoke of grandfather's cattle became unmanageable and jumped over board and swam to the shore. We crossed the river at St. Jo, then an Indian Agency and the western limit of civilization. Here was the rendezvous for forming trains for the long westward hike and we met a number of emigrants and formed a train. Mr. Abner Hackleman was elected captain of the train, and we remained under his charge until a few days after crossing Snake River near the end of our journey." (The family left the wagon train.) The Indian Agent at St. Joe, a Mrs. Rubydeau, told the emigrants that the Indians were all ready for their summer buffalo hunt except for the corn which he was to grind. He promised to put off the grinding as long as possible. His plan was to detain the Indians as he feared trouble for the emigrants if the Indians overtook them. The Indians did overtake us later, while we were camped on the Big Blue River . . ." (1:25) (Joseph Robidou's trading post grew into St. Joseph.)

Referring to the Nemaha Subagency, Ezra Fisher wrote, "We are all in good health and the company in fine spirits. I spent last Sabbath with the Presbyterian Mission at this place and preached once, and, on Wednesday last, attended prayer meeting at his place and we had an affecting scene. I addressed the meeting about tweny minutes. Mr.

(Rev. William) Hamilton, the superintendent, is a godly man." (5:409).

On May 31, Captain Hackleman's wagon train headed southwest to the Big Blue River, crossed it near present Marysville, and camped for two days. On Sunday, June 1, religious meetings were held. Monday was wash day at the river. Then they headed northwest toward the Platte River. During that week William Findlay observed seeing three nearly year-old graves. (3:43, 15).

Hackleman's train continued up the valley and was caught in a severe thunderstorm at their June 8 camp. Sarah Griffith remembered their tents were blown down and hail stones were so large that those who were hit were covered by masses of bruises. Nine horses and several cattle were frightened by the storm and ran off. During their five day layover, three horses and most of the cattle were found. However, William Findley noted that twelve were killed or stolen by Indians. While looking for the strays, 20-year-old William Griffith was kidnapped by Indians. He had his horse and clothes stolen and was set free to find his way back to the wagons. A rescue party found him and he was given a blanket to save further embarrassment and he rode back to camp. (3:43).

Stephen Staats said, "We traveled all day until late in the evening, and then had to camp without water for ourselves or the cattle. Those who brought along a sufficient quantity of water hastily prepared a cup of tea before retiring for the night; while those who were not so fortunate, lay down to rest and dream of that soothing beverage . . ." Hackleman's group took their time traveling, held picnics, and did not begin reaching the Platte River until June 18, seventeen days after Joel Palmer's division of another wagon train. (3:44, 45).

The cattle in Hackleman's train became half wild and would run away at each strange sound, so they were corralled in a circle of wagons with a guard to watch them. During the noon break on June 21, the oxen were startled and began running. Since they were still hitched to the wagons, occupants and contents were strewn across the prairie and four or five people were injured. Thirteen-year-old Ellen Earl was in her family's wagon when it joined the stampede. She became frightened and jumped from the wagon. The back wheel ran over her causing a severe gash on her leg. The company collected their wagons, traveled on up the Platte River, and made camp for the night. Guards were posted, but Indians approached the camp and shot arrows into several cattle, startling them into another stampede. Six wagons were overturned and mashed and five wagon wheels and two axletrees were damaged. Minor injuries were sustained by some of the wagons' occupants. William Findley said they had to travel five miles to get wood and had to use red cedar for the repairs. (3:87 & 9:insert).

Some of the cattle hit by arrows were injured so badly that they were butchered for food. Robert Earl observed that some of the arrows had gone all the way through the animals and were pulled out the other side. Other cattle were saved after arrows were

pulled out. Rev. Hezekiah Johnson noted that one of the large cows was saved when 12 inches of an arrow was extracted. Nancy Osborn recalled that one of her grandfather's cows died after being shot with fourteen arrows. She was traveling with her father, Josiah Osborn, and her grandfather, John Courtney, in two wagons and with the Elisha and Sarah Griffith family. Later that day Captain Hackleman, Elisha Griffith, and his son, William Griffith, each shot a buffalo when a large herd was sighted. Concerned about the loss of their food supply, Indians followed the wagon train for three days. Hackleman gave them food and a tent and acted friendly, but he posted extra guards at night around the cattle and camp. (1:25; 3:87-88; & 4:22).

John McCoy recalled:

> "While they were remarkably free from molestation by Indians, very large herds of buffalo were encountered on the Platt river, and in one instance they were compelled to halt the entire train to allow an immense herd to gallop by across their rout. Some relization of the magnitude of this herd may be had, by considering the fact that, traveling at an easy galloop covering probably ten miles an hour, three forths of an hours time was taken in passing, and it was fully one forth of a mile in width. Some of our mathematitians estimated their numbers as in the millions. In some instances stampedes and heavy loss of stock was caused by their running past while the emigrants were in camp and their animals out grazing. . ."

> "On the Platt River one day a large band of Indians of the Pawnee tribe came to the train. They had just stopped for dinner. Some were frightened, and thought it not best to go on with the cooking. Many however went on as usual and soon the entire company were busy preparing the meals. The Indians waited until the cooking was about done, then by a seeming concert of action, made a rush to the fires, and snatching up the utensils containing the victuals, made off with them as fast as their legs could carry them. As the loss was not great the men thought best not to attack them for fear of further trouble as they were all armed. Some satisfaction was got out of one fellow however, who in making his getaway, backing too near old Darb's heels received a well-directed kick from that vigorous ox that sent him rolling on the plain, greatly to the amusement and delight of all who witnessed it." (8:6-6).

Using his own spelling, Robert Earl wrote:

> ". . . we forded the Plat River we Seen thousands of Bufalow in one band and lots of antelops . . . we kill lots buflow for there hides we come onto where Sioux Crows they threw dead in cave in a hill ther was Red blancket and 100 of yds of Red flanel lots people picked up lots of things it wasent long before the travil with teem we Stop at Independent Rock on Sweetwater there thousand of names on the Rock . . . our Company wrote

there names on the Rock and we mooved on. . .”

On June 11, the second election was held as provided for in Article 4. Captain Hackleman, the other officers and the executive committee were reelected. In the back of his diary, William Findley wrote the “List of Men taken”, a list of 47 men who were in the wagon train other than Hackleman, Ritchie, and himself. (His diary is now in the Yale University Library.) (2).

On June 24, J. V. Hamilton and some other fur traders passed Captain Hackleman’s company and agreed to post letters from the wagon train when he reached St. Louis. One of these letters said: “Last night, thirty Indians camped near us and double guard was kept They were hunters and their mules were loaded with buffalo meat and robes . . . Three bars of lead or two plugs of tobacco will buy a good robe . . . and one pint of salt will buy twenty pounds of dried meat. . .” (3:88).

Rev. Ezra Fisher had hoped to preach more frequently, but with the usual camp labors and continual urging to keep moving, it seemed that every circumstances was considered as an emergency. Others thought they were wasting valuable time when the did stop for a day, so some broke from the group and elected J. B. Holliday as Captain and John Ritchie as Lieutenant. (3:89).

