TRANSACTIONS

OF THE

THIRTIETH ANNUAL REUNION

OF THE

OREGON PIONEER ASSOCIATION

FOR

1902

CONTAINING THE

ANNUAL ADDRESS BY JUDGE T. A. McBRIDE, 1847
OF ST. HELENS

AND THE

OCCASIONAL ADDRESS BY HON. W. T. WRIGHT, 1852
OF UNION

AND

OTHER MATTERS OF HISTORIC INTEREST

PORTLAND, OREGON
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1903

REMINISCENCES OF WASHINGTON SMITH GILLIAM.

(Note.—Mr. Gilliam is a pioneer of 1844. His father, Colonel Cornelius Gilliam, held the chief command of the Oregon volunteers in the Cayuse Indian war of 1847-8, and was accidentally killed on March 24, 1848.)

We left our home in western Missouri on the twenty-fourth of February, 1844, that being the fifteenth anniversary of my birthday. We started thus early for the reason that our food was exhausted, and with the view of crossing the Missouri river into what was then Indian Territory, but now the state of Kansas, where we could graze our stock on rushes, which were very abundant.

We crossed the river the second of March at a point about six miles above St. Joseph, then known as Capless landing. I think it is now known as Amazonia. That being the point designated as the place of rendezvous of the emigration, and expecting to be detained there some time, we built comfortable camps, in which we could live fairly comfortable.

We remained here, preparing, organizing, and waiting for the arrival of fellow emigrants until some time in May. We then went out a distance of twenty-five miles to the Nemaha Agency, where a stop of two or three days was made with a view of having some blacksmithing done, it being the last point where we could have that privilege.

According to my recollection and my ideas of the points of the compass, we traveled from there about due west over a trackless country. The first or second night the Indians followed us from the Agency and stole several head of cattle. A hot pursuit was made on the following morning, which resulted in trailing them back to the Agency. It did not take long to fasten the deed upon the guilty ones. The affair was amicably settled by the Agent making restitution out of the annuities of the perpetrators.

We pursued our western course until we struck the trail leading from Independence to the Rocky Mountain region. The

emigration of the previous year had followed this road; we, in turn, followed it. Immediately after this the great rains overtook us and our worst troubles commenced. We camped about a mile and a half from a small stream called the Vermilion. It rained heavily during the night. By the time we got hitched up and drove to the ford it was impassable and rising rapidly. The rain continued to fall in torrents for days, and the stream to rise correspondingly until it got into the boughs of the trees, and when it commenced falling it was several days before it got into its banks, so we could ferry it and swim the stock in safety. The earliest possible advantage was taken of these latter conditions. This little stream that at low water could be stepped over detained us seventeen days in one camp.

The Big Blue, the next obstacle that detained us, was about twenty miles from the Vermilion; but we found it well in its banks and also had the good fortune to find a couple of large canoes with a platform between them which had been left by a party immediately ahead of us, so all we had to do was to ferry our wagons over and swim the stock, which occupied three days.

These rains of which I have been writing caused the highest waters that had been known up to that time in that region, and that high-water mark has never been reached since; so I feel that I have a fair claim to the distinction of being out in and enduring the heaviest rain of the nineteenth century. Be this a distinction or an honor, it is an experience that I do not care to have repeated in my lifetime.

After we crossed the Blue we were not troubled with high water to any extent worth mentioning. Our worst obstacle was miry roads, but with every day's travel the road improved in this respect.

We traveled across the country to the Republican Fork. We journeyed up this stream several days, and before we left it we celebrated the Fourth of July by stopping over and drying our baggage and hunting.

On the 7th we struck Platte, at a point where I am told Fort Kearney was afterwards built. Our route lay up the Platte

and in some two or three days' travel we sighted the first buffalo. The hunters were soon out in force. They laid low twenty-two monarchs of the plain in a short time, and it is estimated that there was but about one consumed, all the balance wasted. I, in company with several others, went out to the nearest slain buffalo to procure what meat we wanted. It was the first one that any of the crowd had seen. They are about as ugly animals as ever graced our continent. There was a minister in the crowd who expressed himself by saying that if he had seen it without knowing what it was he would have thought that he had met the "Old Nick" himself.

