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### WHEN SHERIDAN WAS IN OREGON\*

I have lived here nearly ever since Oregon became a member of the family of the United States. My father was one of the young huskies that called Uncle Sam's bet, that of land, but he did not risk my mother's life. He succeeded and went through the Indian war of 1856 without a scratch. His land was about three or four miles from the Lower Cascades at what is now called Warrendale. At the Cascades there were about eighteen or nineteen men, women and children massacred by the Indians—surprised at the break of day I think on April 2 [March 26], 1856.

There was a man who had just taken up a claim joining that of my father, by the name of Thomas Pierce, and he and my father had formed a kind of partnership; between them they had one gun and one small boat. Their claims were, of course, right on the bank of the Columbia River, no roads, not even a trail in most places, and the only way to travel was by boat and then they were informed by the Indian Agent who was fleeing in a canoe, that the Cascades was at the mercy of the Indians. They held a hasty consultation and proceeded to carry all their property that they could not take with them and hide it in the thick woods, expecting their cabins would be burned.

Pierce owned a gun and my father owned the small boat. There was a trail at that time from opposite there to the Lower Cascades. They lost some time in deciding what course to pursue. My father wanted to go down the river from the Cascades and meet help which he suspected would be forthcoming. Pierce thought it would not be the right thing to do for him to take his gun and go away from the poor creatures that were at the mercy of the Indians, not knowing but that they were all dead already. He insisted on taking his chances on going to the Cascades by the trail mentioned and argued that one man was just as good as two where they had only one gun and it an old fashioned muzzle load-

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\*This article was obtained for the *Washington Historical Quarterly* by Mrs. Lulu D. Crandall, of The Dalles, Oregon, a pioneer who remembers Turner Fenner Levens from childhood. She says that the father of the author, Dr. H. F. Levens, was a prominent man and, in addition to being sheriff of Skamania County, as here told by the son, was for a time Commissioner of Wasco County on the Oregon side of the Columbia. She is delighted that Turner Levens has put his recollections into permanent form.—EDITOR.

ing rifle, and said father could do just as good service by taking the boat and go after help, which course they finally took. Father conveyed Pierce across the river and they separated, not knowing but forever.

Pierce made the trip to the Cascades all safe but was wounded later when the surviving few were trying to escape in a bateau at the lower Cascades, but what is now known as Old Garrison, opposite Bonneville. Father made his get-away as fast as he could down the river until he met a small steam boat called the *Fashion Belle*, on which was General Sheridan with a few soldiers and some volunteers. He boarded the little steamer and went back to the Cascades. When they arrived, they could see no Indians; the buildings were all burned to the ground and seemed deserted, but when they attempted to make a landing they soon heard from the Indians by whistling messengers that they sent to the white man and as yet they were hardly visible as they were hidden in the thick timber and brush along the bank.

General Sheridan was then a young Lieutenant but, as proved later, was good material. My father said he was at that time. As they could not see any Indians to shoot at and getting one man shot dead, they decided that it was best to retire to their boat where they had a small, old-fashioned smooth bored cannon, I think, about two inch bore. I have seen it many times since but never measured it. When the Indians saw the enemy retreat, they began to appear but too far away for the guns we had then. Our young commander commenced to prepare the little old cannon and commenced to shoot in the direction of the most Indians he could see. As soon as the Indians became aware that they were being shot at by a cannon which they learned by having the top of a small tree cut off right among them, they became terror stricken and disappeared. While their little boat was still laying off shore, trying to see Indians to shoot at, they noticed a number o canoes crossing the river further up in the rapids where their little steamer could not go. Sheridan ordered the boat to make a trial but she failed and then the little party landed and proceeded on foot to what is now known as Bradford Island just above Bonneville. They did not go far until they found quite a bunch of Indians though apparently peaceful. They took charge of the party, however, having in mind safety first. They then proceeded to cross the river and make their way by land to what was then known as the Middle Block House, now known as Sheridan's Point, where there had been a block house

previously built for just such an occasion as this and where was supposed to be some people still fighting for life.