Concerning John McCoy’s trip:

> “Early on the journey, before reaching Fort Laramie, quite a portion of the train became dissatisfied with the arrangement, thinking we were wasting time and not getting along fast enough by traveling but six days in the week; under the leadership of John Ritchie, pulled out and left us. We overtook them once or twice by reason of sickness and accidents, but not seeing fit to again join us, they persisted in keeping the lead which they did until reaching The Dalles on the Columbia river.” (8:7).

> “. . . The train in which He (John McCoy) traveled consisting of quite a religious element, decided at the begining, that they would not travel on the Sabbath, but “Lay by’, resting their stock and themselves, also holding public religious services. Rev. T. S. Kendall usually conducting these services. This rule was observed during the entire trip except in rare instances where the lack of water and grass made it impracticle; and it was observed that they mae equally good progress, kept in better condition, and wree freer from accidents and unavoidable delays, than trains that did not observe this rule.” (8:5).

While other members of the Hackleman train were celebrating the 4th of July by firing their guns, holding debates, celebrating birthdays, and relaxing, George and Elizabeth Cornelius buried their two-month-old infant at White Mounds, which is eight miles south of the North Platte River and two miles east of Chimney Rock.

(3:115).

On July 10 and 11, the company reached Fort Laramie a fur traders' post on the south side of the Platte River, only one or two days behind Captain Holliday's part of the wagon train. (3:90). On July 10, from Fort Laramie Ezra Fisher commented about the ". . . multiplied labors of the camp and the great anxiety of the emigrants" and wrote:

> "By the grace of God we have been preserved through dangers and fatigues about 1000 miles on our journey and we are now in comfortable health, although Mrs. Fisher has had a slight attack of the fever occasioned no doubt from exposure and excessive fatigues on the Platte river. . .
>
> "Our roads since we crossed the Missouri river have been the best we ever saw in any country, and at present our greatest fears are that the long season of drought will render the feed so poor and scarce that our cattle will suffer. We have suffered but little for want of water as yet, and we are now approaching a region of springs and perpetual snow, so that we have but little to fear from that score. We expect it will be at least twelve or thirteen weeks more before we reach the field of our future labors, . . . I am now writing seated on a buffalo robe in the open air under a scorching sun . . . with the bottom of a fallen wash rub in my lap for a table and in the midst of the confusion of the camp . . .
>
> "Our wagons are now undergoing repairs, having became shrunk almost beyond your conception by protracted and excessive heat from the sun and sand. Probably in two days we shall be on our line of march. As near as we can calculate, about 600 wagons are in advance of us and probably about 100 are behind us, and it will be almost a fair estimate to reckon 425 souls to every hundred waggons." (5:409-411).

On July 10, while at Fort Laramie, Rev. Hezekiah Johnson wrote a letter to Br. Cole. It commented on the severe drought and Indians taking cattle for food. The letter was published in the August 22, 1845, *Cross and Journal.*

> ". . . The distance from this to Nimeha Agency, is estimated at from 600 to 650 miles . . . We saw groves of timber all the way until we left Little Platte, or the Republican fork of Blue river. For twenty-five miles from Little Blue to Big Platt(e) we saw no timber excepting a few small groves near Little Blue. On Big Platt there is but little timber, and what there is, is mostly on the island or in the deep ravines of the bluffs. On the forks we saw no timber of consequence excepting willows, until we came within a few miles of this place. On Platt we generally got enough drift wood for fuel. We frequently hauled wood when we supposed we were about to pass through a section of country where we could

get no wood. A few times we made our fires mostly of what we call buffalo-chips. We used a little wood to kindle our fire and laid on a pile of chips, and found them to be good fuel. They blazed fiercely and made a hot fire either for boiling or baking provisions, so that, had I the journey to travel again, I should not be uneasy about fuel. Our road has generally been remarkably good. The worst places are those where the sand is deep. They are generally on the North Fork Platt. We had rainy weather from the Agency until we traveled several days up Platt. Since then we have had very little rain. For a long way back, the grass on the highland is parched nearly to death. I am informed there has been but one other such dough in this country for years. We have generally found enough good grass for our cattle on the low bottom land near Platt. We saw many herds of buffaloes on the South Fork of Platt. I have seen several herds in sight at one time. They were not so wild and could not run so fast as I expected. Our company killed many of them. I and Elder Fisher have found but very little opportunity to preach to the emigrants since we arrived with the caravan. They have been very restless and impatient to get along. Divisions have been common in all caravans that have started for Oregon. We have been compelled to travel on several Sabbaths contrary to our wills, and I believe that none need to expect any thing else, except they have enough of their views to form a company of their own. Twenty-five or thirty wagons are enough, should the Indians become no more hostile to us than they are. We have seen but few of them, and never saw them when they meant to do us harm. They have manifested no dispostion to injure our persons, yet I believe that they will steal horses any where. Our company lost six. Beyond the buffalo region on the Platt, they will steal cattle, and no marvel, for they are suffering for food. They have stolen none from me, yet they have stolen several from our company. They tried to drive off about sixty had of our cattle at one time. They killed one, and wounded another so badly that we killed it for beef, and they shot arrows into several others. The arrows were drawn out. One was drawn from a large cow that had penetrated twelve inches into her body. She was living the last I saw of her and I suppose is living yet. I would advise all emigrating companies to guard their cattle by night, until they travel three or four days up Big Platt, and to confine their horses every night this far at least, and perhaps all the way through.

"The Sioux Indians are many of them about this fort, yet we apprehend no danger from them. Our government have sent out several companies of dragoons to scour the country to the Rocky mountains. This I expect will be done for several years to come."

In a P.S. he added:

"I warn all emigrants against putting their cattle in a circle or sem-circle of their wagons. Our cattle when in a semi-circle, in a fright ran from one side to

the other and mashed several wheels of our wagons and uupset one. The cattle of another caravanhave done the same. The fewer loose cattle that are brought, the better." (4:21-22 & 3:89).

On July 14, while camped at the Dalles (rapids) of the Platte River, Captain Hackleman visited Colonel Kearney to report that six horses and some cattle had been stolen from members of his wagon train by the Pawnee Indians while the company passed through their country. Hackleman was assured that the information would be passed on to the Indian Agent, who might be able to recover the animals. (3:119).

On July 26, Hackleman's company arrived at Red Bluffs where members of the group found a female grizzly bear with two cubs in a cherry thicket. On September 10, Hackleman wrote about it, finishing the letter at 1:00 am, saying:

> "Now let me tell you about our bear fight; some eight or ten of us came across an old bear and her two cubs. Yes and by the by, they were of the grizzly bear. We surrounded them in a cherry thicket and I place two men at each stand with directions to reserve fire in case of an attack after I sent some boys to drive. So after a long time they came out and one of our men fired and wounded the old one and as she passed me I gave her another shot through the lights and away and she ran bawling and growling as she could and we all ran up the branch and found them hid in a thicket and a young man fired on one of the cubs and away it ran screaming too, and in a few moments I found the old she again and I gave her another shot which passed through her lights from the other side and she ran down the branch where Morgan Kees was and he gave her another shot and then she took after him and he ran up the hill toward where I was and I found she would take him and I ran in between them and she took after me but I met her with pistol (not having my gun loaded) and as she made a grab at me I place the muzzle against her neck and then fired which turned her a somerset (somersault). Then Kees ran up again and shot her with his pistol and she took after him again. Then my last remedy was butcher knife. So I drew it and took over her but she then left and went into the brush and after hunting sometime we found her again and Jacob Rinerson fired upon her and she made after him and I ran in again and shot her through the head which ended the battle." (8.6). In cleaning their guns that night, Captain Hackleman found grizzly hair on the hammer of his pistol. (Robert Earl and William Findley also wrote about this incident.) (3:120 & 9:6-7).