Shortly after this the company, being large and cumbersome, dissatisfaction arose, which resulted in the dismemberment of the train into smaller companies, which proved very advantageous to all concerned. About this time our smaller company fell in with Andrew Sublette, a noted mountaineer, who accompanied us as far as Fort Laramie. We traveled days up the main Platte before we came to the forks. We traveled two days up the south fork and then crossed it to the north side, where we camped.

The next morning a sight opened up to us that can never be seen again by mortal man. As far as the eye could reach up the valley of the South Platte, and as far on the bluffs as we could see was black with buffaloes. The quantity of the buffalo was one thing that the early travelers could not exaggerate.

Under the guidance of Mr. Sublette we struck across the country from the last-mentioned camp to the North Platte. In the course of the day we descried a large band of buffaloes under full headway, making directly for the train. We hastily gathered our guns and put ourselves in position, and as soon as the head of the herd came in shooting distance we commenced firing on them, and succeeded, as we thought luckily, in turning them around the rear of the train. I think I may safely say that while we were in the buffalo country we were hardly ever out of sight of the animals.

We struck the North Platte the next day, and traveled up the stream most of the way to Fort Laramie, where we laid by

a day. We met Mr. Joseph Walker here, who was a noted mountaineer and also an old friend of my father's. He happened to be going our way as far as Fort Bridger, and made a very acceptable guide for us.

The day we laid by I was taken with a very violent fever, and remember but little that happened till we got to Sweetwater, where I became convalescent. I remember seeing Independence Rock covered with names innumerable, and the Devil's Gate, where the river had cut its way through a hill, leaving perpendicular banks perhaps a hundred feet high, and a gorge not any wider than the stream.

We followed up Sweetwater several days to a point where we left it to our right, and took into the South Pass, across the Rocky mountains. After a moderate day's travel we camped at the Pacific Springs, the first water that we had encountered that flowed westward. I remember that we felt quite jubilant over the affair, and thought that this was quite a circumstance in our journey. In passing over the country from there to Fort Bridger we crossed the two Sandys, Green river and Ham's fork. We stopped a day at the fort, and next day, it being the first day of September, we started in a northerly course across the country to Bear river. We followed down this stream to the Soda Springs, which were a great wonder to us. On an area of perhaps one hundred acres hundreds of springs boiled up, many in the bed of the river.

We camped here, and next morning, when we started, we left the river, and after traveling some sixty or seventy miles we reached Fort Hall, then a Hudson's Bay Company trading post, where Mr. Grant was chief factor. Here a circumstance occurred that has caused me through life to regard Grant as a bad-hearted man. Peter H. Burnett, a noted man of the previous emigration, had written a letter of instruction and encouragement and sent it to Grant with instructions that he should read it to the emigrants when they reached Fort Hall. When we arrived there the letter was called for, and Grant read it to us. It was a very welcome letter, giving us useful instructions about the route and strong encouragement about the country we were going to. But you can hardly conceive of the bar-

rels of cold water that he poured on Mr. Burnett's words of encouragement. The circumstances were such that such a proceeding was of no profit or benefit to him or to the company he was serving, for it was next to impossible for us to turn back. We were, from the nature of our situation, compelled to go ahead, and he well knew that his discouragement could avail nothing toward stopping us. I have never been able to regard him as a good man.