When they reached the block house there were no Indians in sight, but about this time a company of cavalry had come from the opposite direction blowing their bugle calls which made the Indians hard to catch or see. At the block house they found quite a few people still alive, some dead, some wounded. Farther up the rapids, at what was then known as Bradford's Store, at Upper Cascades, they found another group who had had even a worse time than the little party at the Middle Block house. They too, had some dead and wounded and at the saw mill about one-half mile from Bradford Store none had escaped; men, women and children—all were murdered; some in their beds it is thought, while the buildings were all burned. As near as I can remember, there was either eighteen or nineteen killed and perhaps about the same number wounded. Some of the settlers near Bradford's Store had escaped by the little steamer *Mary*, which at that time laid over at the store three nights in the week and the other three at The Dalles, which was the other end of her run and it is said that the poor little *Mary* received quite a few bullet holes in her cabin while she was making her getaway with her captain playing peek-a-boo with the Indians by keeping his head below the windows in the pilot house, only raising it often enough to keep his course. I could relate a great many other incidents in regard to the Indian massacre if space would permit and my memory was good, but there are parts of most of them that I am not positive about and another thing is that the different survivors do or did not exactly agree on some minor incidents, but in the main they agreed very well.

There were some that exhibited signs of great bravery while there were others who showed signs of cowardice. For instance, Pierce, when he was shot, did not make any outcry at all but said coolly: "Boys, somebody will have to take this oar—they fixed me—"; and just at that time a young man in the boat screamed and said he was killed and made such a noise that hardly anybody heard what Pierce had said. On a hasty examination it was found that the young fellow had only a slight crease wound which might have been as painful as Pierce's wound. Pierce was a small man but had a very large voice and when the young fellow refused to be quiet, Pierce shouted: "Throw that d— fool overboard and hand me my gun; I can shoot yet if I can't row."

Another exhibition of bravery was enacted at another bateau near by where Pierce was and about the same time by S. M. Hamilton whom I believe to be one among if not the bravest man that I knew and I was personally acquainted with nearly all of them later. Hamilton was another one of the men that called Uncle Sam's bet. He successfully crossed the plains in 1852 and located a Donation land claim on what later became known as Hamilton's Island of six hundred and forty acres, and later took up a homestead joining the Donation, making in all something over seven hundred acres, all of which is still together as the S. M. Hamilton estate, not yet divided and is quite valuable at the present time. Hamilton, with his family, was hastily getting ready to skip at the same time the party at the Old Garrison was, one-half mile farther up the river, and when the party was just about ready which consisted of the Hamilton family with about five children and two or three single men, and maybe another small family (I am not sure about that) but they were gathered on the beach to embark in their bateau in sight of the other party at the Old Garrison. They by this time could hear the Indians' rifles popping like pop corn in a skillet with a tin lid on. They noticed a woman coming across the rocky bar between them and the old garrison where Sheridan landed later and lost one of his men. The woman was carrying a child and a large carpet bag and was hurrying with all her strength. All of Hamilton's party was by this time in the boat ready, but Hamilton said: "We must wait for that woman," and at once started to meet her, but he seemed to have had a hunch and turned to look back and saw some of the young men just starting to push the boat off. He ran back to the boat and grabbed up his gun; he was also known to be a good shot. "Now," said he, "the first man that attempts to push this boat off and leave that woman will surely be a dead man if this gun doesn't fool me." That settled it and the woman and child gained the boat and were saved. Her name was that time McNatt, but her husband died later and she remarried and her name is now Mrs. Wm. Wallis and if still alive she lives at Port Ludlow, Washington.