On the U.S. military dragoon's return trip from South Pass, Lieutenant Turner made a table of information about the wagon trains they passed. For A. Hackleman he recorded men 52, women 35, children 44 (total 130), cattle 430, horses and mules 11, wagons 28, state from Iowa. He probably reversed the figures with those for Captain Holliday in which case the figures should have been men 60, women 40, children 123 (total 223), cattle 600, horses and mules 15, wagons 43, state from Ohio, Illinois,

Missouri.(3:122).

On the way up the gradual climb toward South Pass, the group camped at a spring and fished in several nearby streams. Jacob Snyder made a net from his tent cover and caught a huge number of fish. In one hour the men in Hackleman's company caught six hundred fish averaging one and a half pounds. (3:124).

On August 5, the wagon train crossed the Rocky Mountains at South Pass and entered the Oregon Country. Andrew Rogers left his job driving the loose cattle to help the Osborns make camp. That evening Alexander Roger Osborn was born to Margaret and Joseph Osborn. On the evening of August 6, John Scott and Rebecca Cornelius were married. (3:129, 130). Nancy Osborn recalled that ". . . as they stood in front of their tent by a small fire, my father (Jacob) came up with an armful of sage brush and threw it on the fire. Instantly the whole scene was lighted so that the entire camp could witness the ceremony which was being performed by Mr, (Alexander) Evans, a Baptist Minister." (1"26). (Donna Montgomery found this same wedding quotation attributed to Sarah Griffith.) (3:130).

Rebecca Jane Hamilton remembered that it was on the Green River that her younger brother was tied, gagged and kidnapped by some Indians. A search party followed the tracks. They boy was rescued at gunpoint and returned to his parents. While on the way to Fort Bridger, Nancy Osborn wrote: "To the right of the trail just after crossing Green River was the open grave of Mr. Sager who had been buried there the year before (August 27, 1844). The Indians had opened it and I remember the small poles with which the body had been covered, as they were standing upright in the grave. The train stopped a few minutes while we looked at the gruesome reminder that we knew not when we would have to leave some of our loved ones to this same fate." (3:138 & 1:26).

On August 13, at Fort Bridger on Black's Fork of the Green River some of the members of Hackleman's train traded wagons and lame cattle for skins and horses. (3:139). That day Rev. Hezekiah Johnson again took time to write to Bro. Cole. This letter was published in the November 6, 1845, *Cross and Journal:*

> "I and family are well. We have traveled 1000 miles since we left St. Joseph on the Missouri river. Our road has thus far been good, excepting the sandy parts of it. We traveled over more sandy land on Sweetwater than any where else. We have had water plenty; one night we had to use pond water. We have had but little difficulty in obtaining fuel. Driftwood, a shrub called sage, or Buffalo chips, have been used by us when we were where no wood grows. But little timber grows on any of the rivers or creeks that we have traveled up or crossed. The most of the timber that I have seen, since I came into Big Platt, has been on the Black Hills. Last night it snowed on the mountains and rained in the valleys. The shower last night was the first heavy shower that has fallen upon us for months.

"We have been disappointed in the appearance of the Rocky Mountains. We saw them several days before we came near to them. They did not appear to be towering masses of precipitous rocks, but a chain of mountains every where sloping to peaks. There appeared to be no snow on any part of them that was fully exposed to the sun. When we came near them, we left them to our right, passed up Sweetwater still farther, crossed it and passed along between a high bluff on our left and a ridge on our right between us and Sweetwater, until we came to the head of a dry ravine of the Colorado. We came down that to a big spring (Pacific Springs), below which is grass in abundance. We crossed the ravine, came to a small sandy creek without any good grass, thence to the north fork of Big Sandy, thence to the west fork, thence to Green River or Colorado, thence to Black's fork of the same, and up it to this place. We have yet to cross Big Muddy, a right hand branch of this stream, go down little Muddy, and down Bear River until we get not far from Fort Hall, before we reach the waters of the Columbia. Fort Hall is about 120 miles from this place. When we were near the Rocky Mountains on our right, we could not see them on the left. They are near on our left and we cannot see them on our right. For this reason I believe this gap in the Rock Mountans is forty or fifty miles wide.

"For two or three weeks past the nights have been very cool and the days warm. The country along the water courses for hundreds of miles back appear to have been torn to pieces by water. Both Sweetwater and the North fork of Platt have in several places washed their channels through high ridges where the rocky bluffs are perpendicular and hundreds of feet high on both sides. Such places we came round. The strata of rock on Sweetwater had a considerable dip towards the Mississippi. Near the Rocky Mountains the strata of rock in some places were nearly perpendicular. In others they were slanting, some in one direction and some in another. And hence I conclude that in days long gone by this part of the world has been terribly convulsed.

"All the way since we came on to the bottom of the Big Platt we have given our cattle no salt. It is supposed that where it was in great abundance it injured them. Our cattle were more sickly on the North fork of Platt and on Sweetwater than they have been since or were before. The best remedy for sickness in our cattle was a few slices of fat meat and a quart of strong soap suds. On Platt many of our cattle had the foot evil and some of them became so lame we had to leave them. For this disease we poured boiling tar on the sore and afterward applied cold tar every few days. Had I this journey to perform again I would endeavor to have in each team two yoke of oxen from four to six years old — one for the tongue of the wagon and one for the lead and two yoke of cows, because cows are worth more in Oregon than oxen. I should also wish a few milk cows, and a few cattle for relief cattle, should any of my work cattle die or get lame; and no more loose cattle. Our wagons are numbered in messes of

from four to five wagons each. The mess that goes before one day goes behind the next, so that all in regular turn go before. We march in single file, and when we camp at night we form a circle with our wagons by turning the tongues in and running its (sic) off fore wheel near the hindermost near wheel of the wagon before. We generally pitch our tents in this circle and put our guard around it.

"There has been but little sickness in our caravan. One man (Joseph Findley) from Illinois who was very low with the consumption when he started, is now able to walk about. What effect this journey would have had on others afflicted with this disease, I cannot say. It seems to have had a good effect on him.

"Those who laid in 150 pounds of flour to each person will probably have enough, those who did not, will likely fall short of provisions before they get to the end of their journey. Grass in some places on this side of Fort Laramie has been scarce. It has been as plenty through the mountains as it was on the North fork of Platt.

"We miss the Churches, houses of worship, friends and relatives in the States, and also the *Cross and Journal* . . . I know not how the great moral and political conflicts of the world are going on. Bad as my opportunity of information will be in Oregon, I hope that it will not be as it is here . . ." (4:23-24 & 3:139).