When we left Fort Hall we entered the country of the Snake Indians. We traveled about 150 miles down the south side of Snake river, then crossed over to the north side at a point now known as Glenn's Ferry; then traveled a northerly course for about seventy miles, and came to Boise river at a point a few miles above where Boise City now stands. We followed the river down to its mouth, where it enters Snake river, which we recrossed at this place. Not far from this place we left the country of the Snake Indians. It is, perhaps, well enough for me to state the kind of treatment we received from them while in their country, especially after so many massacres were perpetrated on succeeding emigrations. I can most emphatically say that their treatment of us was of the most friendly kind. They seemed to welcome us, and I think regarded us as curiosities. Anything we possessed was of value to them. For a pin or a rag we could buy a large salmon. When we came to the first crossing of the Snake river they volunteered their assistance to us. It was a dangerous crossing, deep, swift and the bar upon which we crossed somewhat narrow. A man had been drowned the previous season by getting off into deep water. The Indians assisted us by one of them going ahead of the front team, thereby showing where the bar or shallowest water was, and others, who were dressed in the same fashion Mother Eve was before she ate of the forbidden fruit, took positions below each team to prevent them from being beaten down by the strong current into the deep water. They signified to us by signs to get into the wagons so that our clothes would not get wet, they having no clothes on them to get wet. They performed their task faithfully, and took us over safely, for which we felt very grateful. But there were a couple of gamblers that followed in our wake from whom the Indians stole

a horse. They followed them up, overtook them and killed one of them, and ever after that they were hostile.

After crosing Snake river the second time in two or three days' travel, we reached Burnt river. Here we encountered decidedly the worst road that we had traveled over. For about twenty miles we passed through the narrow canyon of the river over large stones and up and down steep banks, with frequent recrossing of the stream, which made it very lively for us; but when we got through the canyon on a better road we felt a sigh of relief.

About the time we reached the better road we had the good fortune to meet James Waters, an old friend of my father's and also an acquaintance of several persons in our party. He had gone to Oregon the year before, and had kindly come to meet us and help us in. I well remember that he was plied with many questions. One question was asked with some solicitude —that was, if there was sufficient food for the incoming immigration. His answer was that there was enough for several such immigrations. These services were valuable to us, especially in locating camps and in many other ways.

We pursued our way until we reached the Blue mountains, and camped at the foot of them, where La Grande now stands.

In crossing the mountains I saw the first tall timber that I had ever seen, all the timber that I had seen before being the spreading or umbrageous varieties. In discussing the height of the trees, one of the party remarked that it took three looks to see the top.

We crossed the mountains in about three days' travel, and camped about a mile below where Pendleton stands. At this camp a circumstance occurred which was recalled rather vividly to my mind while passing over the scene a few weeks since on the train. The next morning, when we gathered our stock, we found a horse of one of the party was missing. After a little searching we were satisfied that he was stolen. After hunting till nearly noon that noble red man, Sticcus, came to camp, telling us to go our way, and assuring us that he would see that we got the horse. We broke camp about noon that day, and

while we were nooning the next day Sticcus rode up with the stolen horse, and without hinting about gift or present mounted his horse and rode off like a king.

In the course of a day or two after the delivery of the horse we reached the Columbia river. We thought the distance from where we struck the river to the mouth of the Umatilla about two miles, being able to trace the course of the stream by the fringe of willows on its margin. We considered that reaching the Columbia river another important event in our journey.

The Indians between this point and The Dalles we found to be the most insolent and thieving that we had met in our travels. Their insolence was met on more than one occasion with a good, sound threshing.

From this point to The Dalles our route lay principally along the south bank of the Columbia river, although at places abrupt bluffs closed into the river and forced the road out on the highlands.

We reached The Dalles about the 1st of November, and camped there preparatory to "taking water," as some of them characterize it. The boats were supplied by the Hudson's Bay Company. The wagons had to be taken to pieces, the boats not being large enough to take them any other way. The wagons and household goods were loaded on the boats, also the women and children, and some of the men also took the boat, and were landed at Linnton, a point a few miles below Portland, that was expected at that time to be the future metropolis of Oregon. Most of the men and some of the larger boys took the task of driving the livestock over the trail that led down the Columbia River, the snow on the mountains having fallen so deep as to preclude the possibility of passing that way. I was assigned to the task of assisting in driving the stock down the trail.