Hamilton was a common sized man, very pleasant, a good neighbor and good entertainer with a very even temper; he did not seem to try to get rich; he had many opportunities to do so but he always had plenty and tried to be happy and make others happy. He would never hurt anybody's feelings without just



cause and was generally cautious in all things which some newcomers sometimes mistook for cowardice but whenever they tried the right way to find out they invariably found their mistake. It has been said he was in the crowd that killed Joe Smith at Nauvoo, Ill., but that is not sure. I will say for my part that if Hamilton thought it was right he surely had the backbone to be there. Mr. Hamilton died I think in 1889 or 1890 and Pierce was drowned in the Chehalis River a few years earlier, accidentally. My memory interferes with my story considerably. I would like to tell just who was the captain of the little steamer *Mary* that I spoke of before. I think, however, that it was Captain Dan Baughman, brother of the old pioneer Captain Ephraim Baughman, who I think now lives at or near Lake Chelan. Captain Dan Baughman was drowned on the Lower Columbia. I never heard the details of his death.

And now back to the block house: As soon as all the living survivors were found and the wounded and dead taken care of, Colonel Wright, I think, who was in command of the U. S. Army of this district sought what Indians had really done the murdering at the Cascades by taking Indian evidence. He found that some of the Indians that Sheridan and his party had taken prisoners on Bradford's Island were really guilty and he speedily hanged everyone that he could find sufficient proof against, ten in all, I think. He hanged the best Indian that ever belonged to the Cascade tribe—Tumult was his name. In justice to Colonel Wright I will say that it was not his fault, for he convicted him on Indian evidence as he did the rest. Tumult was the real chief of the Cascade tribe and it transpired later that he flatly refused to join the mutiny that was probably planned by other tribes to exterminate the white race on this coast. The Cascades at that time was a very important point as all the supplies had to go through that point to reach Eastern Oregon and Washington, and if they could take and hold it they could easily exterminate all the whites east of the point. If they could not destroy them farther west they could at least hold them back from Eastern Oregon and Washington and as the Cascades seemed to be an ideal, easy place for the Indian to hold, the plan was to carry it out. They would have made a lot of trouble for Uncle Sam and the Mossbacks but when they got the Cascades, they found quite a quantity of whiskey which they quickly devoured and a great many of them became drunk and demoralized, which I suspect was one cause of their failure.

Pierce foresaw that very thing and argued with the rest of the party that abandoned the old garrison where the whiskey was stored. Pierce wanted to stick around close by and come back at the Indians when they became thoroughly mixed with the whiskey and do them right, but the party could not agree; some of them had cold feet; that was what made them late in getting away; they had plenty of time if they had not spent so much of it in arguing the point; they were still arguing when the Indians charged the place.

Now, I will go back to Tumult: Some of the Indians told in their testimony that Tumult had given guns and ammunition to the Indians to fight the whites; Tumult replied to that by saying that he did and if he had not he would have been killed himself, and by doing so, they promised not to molest him. But in the absence of other proof his story seemed fishy to the Colonel and his court martial so that they did not pay any attention to it, and hanged him. Now, I think that Tumult was so badly surprised that he got rattled, for he could have told perhaps who all the main Indians were who originated the plan. He knew so well that he had really been friendly to the whites that he could not believe they would hang him after what he had told them and what he had done for them. Tumult would surely have been cleared if the white settlers had attended the trial, but they were all busy attending to their own affairs in gathering up their worldly goods and getting organized again. It all came out later when it was too late to save Tumult, who had told all the whites that he could get to listen to him that the Indians were going to try to kill off the whites and take the Cascades. He said he did not know just when they would do so but he thought very soon. Tumult, on the morning of the outbreak, went to where Bonneville now is and got an old man that lived there alone (I don't know his name but we always called him "Chips." He was an old ship's carpenter). He took him in his canoe to safety and in many ways favored and befriended the whites. It was hard for Tumult to realize that they would hang him.