On August 23, Capt. Hackleman's wagon train reached nearby Soda Springs and laid over the next day for Sunday services, wagon repairs, and hunting. Some of the group met fur trapper Peg Leg Smith on his way from Fort Hall to his mountain cabin. One of the hunters, Timothy Lamberson, did not return from hunting and was not found in spite of a three-day search. (3:150).

Abner Hackleman wrote: "I will say a work about the curiosities of the Soda Springs. They are situated on Bear River . . . some of which are warm while others are cold. They are all spouting up out of the ground with great force but one, which is called Steamboat Spring, is worth a great deal to a person who never saw it before. It is continually foaming and spouting like the escape pipe of a boat. Some of these springs are much structured with iron and cooperas while others are good soda and make a fine light cake like salertus. (Saleratus was baking soda.) This region of country is the best I have seen since I left Missouri; and on the Mountains I saw pine trees one hundred feet high." (10:6 & 3:150).

On August 31, Hackleman's company arrived at Fort Hall only two days behind Captain Holliday and the group that had split from his original train and traveled on Sundays. (3:139-140).

On September 10, Hackleman's group was camped at Salmon Falls Creek when Dr. Elijah White, the Indian Agent and former doctor at the Methodist Mission near Salem, and several others heading east met them. Dr. White asked why they were so far behind other emigrant companies. Captain Hackleman explained that they had started three weeks late, had not realized the magnitude of the journey so had taken their time, and had encountered unexpected trouble that caused extra delays. Dr. White cautioned them that they were late in the season and the longest and most difficult part of the trip was before them in the Blue Mountains and the Cascades. John McCoy noted, "From that time on the trip became a strenuous one and every possible effort was made to get ahead." (3:219 & 8:7).

That night when on the west bank of the Lewis (Snake) River, about 170 miles below Fort Hall, Hackleman recalled the first part of the trip and looked ahead in a letter:

> ". . . in good health but with many cares owing to my situation in my company. They selected me as their commander when we first set out on our journey with the assurance that I should be released from it in a month or two but since that time I have endeavored to get rid of this ardous (arduous) task but all in vain. I still have the command of forty one wagons and sixty-five men well armed and about one hundred women and children; and you know in that number there are always some that will be ungovernable, although in the main they all obey quite well. We have great difficulty in gettin up our cattle of a morning. Sometimes we have four, five, or six gone and then we have trouble to find hands who are willing to stay back and hunt for them, especially where there is danger of Indians. Although we have been molested by them very little. The Pawnees on Blue River killed some of our cattle and stole six horses from us; afterward six of them (Pawnees) came to our encampment at night and I espied (spied) them and we immediately took them and kept them under guard until morning, which alarmed them very much and we were never trouble with them any more. We have had hard times for want of grass part of the way. When we first came upon the Platte, we had good grass but the further up the worse and when we came to Fort Laramie we found none scarcely and for some miles above. On Sweetwater we found good grass there on the bottoms but on the up-land there is nothing but sage (or what some call wormwood). I must say to you that it is a greater undertaking than most men think it is to go to Oregon but if it is the country as is represented, all who go to it will be repaid for all their trials and vexations — for there are many unthought of until tried.
>
> "So far I have seen Oregon, I do not like it for it is nothing but a waste country fit for neither agricultureal purposes nor for grazing, but we this evening met Dr. (Elijah) White in company with four other men, who assure us that the Wallamett (Willamette) Valley is one of the most beautiful sustenance

of life." It was from here that he wrote about the bear fight and sent the letter east with Dr. White. (10:5).

On September 11, Abner Hackleman's group passed Rock Creek, still two days behind Captain Holliday's wagon train, but thirty-three days behind the first wagons of the year. They camped at Salmon Falls, where Indians were fishing, and during the night Indians took all the visible whips in the company. As the emigrants were getting ready to leave camp the next morning, William Earl reached for his whip but found only the stock. Then he saw an Indian with a whip tied around his waist trying to trade a salmon for a shirt. Earl grabbed the whip and hit the Indian over the head with it two or three times, then tied it to his stock and drove off. (3:202, 211 & 9:8-9). Robert Earl recalled: ". . . we forded Green River and Snake River at (the first) f. Hall we proped our wagons up in the Stanards to keep water from Spoiling our goods the knight we camped a(t) Salmon falls the Red Skins Stole all whips in the company except waht was thoud over there wagon. . ." (9:8).

On September 12, while on the Snake River seven miles from Salmon Falls, Dr. White met a detached portion of the Hackleman group that included Dr. Ezra Fisher. When Dr. White asked this last portion of the train whey they were so far behind, one young lady replied, "Why, I guess it is because we lie by on the Sabbath." An elderly woman added, "Oh sir, that is not the only reason; our company are very philosophical; they are not disposed to let little drawbacks trouble them; neither do they wish to wear themselves out by extraordinary exertions such as rising too early in the morning and dashing away over the plains like eager seekers of filthy lucre." (3:220). (Dr. White was on his way to Washington, D.C. to deliver a memorial of the Provisional Legislature to the US Congress.)

They spent an enjoyable eveing with this group, who Dr. White observed were intelligent people — many of which were from New England before migrating to Iowa. Dr. White told them about the Willamette Valley and they had dinner together. Several emigrants gave Dr. White letters to post when he reached the states. A member of White's east bound party gave Dr. Fisher a nice horse. (3:120, 219-221). That day Rev. Fisher wrote that ". . . our families have been preserved through a fatiguing journey of about 2000 miles by ox team and that we are now in health and within about 670 miles of our journey's end . . ." (5:411).

The wagon train crossed the Snake River at Three Island Crossing, near Glen's Ferry, Idaho, on September 12, the Boise River at Fort Boise and some made camp while others went on to the Malheur River, traveling up Lytle Gulch (near Vale). John Ritchie had led about eleven wagons from the Platte River ahead of the rest of the Hackleman train. On September 15, they were seen by James Field, who stated: "Their loose stock were nearly all working steers, they having enough apparently, to change teams every day." They had followed Stephen Meek and continued traveling by moonlight from Lost Hollow (or Last Hollow). (3.221, 271 & 11:48).

Nancy Osborn said: “Soon after reaching Snake River the emigrants felt safe from the dangers of the plains and the train split up into small divisions on account of the greater ease of procuring food and water for the stock.” (1:27). She recalled:

> “. . . While along the North bank of the Snake River we met Dr. White who told us of Dr. Whitman at Waiilatpu where we could get provisions. When we reached the Grand Ronde Valley, John B. Courtney and his son John were sent ahead with a little gray mare to secure provisions from Dr. Whitman. On their return to our party they told us of the need of a mill-wright at Waiilatpu as the Indians had burned the mill which Dr. Whitman had erected there. They had told the Doctor of my father as a man who would suit his need, and so we parted from our friends at the foot of the Blue Mts., near the old Cayuse station and wended our way to Waiilatpu, our first camp being near where Athena now is. That was about the middle of October, 1845. Later Isaac Cornelius and Tom Summers came with their families to the mission and stopped for the winter. Summers as a blacksmith and worked for the Doctor. Jacob Rynearson taught the Indian School and Andrew Rogers, a young man from Illinois taught the mission school for the white children that winter. . .” Narcissa Whitman was Nancy’s Sunday School teacher. (Andrew Rogers brought his violin and would sing with Narcissa Whitman. He was one of the people killed during the “Whitman Massacre” on November 27, 1847. The Osborn family had returned to the Whitman Mission and escaped by hiding under the floor boards in the Whitman house.) (1:27, & 3:221).