For the first few days the weather was good, but before we reached Cascade Falls the gates of heaven seemed to have opened, and the rain came down in torrents. The stream near where we camped rose in the course of the night so as to make it impossible to cross it. There we were, with very little to live on. Our situation was becoming critical; but about the third

day, late in the evening, we got provisions from the Falls, and the next morning the water had fallen so that we could cross. We at once availed ourselves of the favorable condition and crossed and pursued our journey to the Falls, a distance of about ten miles, where we found plenty of food awaiting us. When we arrived here the oxen were taken to haul the wagons around the portage, which detained us probably two days, after which we resumed our journey, and, enduring hunger, drenching rains and traveling over the worst roads that I ever saw, we reached Vancouver early in December.

In taking a retrospect of my life I regard this trip from The Dalles to Vancouver as the severest hardship that it was ever my lot to endure. For days and nights my clothes were never dry. That, coupled with starvation and the frightfully terrible roads over which we traveled, combined to make it such. Yet this occurred when I was only fifteen years old.

Mr. Douglas, who was the chief factor at Fort Vancouver, received father kindly and treated him splendidly. We were there several days in crossing the river. During our stay there we were the guests of Mr. Douglas, who was kindness personified, and whom I shall always remember with the deepest gratitude.

Before we got the stock ferried over a boat loaded with immigrants on its way to Linnton stopped at Vancouver. I suppose father thought I had had about enough for one of my age, so he put me aboard of the boat, and in a few hours I landed at Linnton. The next morning a team went out, so I went along with it, and by night I reached the place where the family had preceded us. Father had to come around by Oregon City with cattle, and in a few days he joined us, and our long and tedious journey was ended.

It may be well enough to take a retrospect of things as they were then and compare them with things as they are now.

We traveled through the territory that now constitutes the states of Kansas, Nebraska, Wyoming, Utah, Idaho and well through Oregon, and in all this vast region we did not find one single home, unless you, by a strained construction, call a mission or trading post a home. There were two thousand miles of

this journey which required six months to perform. We stood guard to protect our lives and property from hostile Indians. This being the year that Polk was elected president, the earliest news that we got of it was in July following, and we considered ourselves rather fortunate in getting it thus early, it having come by ship, when, in fact, we did not expect to get it until the arrival of the emigrants in the fall. When a presidential election occurs now, if we do not get the news the next day we feel that we are unfortunate in being deprived of the news so long.

I took my first trip back three years ago. I was three days in making it, and on the route found two large cities—Salt Lake and Denver—and seemingly happy homes everywhere, and made the trip in a comfortable manner that was undreamed of in those early days.

Well, to return. We wintered where the town of Cornelius now stands, about eighty rods south of the depot, with Messrs. Waters and Emerick, who were keeping bach at that time. The winter was very mild, which impressed us very favorably with the climate.

In February father went up the country to select a land claim. I think his was the first claim taken south of the Rickreall. The town of Dallas now stands on part of it. He came back with a glowing account of the country he had seen, and particularly of the place that he had selected for a home. So we got ready, and as early in March, as traveling was good, we started for our new home. We arrived there the 16th of March, it being Sunday. The whole country was a natural park, and, combined with the ideal spring day when we reached there, made it seem to me like dreamland.

We went to work in good earnest building a log cabin, but before we could complete it we were overtaken by the equinoctial storm, which gave us some very serious discomfort. The next thing to do was to put in some garden and sow some wheat, and nature gave us a bountiful yield in both field and garden.

During this season we suffered some privations in food. For instance, at times we had to substitute boiled wheat for bread. It is hardly necessary to say that we did not do this

from choice; but, having plenty of wild meat, milk and butter, we could have a meal that would hardly pass muster now; but I can assure you that a person would be a long time starving to death on it. We never had any shortage of breadstuffs after the first season, for there was a gristmill built in the immediate neighborhood the next year, where we could get flour any time.