There were some very amusing incidents and still some very sad ones. One of the saddest I remember was an old German and his son, fourteen or fifteen years old. They ran desperately toward the Block House as everybody did when they found the Indians were upon them. The old gentleman was lucky enough to get there, but the boy was wounded and fell right in sight of

the Block House and the wound would probably not have been fatal if he could have had proper care and treatment, but it would have been certain death to the man that tried to rescue the boy as he lay at the base of a steep hill covered with timber. The Indians could overlook that road or trail over which people would go in reaching the block house from the west. The Indians could sneak down to within a few feet of the boy without being seen by the occupants of the Block House, which they did and the poor boy was thinking perhaps that his friends did not see him. He would raise on one side and motion to them for help and the Indians that were nearest to him would shoot an arrow into his body as often as he would try to signal. The poor father was almost distracted and tried his very best to go to his son's rescue, but was prevented by his friends inside the Block House.

The Block House was, as near as I am able to say, about twenty feet square on the ground, the first story, and about twenty-four feet square on the upper story, with a projection of about two feet all around the building, thereby making a protection against the Indians setting it on fire at the corners. It was provided with port holes about two inches by six or eight inches perpendicular on the outside but perhaps twelve inches square on the inside so as to allow the gun to be pointed in different directions. It was built of fir logs close together and I think the one at Sheridan's Point had a log floor with a ladder or stairs from the lower to the upper, which was not very high either; I have played in it when I was about nine years old and dug out some bullets from the wall, but lost them years ago.

I do not know how many deaths there were in the Block House, but I remember one who was a friend of my father by the name of Griswold, and it seems to me that there were others. There were several in there that were wounded on their way there. A boy, nearly grown, right near the Block House, heard the shooting and went out on the porch to see what was the matter and was shot and wounded. His mother picked him up and ran to the Block House safely; she had two other sons that came in later safely. She was a widow; her name was Sneck; she and her husband started to take Uncle Sam's bet but he died on the plains before he reached Oregon and the widow stayed a while with Dr. Whitman at his famous mission, but came on before the Whitman massacre, and later completed her part of the wager with Uncle Sam and won and finally obtained title to three hundred and twenty acres of land.

There was one incident I remember hearing told that seemed rather amusing to me, though I guess it was not amusing to the parties that enacted it. There was a tall, strong man by the name of Moffet, and a little short German (I have forgotten his last name, but they called him Peter) who were running to the Block house from the west. Moffet could excel Peter in sprinting and soon left Peter far in the rear, but before he got out of hearing he kept calling to Peter: "Run, Peter, run faster." But Peter was beginning to fag and he stopped and shouted to Moffet: "Run faster be d—, I can no faster run—my legs no so long like yours." When Moffet came along where the boy was later killed, the Indians that were stationed on the hillside all took a shot at him and one of them hit Moffet but did not kill him and he ran on and made the Block House. When Peter came along a few seconds later the Indians' guns were all empty and they had nothing but arrows to send after him and he went through without a scratch.

Another incident that always got on my nerves was a young fellow by the name of Galentine was running to the Block House from the east. He was unarmed, and he noticed an old Indian partly lying upon a big stone with a long, single barrelled shot gun. The young fellow was on the alert and dodged into the brush as soon as he saw the Indian and sneaked along a few steps and watched the Indian; he soon made up his mind that the Indian could hear him but could not see him for he was winking and blinking like a toad in a thunder storm. Galentine wanted that gun pretty badly at that particular time so he sneaked around behind the old Indian and with a big stone laid him out and took the gun and ran on all right. Long afterwards I owned the gun and it was a good shooter. I killed many ducks and geese and other small game, but I always disliked the history of the gun and I traded it off for a rifle.

I will try to describe Colonel Wright's primitive but effective mode of executing the Indians of the Cascade massacre. He found a large cottonwood tree handy and fastened a rope to a limb. He then proceeded to place an empty barrel on end. He then placed the Indian on the barrel and adjusted the noose around the Indian's neck and when all was ready the barrel was kicked out from under the Indian and that was supposed to settle that particular case. However, he found one case that puzzled him some before he got through with it. He had con-



victed an Indian by the name of Chinowith who without doubt was a brave Indian and was said not to have been a bad Indian by some people that knew him at that time. I do not remember what the charge was against him or how he pled, but I remember he told the Colonel that the white man could not kill him by any means and surely meant it and it proved not to be all hot air either. When the barrel was kicked out from under him, he did not show any signs of death. They put him on the barrel again and changed the noose and gave him more drop, but the effect was the same. I am not sure how many times they tried that scheme, but they concluded to shoot him to death and I have heard that it took six shots from a large dragoon pistol to finally execute him.