Sarah Griffith told how “At Snake river, one ox got away and father and brother William went to hunt him, leaving me, mother and four little ones alone. Indians came, reaching their hands into the wagon and mother hacked their hands with a butcher knife. Then Mr. William Earl missed our wagon and came bck to see what was the troube and all was saved.” (3:221-222).

Robert Earl noted the route followed. “We traveled down the Boisey river Some ways the(n)ce to ft Boisey there we crosed Snake river back again thence acrose a desert of 25 miles to the malhur thense to well Spring thence to burnt river to Whitmans St we lay over there three days then we Started for the Dalles the next Stream of any note was Johndays (John Day River) we forded it thence acrose a high rolling county to the deschutes . . .” (9-9-10).

When the Hackleman company reached the Deschutes River, they found that some Indians has erased all signs of the crossing. William Earl swam across and found the marks on the opposite bank where wagons had come out of the river, so the company was able to locate the likely entrance and make the crossing. Robert Earl had a pony that was afraid to cross the swift river, so William hired an Indian to take it across. When the Indian wanted payment for the effort, William pulled him off the pony and

"give him a good thumping." That night Indians stole two horses from the Earls and two from other emigrants. Men sent to search for the missing animals followed moccasin prints and found the animals by the river. Other Indians hired to take the horses to the emigrant camp did not arrive until midnight, so a day's travel was lost because William Earl had lost his temper. (3:242 & 9:10-12).

The next day part of the Hackleman group made it to Wascopam Mission (The Dalles), while others camped at Fifteen Mile Creek. Part of the Hackleman party finally arrived at Wascopam on October 31. On September 28, the first emigrants to follow the Meek Cutoff had arrived at this Methodist Mission. (3:316). Hiram Smeed, Anderson Cox, Grandville Baber and probably John Ritchie followed this "Terrible Trail" in 1845, but Cox was with another wagon train. (3:271, 382, 402, 489 & 11:181, 240).

John McCoy's part of the Hackleman wagon train at The Dalles on November 1. "At The Dalles we came upon John Ritchie and his division of the train who had parted from us at Fort Laramie for reasons before stated. One calamity after another had befallen them. Many of their oxen had died and they were in dire straits and seemed unable to get farther. Such assistance aw was possible was rendered them and they were brot' through with the others of the train to the valley." (8:8).

In a 1907 article in the *Albany Democrat,* Martin Miller reported the addition to the John J. Crabtree family.

> ". . . After many hardships he arrived at The Dalles in October, where he built a raft in which to ascend the Columbia.
>
> "While building the raft Mr. Crabtree's family was increased (on October 22) by the advent of twin boys, probably the first event of that kind among the white settlers of Oregon. They were named Jasper and Newton.
>
> "Without fear and with great courage he embarked on the river voyage." (12:4).

It was noted about John McCoy:

> "Here greatly to the surprise and delight of the company, he opened a chest containing a complete kit of carpenter tools consisting of a broad-axe, augers, saws &c. necessary for the work, and superintended the building of a flat-boat of sufficient capacity in which His family and that of Dr. Maley, and their effects were bought down the Columbia to the Cascades. The lumber from which this boat was built was whip-sawed by the emigrants from timber brought in from the foot hills of the Cascade mountains. After the boat was completed, the wheels were taken off the wagon and placed in the bottom of the boat, and the running gears and bed placed on top. A steering oar on the

stern and two oars, one on each side near the bow, was provided with which to in some measure control the movement of the boat. In this way they came down to the Cascades, carried mostly by the current of the stream. At one place on their way they encountered a large whirlpool, which in spite of the efforts of those at the oars, turned the boat entirely around greatly frightening the occupants. It was on this voyage that the submerged forests were seen standing upright in the bottom of the river . . .” (8:8)

(In his *The Bridge of the Gods,* published in 1890, F. H. Balch says:

“In the fall of the year when the freshets are over and the waters of the Columbia are clear, one going out in a small boat and looking down into the transparent depths can see submerged forest trees beneath him, still standing upright as before the bridge fell in and the river was raised above them. It is a strange weird sight, this forest beneath the river; the waters wash over the broken tree-tops, fish swim among the leafless branches. It is desolate, spectre-like, beyond all words.”

At The Dalles Rev. Ezra Fisher preached a sermon. They were out of provisions so had to pay the high prices of eight dollars per hundred pounds of flour and six dollars for beef. Most bought salmon from the Indians instead. They camped and built a flatboat. Fisher and some of their party:

“. . . brought the cattle and horses down the Indian trail on the north bank of the Columbia. On the flatboat, laden with their wagons and possessions and a skiff for use in catching their flatboat below the rapids, the rest of their number embarked, and thus came to the portage at the Cascades (west of Stevenson, Washington) where they camped in a drenching rain.

“Their boat, which was set adrift to go over the Cascades, lodged in the rocks amid-stream and all efforts to dislodge it were in vain. In their extremity, they sent to Dr. McLoughlin for aid. With his usual kindness, he sent them a bateau.

“At the Cascades, or, it would seem likely, at a later camping point, those who hd come down the north bank joined them. They were wet and in a nearly famished condition. Ezra Fisher and his son (Ezra) had been living for the last day or two, on a daily half-pint of milk, and a little wheat which they had in their pockets. Hot biscuits (baked in a tin reflector oven) were a never-to-be-forgotten luxury of their repast that night.

“Continuing their journey in the bateau, the party arrived at a point near Linnton on or near the sixth of December. Here the two families separated, Hezekiah Johnson and family continuing up the river to Oregon City, while

Ezra Fisher and family, piloted by Edward Lenox, went to Tualatin Plains."

Upon reaching the Willamette Valley, the emigrants scattered to find land or a place to spend the first winter. John McCoy recalled the route followed and tourist attractions experienced:

"Leaving the Missouri River near Omaha Neb. the rout lay over a rolling sandy prairie country some twenty miles west till reaching the Platt River. Following up the South bank of that most interesting stream until reaching its forks. Fording the South Fork there, the way continued up the North Platt, crossing the line of Neb. near Scotts Bluffs, into Wyoming and Fort Laramie. Here we are 550 miles from our starting point. Continuing our journey to the west, we pass Glenn Rock, Chimney Rock, Independence Rock, Devils Gate, and Split Rock — all of which are worthy of special mention — over onto the Sweetwater River, and we are now 850 miles out. Leaving this steam we continue through the South Pass in the Rocky Mountains, then bearing to the South we reach the line of Idaho and soon after passing what is now Cokeville on Green River. We are now 1000 miles on our way. Crossing the line of Idaho near what is now Pocatello, we reach Snake River near American Falls. Continuing down the South side of the stream, we cross the line of Idaho into Oregon near the mouth of the Oyhee river. Continuing to what is now Huntington, we turn west over a high rolling country, to Powder River valley near Baker, Oregon. From there North through 'The Cove' or what is now called Ladds or Pyles Canion, we reach the Grand Round Valley. We enter the Blue Mountains west of La Grand, in that valley, passing over these mountains by the Mecham rout, through Lee's encampment, down the west slope — which is quite long and steep — to the Umatilla River; down that stream to the Columbia. From here (The Dalles) the stock was sent over the Cascade Mountains by way of the Shell Rock Trail to the Wallamet Valley; while the families, wagons and goods were floated down the river by boat or raft to the Cascades. Here after passing a portage of some five miles, boats were again taken down the Columbia to the mouth of the Willamet (Wallamette) river, then up that stream to their several destinations: Lynnton, Portland or Oregon City." (8:5).