A large number of the immigrants who wintered at Dr. Whitman's during the season settled in our immediate neighborhood, and I learned a great deal about the doctor's character from them. It seemed as if he had made a deep impression on them, for they talked a great deal about him, and from their talk I came to have a high regard for him. They told me that he would come home from Wallula, a distance of twenty-five miles, before breakfast, or, if necessary, go up to where they were building the sawmill, a distance of eighteen miles, before breakfast. In fact, his energy seemed to have no bounds, and no obstacle with him seemed insurmountable. It was this summer of 1845 that he visited the Willamette valley, and while there he called on my father; and, as it happened, I was away from home at the time, and, therefore, failed to see him, a circumstance that I have always regretted, more especially since he has become such an important figure in history.

The way we cut and threshed our wheat would seem primitive, indeed, alongside of our steam threshers and combines of to-day. We prepared what we called a threshing floor by smoothing off the ground and making it as firm as possible, and then spread the sheaves down and rode and drove the horses over them until the grain was threshed out of the straw, then rake off the straw and put another lot down, and when the chaff and wheat got too deep on the floor, we would rake it to the center of the floor into a heap, where it would remain until we finished threshing. The next step would be to winnow the grain from the chaff, which we did with the wind, there being no fanning mills at that time in that part of the country. Two years later, in 1847, the neighborhood got the loan of a fanning mill for a limited period of time. It was considered such a boon that it was run day and night, so that all the wheat fanning might be done by the time the mill had to be returned. Notwithstanding the serious deprivations like the above that we

were subjected to, we were, in part, at least, compensated by having a country to live in that was fresh from the hands of nature.

Our only ways of traveling were by horseback or ox wagon. If more than one person were going, sometimes a wagon was brought into requisition, but most generally horses were used in getting about. Saddle horses were cheap, and the keeping of them cost nothing, for the abundant wild pasture furnished a varied, bountiful and rich supply of feed. It was truthfully said in those days that it cost less to raise a sow or a horse than it did to raise a chicken. The above being the conditions, horses were not spared and treated as kindly as humanity would dictate, for they were generally ridden in a gallop, which was facetiously called the "missionary lope," from the fact, I suppose, that they generally rode in that gait.

This spring, 1845, there was a company went overland from Oregon to California. The rendezvous was near our place. Quite a sprinkling of our immigrants joined the company, and among them was James W. Marshall, who three years later discovered the gold mines in California. It was my good fortune to travel with him the entire trip. Father had procured the irons of a plow made in the missionary blacksmith shop near Salem, but before it could be used the wood work had to be put on it. Marshall, being a carriage builder and expert in working wood generally, volunteered to "stock the plow," as we called it. So we had a plow that was stocked by a man who afterward became famous the world over as the discoverer of the gold mines in California, and from which the impulse to gold hunting was given that has resulted in all the rich discoveries since.

The immigration of 1847 brought from Washington City father's appointment as postal agent, with instructions from the Postoffice Department concerning the same. On a recent visit with my sister at Dallas, Or., who has all the papers, I had the pleasure of inspecting them anew. I found them queer reading, from our standpoint.

In the fall of 1847 father disposed of the place we settled on, and moved up the country about twelve miles and bought a place on Pedee. This fall one of my sisters married. In the meantime some Indians had become acquainted with us, and were living in the immediate neighborhood. They took some interest in the wedding, and were very curious to know what her husband gave for her, it being their custom to sell their daughters into marriage. They were surprised beyond measure when told that she was given to him.

It was November of this year that the Whitman massacre occurred. Father was at once notified that he was requested to take command of the volunteers that were to be raised to march against the hostile Indians. He left home abruptly early in December, never to return. His death was the heaviest blow that has ever befallen me.