Now, as I said before, the Indians were nearly all convicted by Indian evidence and in one case they had one Indian upon the barrel who had been convicted of burning a house. He pled not guilty but now he saw that it was of no avail he spoke out in Chinook: "Catah mika wake iscum Gabrel yaka mamook pish cope George Jonson house," which means in English, "Why don't you get Gabrel—he burned George Jonson's house." They noted his evidence and the next Indian executed was Gabrel who was already in attendance, being one of the party that Sheridan had taken prisoner on Bradford's Island.

There were perhaps many other incidents of equal interest that my faulty memory prevents me from relating. I was, however, not present to witness all I have been telling you for I was only five years old at that time and was with my mother in the state of Illinois on my father's little farm that he left to call Uncle Sam's bet in the year 1852. My father was a young man at that time, having been born in the year 1824 in the state of New York. My father, previous to his coming west, had been studying to become a doctor with an old time doctor and friend of his, but before he finished his course, his doctor friend died, leaving to my father all his books, etc. Medical schools in those days were very few and costly, so my father for the time being abandoned his studies and came west over the great plains to gamble with Uncle Sam. He came with a party of his friends by ox team and later was pressed into service as a doctor. He lacked, however, both confidence and medicine, which worried him greatly, but he gradually gained confidence and did exceedingly well, considering the circumstances and only lost one case, according to my memory—the wife of his particular friend,

Henry Burlingame, later an old resident of Vancouver and a son-in-law of the old pioneer, Short, whose land claim is now a great part of the City of Vancouver.

Although my father had succeeded in curing and nursing through quite a number of cases of mountain fever and the like, he was very much hurt and discouraged by losing the case of his particular friend and had made up his mind that when he got into civilization, he would quit the profession, but later he realized that he had decided to do something that was very difficult. When he arrived on this coast he found that his services as a doctor were even more sought after than on the plains, so he was obliged to continue against his wishes and also greatly handicapped by lack of drugs that he particularly needed. He worked away as best he could and his friends helped him to import drugs and herbs and he succeeded quite satisfactorily.

In one instance I remember, he wrote back east to some of his relatives for some burdock seed which has been a curse to the Oregon and Washington farmer ever since, but may have been some benefit to the country in general. I will not say as to that point. My father was not noted for his bravery but still was not noted in the opposite direction. Although his ancestors were somewhat of a fighting nature, he did not incline that way. His grandfather on his mother's side, Turner Fenner, was a captain under George Washington in the Revolutionary War of 1776 and came through alive. I still have his old fashioned pocketbook that his mother made for him when he went to war, which contains some of his old papers as well as some of the later generations.

My grandfather on my mother's side went through the war of 1812, not as a soldier, for he was too young, but as a teamster; he and his two older brothers were Frenchmen who had just emigrated to Canada. Their older brothers had taken up land claims in Canada but when the war broke out between the United States and Great Britain the three brothers came over and joined the United States army and went through alive, and later when the war was over, the older brothers went back to Canada and learned that their land, as well as everything else that they left there, had been confiscated by the Government, so they returned to the United States and remained there. My grandfather later married a Yankee woman of Vermont by the name of Hosmer. His name was James St. Ores. So my ancestors, if not I, have

done something for this great United States. As for me, I have always been more on the order of my father in the fighting line, with the quick temper of my mother. I never would fight anybody until I was crazy mad and then I would not have sense enough to use any judgment, so of course, I most always got the worst of it, but I think there is some excuse for me in the circumstances of my early life. I was born in June, 1851, and my father left his family temporarily, in 1852, before I was quite one year old. He returned home either in the last days of 1857 or the first ones of 1858, which made his absence from his family nearly six years. I was then nearly seven years old and of course could not remember ever seeing my father and did not know what he looked like. When he came home, he wore a long, black beard and a heavy, bushy black head of hair. He was a man six feet one inch in height. He did not look like the mind picture I had made of him. I was disappointed in him and positively refused to go to him when he asked me to do so and he, having been away from children so long, did not have the knack or desire to make up with me, so we never did work well together.