"The trail over which our stock was brought was cut out by Dr. Whitman and the emigration of the year previous. Up to that time a dim trail rarely used even by the Indians was all there was. It was afterwards called the Shell Rock Trail, and most of its way lay close to the river. It was never extensively used. The Barlow rout was cut out the following year (1846), after which it was used extensively, as it permitted wagons to cross . . ." At the Cascades a portage of some five miles had to be made before the open river to the end of their journey could be reached. On their arrival at the upper end of the portage, the boat was unloaded and the wagons set up. The road around this obstruction being on the North side, and the trail down the river over which the stock was driven being on the South side, oxen with which to draw the wagons were brought across for the purpose. After the wagons were hauled around to a point below the rapids, the animals were taken back, and again crossed over to the South side and

brought down with the other stock. Our provissions running low, an animal was brought across and slaughtered. Being an emigrant the beef afforded was very poor, but was far better than none and the travelers could not be fastidious with regard to their eating at this stage of their journey." (8:8).

"The empty boats above the Cascades were then turned loose to of their own accord run over the rapids. Some of them survived the trip and were caught below and used again, while others were broken up on the rocks by the violence of the current and the crookedness of the channel. His boat struck a slanting rock, the bow ran up out of the water while the after part sank below the surface, the swift current pinning it fast to the rock. For a good round price he secured the services of an Indian with a canoe, and at the risk of their lives, succeeded in reaching the rock on which it was lodged, but the current proved so strong that their united efforts could not move it, and it was necessarily abandoned.

"They then secured the services of a Hudson Bay Co. bateaux, in which Dr. Mealey with the two families embarked and continued their journey, while He and William returned to the stock and assisted in bringing them down the trail.

> "The bateaux with its precious cargo proceeded down the Columbia river past Vancouver, the then headquarters of the Hudson Bay Company, to the mouth of the Wallamet, then up that stream to Oregon City at the Falls of that river. Here they were comfortably housed in a log cabin furnished by the kind-harted Dr. McLaughlin, the chief Factor of the Hudson Bay Co. at that time, here to await the coming of the stock and the men with them. After a fortnight or more had passed with no news from the stock; no little uneasiness was felt by the two families. On the 20th of November the stock reached the Wallamet at a point called Linnton, some six or more miles from its mouth. Here they were crossed over to the West side of the river. Then then took their way up through the timber past what is now Portland, which at that time consisted of a single log cabin in the forest, out on to the Tualitan Plains near the present site of Forest Grove; There the train was disbanded and the individual families sought locations and employment, and otherwise prepared to spend the winter." (8:9). (Linnton was northwest of Portland as shown in *Early Oregon Atlas.*)

A letter published in the February 1, 1907, issue of *Albany Democrat* tells about some of the troubles encountered and how a few of the pioneers traveled to the Albany area.

> "Mr. and Mrs. (Milton) Hale, with their one child, came from The Dalles by trail, Mrs. Hale riding horseback, with their little daughter in her arms, and Mr. Hale walking, as did also a few others of the company.

"But they sent their wagons and goods down the river by boat, in charge of one of their company.

"At Fort Vancouver the boat tied up and the men went ashore. When they returned to the boat, they found it submerged, and the contents wet. The goods were spread out to dry, and a portion was stolen, among the rest some of Mrs. Hale's dresses, and all of her needles.

"Now Mrs. Hale had a blanket, given her as a parting gift on going from Indiana to Iowa, which she brought with her to Oregon as a treasured memento of the far away dear one who made and gave it to her, and from which after losing so much of her clothing, she made herself a dress, borrowing for the purpose, a needle of Mr. Whitlock, who had only the one, and who charged her so earnestly not to loose or break it, that she used it almost reverantly, and felt relieved when the dress was finished, and the precious little needle returned safely to its owner." (14:6).

Rev. Thomas Kendall, whose wife had died in the east, was traveling west with their two small daughters. He "on Platte River had an attack of bilious fever, from which at Ft. Laramie I was beginning to recover." Now they separated from the wagon train, got ponies from the Indians to carry the goods and the girls, and he proceeded on foot arriving in Oregon City on November 11.

"In crossing the Cascades in November, 1845, myself, my two daughters, and a comrade, after passing the summit, came to a small creek, on the western slope, not more than ten feet in width, and one foot in depth at the crossing. My comrade being a little in advance called out 'Salmon.' Being on short allowance and some days travel to the settlements, I called him to fire, but the weather being damp, our guns were both out of order. I sprang forward, and with one kick, drove a fine fish several feet on the opposite bank; the rest of the shoal made their way into deeper water. There were no hunger lamentations for several meals afterwards." (15:3).

Years later Joseph Earl describe to Thurston Hackleman how they continued their 1845 journey:

"He says they came to the Dalles and then came down the river in large batteaux or boats. That they crossed the river at Vancouver on a ferry and the Willamette at Linnton near Portland and went to the Tualliten plains (Tualatin Plains) where they remained all winter. They then came up the Willamette and he and Grandfather Hackleman and two or three others rode around over the prairie and came to the grove and Grandfather Hackleman said to them, if none of them wanted the place, he would take it. They did not want it and he took it and built a little house there." (16).

The John McCoy account continues:

". . . immediately after the arrival of the stock from over the trail across the Casacde Mountains, Dr. Maley, not finding any thing available about Oregon City or Tualatin Plains that suited his fancy — hooked up his team and loading his family and effects, continued his journey up the Willamette Valley seeking a location more to his liking. The way taken by him was up the East side of the river through what is now Yamhill and Polk Counties into what is now Benton County, crossing the Willamette at a point a few miles below the present site of Corvallis at what is now the Steward farm, to the East side (of the Willamette River) into what is now Linn County. Some seven miles above this crossing, and to the East side of Muddy Creek, a short distance from where it empties into the Wallamet; he halted and located a claim. This was in November or December of 1845." His brother, William McCoy, "accompanied him (John) up to this wilderness home and assisted him in building a cabin and getting his family comfortably housed for the winter. They then returned to Tualitan Plains where they spent the winter. . . living with and working for G. W. Ebbarts." (8:9, 10). (Dr. Washington B. Mealey had married Margaret McCoy on February 23, 1837.)

Robert Earl notes travel by Idian canoe.