The next year was one long to be remembered in Oregon. It was the year of the discovery of gold in California. It was late in August that reports of the discovery began to reach Oregon. They reported the mines to be so rich that at first they were discredited; but they were soon confirmed in such a way as to relieve all doubts. It would be hard to exaggerate the excitement that was raised upon the confirmation of the news. In fact, it would be hard to excite a community in any other way to the pitch ours was on this occasion, more especially when we consider how small it was. Everybody that could get away dropped their business and left. My brother-in-law and I rigged ourselves out with a saddle horse and pack horse apiece, and started. We had to travel through the Rogue river and Klamath countries in considerable bands to protect ourselves against the hostile Indians; but by the time we got to where it was dangerous we had fallen in with plenty of company, so we had no trouble on that score. We passed through the hostile country without being attacked or having any horses stolen. In fact, to me it was a trip that afforded me some of the keenest kind of pleasure, new scenery every day and some of it, Mount Shasta, for instance, was of the grandest kind. It was the first time I had left the parental roof.

When we got well into the Sacramento valley, just after we had struck camp, an acquaintance rode into camp with his pack horse and proceeded to camp with us. He had a thrilling

story to tell of his previous night's experience. It seemed that the company he traveled with through the hostile country were highly disagreeable to him, so when they reached the Sacramento valley, where the Indians were friendly, he tore himself from it and was traveling alone. During the first day of his lone travel he bought a salmon of the Indians. When he camped that night he cooked part of the salmon for supper and laid the balance within a few feet of where he made his bed. After retiring, while looking out into the increasing gloom, he saw an approaching form that looked as large as a covered wagon. His bearship, for such it was, very coolly and unconcernedly appropriated the remainder of the salmon, and sat down within a few feet of him and quietly ate it. After eating he still sat there, seeming to ponder on what to do next. In the meantime the campfire got into the dry grass and burnt toward where Mr. Bear was sitting. When it got unpleasantly near him he slowly moved away and disappeared. Some Indians were at the camp in the morning and were shown the track. They assured him the best they could that he was very fortunate in not being served up for a supper for Mr. Bear. When he reached our camp and narrated the circumstance, he remarked that he had concluded that he would not camp alone any more.

I went into the mines, and worked with only fair success until late next spring, when I became homesick, and, not appreciating the opportunities as I would have in later life, I returned home, where I arrived the 16th of June, 1849.

After resting a few days I visited a camp meeting that was in progress near Salem. I had visited the meeting at the same grounds the year before. I was very forcibly impressed with the difference in the dress of the people in the two years. The first year, before California had poured her wealth of gold into the country, the people were dressed in very plain pioneer style, the men in buckskin pants, with the balance of the suit corresponding, the women in calicoes and muslin. But this year it was very evident that they had freely availed themselves of the privilege that the great quantity of gold that had found its way to Oregon gave them to improve their attire, for in the case of the men broadcloth had taken the place of buckskin, and

with the women silks and satins had replaced calico and gingham.

In 1851 there was a vacancy in the sheriff's office, and I was appointed by the county commisioners to fill the vacancy. During my incumbency, in the discharge of my duty as sheriff, it fell to my lot to execute a death warrant by hanging a man by the name of Everman, who had committed a very foul murder. It was not a very pleasant duty to perform, and most certainly one that I never wanted to be called on to repeat. This was the first execution for murder in Polk county, and I think the second in the territory, excepting the Indians that were hung at Oregon City for the murder of Dr. Whitman and others.

There was another circumstance that grew out of the murder case that gave me the unenviable distinction of being the only man that ever put up a white man at auction and sold to the highest bidder. The man in question was a brother of the above murderer. He was found guilty of being accessory to the murder after the fact, which would entitle him to a term in the penitentiary. There was no penitentiary in the territory at that time, and the judge, in sentencing him to a term, made the provision in the order that. in default of there being no penitentiary, that he be sold to the highest bidder for the same term that he was sentenced to the penitentiary. Some of my lawyer friends tell me that the judge assumed a very doubtful right in so sentencing the culprit; but no legal move was made to in validate the judge's order, so the matter rested.

The above execution occurred on the 11th of May, 1852. That year my future wife crossed the plains and settled in the neighborhood where I lived. After a year's acquaintance we were married and moved to a donation claim that I had three miles northwest of Dallas. At this time I was engaged in cattle-raising.