I left home at thirteen and have been my own boss ever since; but my younger sister, who was born soon after my father's departure for Oregon and is now Mrs. L. Reed of 349 Cook Avenue, seemed to like father better and made up with him soon and agreed better than he and I. I dearly loved my mother and she realized my predicament and sympathized with me, but I could not understand at that time what was the matter. It came to me later on plain enough.

Well, the locality where we lived in Illinois was practically a new country, and schools were rare things with only about three months in a year and hard to reach, and I did not reach many of them. The last school that I went to there, my sister and I walked about a mile across a lake on the ice. I do not remember how cold it was there, but the ice on the lake generally froze about three feet thick, and when we arrived in Oregon across the plains in November, 1859, we found the school proposition worse than where we had come from, so I have practically grown up ahead of schools, railroads, and telegraph and modernism.

Away back in the early sixties a man who was then known as General Palmer conceived the idea of building a road up the south bank of the Columbia River from Portland to The Dalles. He was aware that he did not have sufficient funds of his own

to do as he wished, so he tried to interest other parties who did. He was not a modern man but honest and upright. He could not interest capital in that direction, which would have been a great utility for Oregon and Washington at that time, as Eastern Oregon and Washington had just commence to settle up and the only means of transportation was by the O. S. N. Company's line of steamboats with good boats and a portage railroad both at the Cascades and The Dalles.

They had good men in their employ and paid them good wages. Fuel and all other expenses were high but to offset the expenses they charged a good high tariff and really had a good thing, like the negro's coon trap, that would "catch 'em goin' or comin'." But if General Palmer could have gotten his wagon road, it would not have been much benefit to the O.S.N. Company, but would have been a great saving to the settlers of Eastern Oregon and Washington, but it would not go. The O. S. N. had the cash, but they could not see the necessity for such a road, so Palmer, after becoming disgusted trying to raise fund, concluded to try to build a trail with what means he had which he did to a certain extent. He was shy on funds and a man of his class could not get funds then much more than he can now, so his trail was primitive and the first winter it became blocked the same as our noted Columbia Highway does and always will, and poor Palmer was hardly able to open it in the spring. He made an effort however, but only got curses for his efforts from the poor mossbacks or webfeet as they were then called, who would try to drive a band of cattle or sheep or horses over Palmer's trail. They wanted it level and paved like the present highway and perhaps would not have objected to the electric lights, but they, like the automobile, were not in sight yet but were waiting just around the corner for the modern man. Palmer was obliged to abandon his trail at quite a loss.

Later some member of the Oregon Legislature ( a Wasco County man, I think) managed to get an appropriation of \$50,000 to build a common wagon road over the same ground that General Palmer had tried to build a trail. Fifteen thousand dollars was set aside for the survey, which was started from The Dalles end of the proposed road. When the survey reached the Cascades the funds for that purpose were exhausted, so whoever was in command came to a wise conclusion by putting the whole affair into the hands of a practical man by the name of John Marden, with



instructions to build a good, practical road as cheaply and as far as the remaining thirty-five thousand would reach, and Marden succeeded by using good, common horse sense and economy, in making a fairly good road, bridges and all, as far as the Lower Cascades or Bonneville.

He paid no attention to the survey for which fifteen thousand dollars had been squandered. If he had followed the survey he would not have covered half the distance he did. Marden's equipment was not expensive nor his mode of operations. His outfit consisted of sufficient tools, a few tents, a small boat and perhaps a team and wagon, plenty of provisions and a few good men, not even a secretary or stenographer or clerk of any kind, but he got there just the same.