". . . came to the Dalles without any further trouble that was the end of the road we get a big Chinock kinim and the family went down the river took our wagons to pieces we drove our cattle and horse down the pack trail to the cascades then we Swam them over Columbia then down the river below vancouver then Swam them on the Sovesies Ilddand (Sauvie Island) we drowned 2 mares Swiming (the) river at Fort Vancoover I eat my first aple. one of McGlofelins (John McLouglin, Chief Factor at Fort Vancouver) had breed girls gave me an aple and a piece of bread and butter maby you think it wasent good we traided poor cow for a Small fat beef and divided it out among imagrants we hadent flour enought to make br(e)ad on the trip we milked our cows and mad thickenmilk . . . we Swam Stock acrose the Slow (slough) over to Linton then we moved out on the thowlinton plaines (Tualitin Plains) to winter among the French and half breeds (retired French Canadian fur trappers had married Indian wives) we all learnt to talk Chinock we made rails for grub and lived on dry peas the most of the time Wm Earl went to the uper end of the valey to See the country South of the Santiam river what is known as Linn Co he liked the country came back and in April we Started for the new country wehen we went through Saliam (Salem) there wasent but one Store and litle Sash Saw mill and few resedence. (9:11-13).

"we got to the Santiam River there was no fery there was a man by name of Milt hale that croosed the plains with us head (had) 2 connooes

(canoes) he fasent them toge(t)her and(d) took every thing acrose first then we runn our wagon a Stardle of the connims then Swam our Stock acros the river we mooved on our ____ (ranch?) mired down tow or three times and had to pull out backwards we made a plow and we plowed point a Short barr & we made the wole out of a twisty pice (of) oak then we went to breaking prairie one of my brothers Stoped in french prair(ie) to work for wheat for Seed we (ploughed?) 20 acres for wheat and garden we built cabon our catle would ly down within 4 hun yd and we couldent See them for the grass the kiots (coyotes) would run our dog to the house and the dog would run them of(f) aga(in) we could See deer any time we hadent a ____ (gun?) on the ranch we went to makeing rails I went after the cows one eve(n)ing and I found a wild cat . . . we dident have any cat So I thought I would catch it I tried a half an hour to catch it but it wouldent let me git hold of it. . .” (9:13-15).

In an “Early Albany” article in the January 25, 1907, *Albany Democrat*, John J. Davis wrote about his youth and the first two log cabins in Albany.

“. . . The first sight I had of Albany was in the month of December, 1847. Our Oregon City purchases having gone, we sought some meat, so H. (Hiram) N. Smead, who had been living near Albany a year or so, went into Albany for some deer meat. On the rig (ridge?) near the city cemetary, he fired and got a deer and we had plenty of meat. We were both barefooted. The deer was cut in two, and each took a half and started back along the Calapooia, which means gunshot in Jargon. *(Chinook: A History and Dictionary of the Northwest Coast Trade Jargon* by Edward Thomas lists al-i-peen as meaning a rifle or carbine.) There was a thin ice on the swail, hence going barefooted was no snap. We kept along the bank until we came to the foot of Second street, where we found a trail and went east. A block east of the Revere House (built later on the southwest corner of First and Ellsworth Street) there was a grove of second growth firs, and on the east side was a cabin. We lay the deer down and took a look at Albany in its infancy. It was about 12 x 14 feet, two logs cut out on the south for a window and three on the east for a door, the size of Albany in 1847. Smead said Milt Hale built the cabin a year or two before. We took our deer and continued our barefoot trip.

“Afterwards in a conversation with Mr. Hale he said he came into the county in the summer of 1844 (1845) He and Sniggering Davis came to the present site of Albany, and Davis decided to take the townsite. They camped and Mr. Hale struck the first stick with an edged took ever struck in Albany, when he and Davis began to cut logs for a cabin. After the cabin was up the men cut the logs for another cabin on the Abram Hackleman claim, now a part of Albany. Mr. Hale declined to take the Hackleman claim, not liking it for planting an orchard, which he proposed to do. Davis went back to Oregon City during the summer of 1844 (1845?) to work for the Hudson(s) Bay Co., to get

money to improve his land, but he never returned. (There is no record of 'Sniggering' Davis in the Fort Vancover HBC records, but he could have been a free trapper or earlier settler.) In 1845 Abner Hackleman, John Holland and Mr. Icomberry came out from Iowa, after homes, meeting Mr. Hale on the Santiam (River). Mr. Hale brought them to Albany, and Mr. Holland took the Davis claim, Mr. Hackleman the claim now owned by the Hackleman heirs and Mr. Icomberry a claim southwest of the townsite, now the Albany Nursery, the hopyard and across into Geo. W. Cline's farm (Hazelwood Addition west of Broadway Street).

". . . Mr. Hackleman built a cabin on his claim, appropriating the logs Hale and Davis cut, putting it up on the site of Hackleman's grove, the other men helping him raise it. . .

"The three men went back to Iowa in the summer of 1846, after their families, and intended to return in 1847, but Mr. Hackleman was taken sick and died, and the other two men never returned.

"Not returning H. N. Smead took the Holland claim in the fall of 1847 and built a cabin on the north side of the grove. This cabin stood near the present site of the Russ House (built later on the northeast corner of First and Lyon Street)." (17:6).

A possible correction in the date for the Hale cabin to 1846 is contained in a 1937 interview with Milton Hale's daughter, Mrs. John B. Burkhart, by Leslie L. Haskin, WPA Interviewer.

"My father reached Oregon in November of 1845. He located his claim on the south bank of the Santiam River and then returned northward and spent the first winter at Molalla. His intention in settling on the Santiam was to secure a good place for the raising of fruit.

"In the spring of 1846, my father returned with is family to his claim, but found the river so high as to make crossing impossible. Thus, it became necessary for him to construct a ferryboat at once. His tools and materials were of the scantiest, for he had nothing but an axe, an augur, an adz, and his pocket knife.

"During the time that the ferry was under construction, a number of other families waited until the ferry was completed before crossing. Thus, it immediately became apparent that a commercial ferry would be profitable, and such my father maintained at Syracuse for many years. The Earl family was the first to cross this ferry (about a mile west of Jefferson).

"During the time that the ferry was under construction, my mother and her one child lived in a camp or shelter, beneath a great fir tree on the river bank.

My father perfected this shelter by cutting other, smaller fir trees and leaning them up against the branches of the larger one, thus providing a green-walled sylvan bower. At first, my mother was well pleased with this arrangement, but as the season progressed and the fir boughs dried and the needles began to shatter from the stem, it was not so pleasant, for every breeze or motion brought down showers of the dried needles. It was, therefore, necesarry to keep all food covered to prevent every dish or container from becoming liberally sprinkled with the dried fir leaves. In later years, I asked Father just where that fir-tree house stood and he replied, 'The river has so washed the banks that were the tree still standing, it would now be situated in almost the exact center of the Santiam.'

"After crossing the Santiam, the Earl family, above mentioned, started immediately to build a house. Mr. Hale, being occupied in ferrying other emigrants, did not start his permanent house until at a later date. When he was relieved of the first rush of ferriage, he hired four men and worked very rapidly, he completed his house before the Earl house was done. The honors of owning the first home in this locality are, therefore, divided. The Earl family began their first, but the Hales completed and lived in theirs first. . ." (18:65-66).

Martin Miller chaired a committee that was supposed to determine what was the oldest log house and the oldest frame house in Linn County. The findings were reported in the February 1, 1907 *Albany Democrat.*

". . . There is no doubt but John Packwood came to Oregon prior to 1844, for he commenced building in the spring of 1944 and in the spring of 1846 sold his home to John J. Crabtree." He cites Mrs. Rebecca Crabtree Morris agreeing, since her father had purchased the house. She know that it had been exhibited at the 1905 Lewis and Clark Exposition with a sign saying 'Built by John Packwood in 1844'.