We lived here until 1859, when I became disgusted with the long, wet, dreary winters. That, coupled with the growing shortage of public pasture, caused me to sell and seek a country with less winter rains and more public range. From what we could hear of the Walla Walla country we concluded that the winter

weather and range were about what we wanted, so we at once decided to emigrate thither. In July I gathered up the cattle and started. The journey was somewhat tedious, a part of it being over dusty roads and the weather at times hot. I reached Dry creek, at Mr. Aldrich's place, early in August. I bought a man's claim, just above the Aldrich place. I stayed some two weeks getting the cattle settled on the range. I started back for the family the 1st day of September, traveling with saddle and pack horse.

On my way back I had the good fortune to fall in with an immigrant who had been in Oregon, and knew the locality where my land was, and sell him my farm, and was thus relieved from being detained on that account.

I reached home in twelve days after leaving Dry creek, and found the folks all well. We hurriedly made our arrangements for our departure to the place that I had selected for our new home. We bundled our household goods into a wagon, bade good-bye to our friends, and started. We drove over the country to Portland, where we put the wagon and team on the boat and got on ourselves, and finally landed at The Dalles. From there we took the wagon to Walla Walla, arriving at our new home the 23d of October.

There was nothing there in the shape of a house but a miserable hut, that would neither protect us from the rain or cold. Therefore, it was very important to build a house at the earliest possible time. I took a man with me into the mountains to assist in getting out the timbers, and put another one to hauling them as fast as we got them out; so it was not but a few days till we had the material on the ground with which to build a cabin. We at once put it up and finished it so as to make it endurable for the winter.

This was a tolerably severe winter, a great deal of snow and cold weather, but the stock got through in good shape, for the reason that the grass was fine in the late fall, which put them in good shape to withstand bad weather, and the country was all open, so that they could range on the creeks and browse when the grass was covered with snow. As to ourselves, we got along fairly well in the line of provisions, but I can assure you we did not enjoy any delicacies. We had plenty of bread, meat and potatoes, but as to the bread I remember that at times I had to work for it. When the flour was low I had to take corn to a neighbor's, who had a steel hand mill, and grind it into meal. I think any person who has ever had the experience of grinding on a hand mill, in the matter of recollection, will be like myself—that is, he will remember it.

When spring came, the first thing I did was to gather up the cattle, that got considerably scattered. When that was attended to we went to seeding and planting garden. The season being very favorable, everything planted grew luxuriantly. I have never since seen such a crop of potatoes as we raised that year. We estimated the crop at six hundred bushels per acre, and I am inclined to believe it was over rather than under the estimate. I often hear people remark that it rains more now than when the country was first settled. I can confidently say that there has never been a season in which more rain fell in the summer season, with possibly the exception of 1862, than fell this season of 1860. I heard remarked that, had it not been for the peculiar nature of our soil, that readily absorbed it, the crops would have been generally drowned out. I look back upon this season as being one of the most enjoyable of my life. The summer was all that we could want it to be. I heartily enjoyed looking over the beautiful country, fresh from the hands of nature, and unmarred by the hands of man; everything seemed to smile. The country became endeared to me, and I have never seriously thought of making any other place my home.

To give an idea of how little people then in the country knew of its value, when it was being surveyed it was talked among the people that it was a waste of government money to survey it, for the reason that there was so little of it fit for settlement; and to-day you could not get an acre of that land for less than forty dollars. It was universally believed that all the country was worth anything for was its grazing qualities, excepting the low bottoms, which were known to be very productive. Everybody who came to the country then came with the intention of raising stock on the fine pasturage which the country afforded. Nobody came with the intention of farming,

for the reason that it was thought that only a very small part of the country would produce grain.