The first creek east of Warrendale was originally named Pierce Creek by the Government surveyor, who was father to Captain Pen Short, now in active service on the river. After that Pierce who lived nearest to that stream, whom I mentioned before as being a partner of my father, who was wounded by the Indians at Cascades in 1856, and I think in justice to the old pioneers, he should be entitled to the name still; and Crown Point, now in my nearly sixty years' residence along the banks of the Columbia River, the only name I ever heard for what is now called Crown Point was an Indian name Lamai Lemati, which means Old Woman Mountain, which was said to have derived its name from an old Indian woman who was partly blind who climbed up the mountain for some purpose that was never explained to me. It was said she slipped and slid down the hill and was killed, and therefore the name in her honor. Perhaps Hood River was formerly named Dog River by either Lewis and Clark or Astor's party, but of course they are all dead, as well as Pierce, and they are of no consequence to modern Oregon any more.

Had not the old Pioneers organized into a society, they too would have been completely covered up from sight and memory insofar as the majority of the people are concerned, but thanks be to George H. Himes and others who have been so active in preserving the honor and respect and memory of the old pioneers. Only for them we would be practically forgotten. I did not take any interest in the Association of the Oregon Pioneers until a few years ago when I saw such an effort to cover them up entirely. I used to have quite a few old pioneer relics; most of

them, however, have got away from me. I had the old leather game pouch or ammunition bag that my old time friend Pierce was wearing when he was shot by the Indians, with the bullet hole through it which probably saved his life, the bullet having passed through five or six thicknesses of the leather that it was made of.

Sometime in the seventies I loaned it to the Oregon Museum then located in Portland, with the solemn understanding that it belonged to me and that I could come and get it at any time I so chose and that it should not leave the Museum without my consent, but the Museum disappeared when I was not looking and with it my much prized pouch. I still have an old violin that has quite a history. It is said to have left some town in Canada, Montreal, I think, some time in the spring of 1813, in possession of a French trapper in the employ of the Northwest Fur Company, but just what year it reached Oregon my informant did not know, but thought perhaps two or three years later. When it finally settled down with its owner, whose name I have forgotten if I ever knew it, but who took up a land claim at or near Cham-poig, Oregon, and took to himself an Indian woman for his wife and reared a family. One of his sons became an expert fiddler of that day but later became addicted to the use of strong drink to such an extent that he could not be depended upon to play when he was most wanted. He had become owner of my violin at that time, of which he was said to have always taken great care, drunk or sober. When he would lay out in the rain and get soaked, the violin was always protected. When his profession was ruined, he got reckless one day and pawned it to a saloon keeper in Dayton, Oregon, for fifteen dollars and failed to redeem it, and in 1873, I think, I bought it from the man who got it from the saloon keeper for the amount loaned but I had to pay more than that amount. I have forgotten, but I gave him an old English Bulls' Eye watch and between twenty and thirty. I would not have been able to get it for that price but he thought he had ruined it.

I had never seen it at the time I bought it, but heard it many times as I was passing his house and I was satisfied it was a great instrument, but when I came to try it I was disappointed. I soon found the difficulty and remedied it, but the old finger board was worn so badly that it was very difficult to note it properly and the holes for the keys were worn so large that home made

keys had to be used to get them large enough to fit. I took it to several men who claimed to be violin repairers who always wanted it and the first one finally offered me sixty dollars, which I refused promptly, but the repairs he made were no good so I tried another man who did better, and later I was advised to try John G. Henrici, who did better and who I was well acquainted with. As soon as he looked at it, he said that it either was a very good counterfeit or a genuine Maggina violin, but he found it necessary to take it all apart as the glue which held it together had given out, and when he had it apart he quickly decided that it was genuine and before I got it home, he was offered three hundred dollars for it. He advised me not to take it which was unnecessary, however, for I was making some money at that time and was in demand, not that I was an expert but because I could make lots of noise and they could depend on me to stay sober and keep the noise going all night long if necessary, which they could not do with a great many fiddlers of that day.