"Mr. Crabtree wintered in the Tualatin plains. In the spring of 1846 he started to locate a home. While traveling up the valley he found a man living in a log cabin by the name of John Packwood . . . on a strem of water now known as the Crabtree river (Creek) in Linn county.

"It was traded to John J. Crabtree in 1846. It still stands on its original foundation of oak blocks which are in a remarkeble state of preservation.

"This cabin was used by Mr. Crabtree for many years as a home and is now used for a hay barn. **(This information is in error.)** "John (Packwood) came west in 1845. This cabin belonged to his father Elisha Sr. . . . and brother (William) who came west in 1844. The cabin was located where the old Indians trail crossed (later named) Crabtree creek. In 1845, Elisha and son located the claim in the spring, built a cabin, cleared some land and planted a

garden. Then they were supposedly frightened away by Indians. They returned in the spring 1846, found the cabin occupied by John Crabtree's family, sold it to him and shortly after went to California . . ." (3:368 & 2).

". . . I further find that Granville H. Baber, better known among the early pioneers as Judge Baber, came to Oregon in 1845, wintered near the Tualatin plains and in the spring of 1846 started out to hunt a home. He came up the valley, crossed the Santiam, drove up the valley three miles and located on 640 acres, and pitched his tent.

"Mr. Baber brought a set of carpenter's tools with him and a good broad ax. He knew how to use his ax, for he went to work hewing out timbers to put up a frame house. He also rove out his weatherboarding and dressed it with is bench planes, and by the help of his wife they had a good frame built long before winter came on. This house was built two miles north of Knox' Butte and three miles south of Jefferson, on the road leading from Knox's Butte to Jefferson." (12:4).

So this 1845 wagon train helped settle Linn County. The Crabtree family lived in the oldest log cabin in the county, the Baber family lived in the oldest frame house in the county. Milton Hale and William Earl each built early log cabins. Hale helped build the first log cabin in Albany and the Smeed family lived in it. Abner Hacklemand built the second log house in Albany.

Some of the others who were part of the New England Emigrating Company were Milton Hale, who built a ferry to help emigrants cross the Santiam River; Hiram N. Smeed, who sold his Albany claim to Thomas and Walter Montieth in 1848; Jacob Wheeler, who became Linn County's first elected Sheriff; Josiah Osborn, whose Union Point family was at the Whitman Mission during the November 1847 Indian attack; and Rev. Thomas S. Kendall, who became the first minister at the Oakville Willamette Presbyterian Church; Dr. Washington Blain Mealey, who became a senator in the Oregon provisional and territorial legislature; and John McCoy, who became a Linn County judge under the provisional and territorial governments. Mealey and McCoy were the first elders of the Oakville Willamette Presbyterian Church, which was organized as an Associate Presbyterian Church (Seceders) by Rev. Kendall on July 9, 1850.

Names of several members of this wagon train are still featured in the area surrounding Albany: Gore (school and road near Lebanon), Knox (Butte) east of Albany, Crabtree (town and Creek) east of Albany, and Courtney (Creek) near Brownsville.

Elizabeth Miller Wilson, daughter of Rev. James P. Miller (he spelled it Millar) and wife of U. S. Senator Joseph G. Wilson, wrote in her early recollections of Albany: "The wide-spread valley — from the Cascade mountain on the south, the rapid flowing Santiam on the east, and the encroaching mountain slopes on the west, with the meanderings of the Willamette River on the north — known as the Albany Prairie, was

one continuous panorama of picturesqueness that the pen will never depict and brush never paint. The tepee of the savage was erected on the banks of the Calapooia, Santiam and Willamette rivers." (She and her father had traveled separately to Oregon in 1853 by way of Panama. Her three different manuscripts are kept in the Radcliffe College Library, Cambridge, Massachusetts.) (15:31, 145).

Donna Montgomery has compiled a list of the members of the New London Emigrating Company. This list is by head of household and the number in each family.

Allison, Nelson 1
Baber, Grandville 2
Kelknap, William 1
Booster, Daniel 1
Bottan, John 1
Bozorth, Squire 11
Bradley, John 1
Buck, William W. 4
Birkhart, Cariolanus D.* 1
Case (Chase), William 1
Chamness, Israel 5 or 4
Cleveland, John 1
Clock, James 5
Comfort, Edwin B. 2
Cornelius, Absalom 12
Cornelius, George 3
Cornelius, Isaac 3
Courtney, Isaac 3
Courtney, John B. 9
Crow, Eli C. 1
Cutler, Benjamin 1
Davis, Joseph 7
Earl, John 3
Earl, Margaret 7
Eikenbury, Samuel 1
Evans, Dr. Alexander 7
Findley, James Alex 1
Findley, Joseph S.1
Findley, William 1
Fisher, Ezra 6
Force, George W. 2
Gallaher, William C. 10
Gore, William B.
Griffith, Elisha N.8
Hackleman 1
Hale, Milton 3
Hawks, William 1
Henderson, William 1
Hendricson, William F. 1
Herbert, Joshua, 7
Hibbert, William 1
Holland, Alamanzer 1
Holland, Francis S. 1
Holland, John W. 3
Holland, Joshua 1
Holiday, J. B. 1
Huber, Noah F. 1
Johnson, Hezekiah 9
Kees, Elmore 1
Kees, Morgan 2
Kendall, Jehial 1
Kendall, Thomas S. 4
Knox, James 9
Laberson, Timothy Jr. 8
McCoy, John 5
McCoy, William 1
McCullock, George 1
Martin, Charles G. 1
Mealey, James 3
Mealey, Dr. Washington B. 5
Meldrum, John 7
Moist, James 1
Moist, Joseph 1
Morgan, Edward Sr. 10
Morgan, Thomas 1
Morris, James M. 3
Osborn, Josiah 6
Rinearson, Jacob Sr. 1
Rinearson, Peter 1
Ritchie, John 1
Rogers, Alex 1
Rogers, Andrew 1
Scott, John 1
Short, Amos M. 12
Smeed, Hiram N. 1
Staff, Nicholas 1
Striethoff, John Y. 10
Summers, Tom 4
Switzler, John 9
Tallentine, Thomas 1
Umphlet, Stanley 4
Wallings, Agustus 1
Walter, Elias 1
Wheeler, Isaac Newton 1
Wheeler, Jacob 1
Wheeler, James 1
Williams, Charles Austin 5
Williams, Naomi 3
Williamson, Henry 1
Wilson, General Anthony 6
Woodcock, Williston D. 5

303 people

(2 & 3:381-514)

*Donation Land Claim records, his obituary, and *History of the Burkhart Family of Linn County, Oregon,* show Coriolanus "Crill" D. Buirkhart as arriving in Oregon Territory in 1846.

Abner Hackleman's grandson, Thurston P. Gilchrist, noted a portion of Abner's obituary said, "He was absent on the Oregon trip 18 months, and on his return home he gave it as his decided opinion that Oregon was the best country he had ever seen. He immediately began to make preparations to return but like Moses he was only permitted to behold the promised land." (10:7).

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