In 1861 I was elected a member of the territorial legislature, which I have always thought was unfortunate for me, for the reason that the following winter was the hard winter, and my presence at home would have been very desirable and beneficial to my interests. As soon as the legislature adjourned, although the severe weather was still in evidence, I started at once for home. We traveled in public conveyance as far as Monticello. We found the Columbia thoroughly frozen up, and waited a few days, hoping that there might be a break-up; but as the bad weather continued and showed no signs of a change, Mr. Moore, a member of the legislature, and I concluded to start on foot for The Dalles. It was one of the hardest trips I ever had. We traveled mostly on the ice, but at times would take to the land, where trails were beaten between neighbors in the snow, who lived along the shore. We were fortunate enough to find lodging every night, and to procure meals when we wanted them.

After about a week of weary traveling we reached The Dalles, where we got saddle horses. A Wells, Fargo & Co. messenger fell in with us here, which swelled our company to three. We had traveled a couple of days when my two comrades became badly afflicted with snowblindness. The road had been broken through the snow, but had later filled up with fresh snow. It took the practiced eye to follow it. My comrades being snowblinded, it devolved on me to lead and break the way. The weather at times was intensely cold, but we found lodging every night except one. Luckily for us, it happened to be one of the mildest nights we had, and with some blankets we passed the night fairly comfortable.

We reached Walla Walla about the last of February. The war was raging then to such an extent and travel impeded that we brought news that was six weeks old.

I found my folks all well and hearty, but the destruction of our stock was something frightful. When I looked them up later I found only about ten per cent of them alive; but, being in the prime of life, and enjoying perfect health, I was not discouraged.

This season the Oro Fino and Florence mines poured wealth into the country to such an extent that money was very plentiful and produce very high. I succeeded in raising a large lot of potatoes and vegetables, and some grain. The season being highly favorable, everything grew splendidly and produced abundantly, and brought a very high prices, potatoes selling at 4½ cents per pound, and other things in proportion, so at the end of the year I had to a large extent retrieved the losses that I had sustained by the severity of the winter.

Ever since I had heard so much about Dr. Whitman from the immigrants who wintered with him in 1844 and especially after his tragic death, I had become interested in him, and in the site of his mission, but had never visited it. In June this year (1862) I took a day for it and got on my horse and rode to the old site. Father Eells was occupying it then. I told him the object of my visit. He was very kind, indeed, and took a great deal of pains in showing me about the place, and explaining things the best he could. He took me to the ruins of the old adobe building and explained the plan of it, and showed me the spot where Dr. Whitman, according to reports, must have fallen. He then took me to where the victims of the massacre were buried, and while standing there one of us kicked the loose dirt and turned up the lower jaw bone of one of the victims. One of the teeth in the bone was filled with gold. We buried it as well as we could without tools, and inferred from the circumstances that they had been buried in shallow graves or been dug up by badgers. I went home feeling that I had been well rewarded for my ride.

The next year, 1863, I was elected sheriff. I have nothing to report that was unusual during my term—the usual routine of business incident to the office, and no executions for murder or anything else worth speaking of. At the same time I was appointed deputy collector of internal revenue under Philip D. Moore. The duties of this position were simply collecting revenue that fell due to the government. The most unpleasant part of my duties was my responsibility for the considerable sums of money that I had in my possession.

After the expiration of my term I returned to the farm and entered into the usual humdrum routine pertaining to farm life.

In 1869, for the first time since leaving, I took a trip to Oregon. The election occurred the day before I started. The telegraph line had reached Umatilla. When the boat landed there the messenger went immediately to the telegraph office with the election news. This was my first contact with the telegraph, and it was hard for me to realize that while the operator was sending the dispatch at that very moment it was being received in Portland.

At The Dalles we met the first tourist who had come on the newly completed transcontinental railroad to San Francisco and from thence by steamer to Portland, and from Portland by river steamers to The Dalles.

I went to Dallas, where most of my people lived. I had a very enjoyable visit, having been away ten years. In due time I returned home and found the folks all well.

My reminiscences having come down to and partly including the year 1869, the year that the first transcontinental railroad was completed, I think about this time they should lose their character as pioneer reminiscences, and thus far their interest to the public; for I think the future historian will draw the line between those who came in an ox team and those who came on the railroads. Hence I feel that my task is done .

March 8, 1904.