I have been taken body, boots, fiddle and all, ten fifteen and even twenty miles to play for some country dance and sometimes when it was bitter cold and stormy, either in a small boat or canoe, sometimes on horseback, and even on foot at times, but modernism has knocked all that in the head years ago. I am too old, but the old fiddle is just as good as it was when it played for a dance at Champoege the night after the great pow-wow that decided that Oregon was United States Territory many years ago, although it has probably been fixed up several times during its life. It is two or three times my age and still hale and hearty.

#### *An Early Feud in Oregon*

From my recollections, the feud of Bush and Bradford started in 1859 when the Donation Land Claims of that district were surveyed by the United States Government.

Isaac Bush and D. F. Bradford, about the same time in the early fifties, had marked off their land claims so that the two claims overlapped, and when the survey came the trouble commenced and a long law suit resulted, which was carried through the courts until Bush became short of funds. Bradford, however, had been prosperous in business and with the aid of a relative, by the name of Flint, had built a tramway or railroad from the Upper Cascades to what was then called Middle Block House,

but now known as Sheridan's Point, and by that means had become interested in a line of small steamboats plying between Portland and The Dalles, and used his little mule railroad to transport the freight around the rapids.

They had by this time improved on their little steamboat's power so they could run up the rapids in the low stage of the river as far as the Middle Block House, and in the high stage they had little schooners, built very much like the Columbia River fish-boats, only larger, with plenty of sail and when the wind was good they could very nearly sail over the whole rapids. Some times the wind would be from the east or down stream, as we called it, for several days, so they always had teams on hand to haul the freight and passengers as far as the Middle Block House, then the passengers were conveyed to the Upper Cascades with coaches.

P. F. Bradford was, I think, also interested with his brother, D. F., in the little railroad, and also had a store at the Upper Cascades at the upper end of the road and the boat landing, and he was also quite prosperous and so naturally helped his brother in the fight over the claim.

I remember that when I arrived at that place in the fall of 1859 there was trouble brewing between Bush and the Bradfords. I was only eight years old then and my father cared for the wharf boat at the Lower Cascades and took care of a team of eight mules for the Bradfords and the steamboat company. During the following winter or spring he was either appointed or elected Sheriff of Skamania county, which with all his other work, made him a very busy man.

There was a man at that time by the name of Edmond Sullivan, a master shipbuilder, in the employ of the steamboat company. I think he was then building the old steamer *Idaho*, at the Upper Cascades, on the Oregon side of the river. He was a noble and fearless man. I think the first time I remember seeing Mr. Sullivan was in the spring of 1860. He came to our house early in the morning before we were up with a prisoner who killed a man by the name of Andrews at Upper Cascades. The prisoner's name was Donovan. Sullivan had volunteered to arrest the man and had walked him from the Upper Cascades to the Lower Cascades, about five miles, and turned him over to my father, who was sheriff at that time. Nobody knows the facts about the killing. It was in the night and no one saw it but the two. It



was done on a bridge between Bradford's Store and the main land. The store was built on a little Island with the railroad bridge and also a foot bridge connecting it with the main land. Donovan claimed that Andrews was about to throw him off the bridge and that he shot in self defense. They were both drunk and it was generally believed that it was a friendly bout to start with. They were apparently friends and got drunk together and I think they were both working for Sullivan on the steamer *Idaho* on the Oregon side of the river.

Now this man Bush had quite a large family, four sons, I think, and three daughters. Before I came there Bush had built quite a large dwelling two stories high which would have been a fine building at that time if it was finished, as it was started but it was never finished. He used it for a hotel, however, which was his only income, and with a large family like his and another hotel in opposition to him it was not, by any means, a bonanza. Some of his sons were at that time grown men. All carried guns, everybody did at that time. I did myself until I was nearly a man, and I was a good shot.

The only gun then was the old Colt's muzzle loading revolver. Jay Bush, not the oldest son, if he was drinking and if he was crossed in that mood, was almost sure to cause trouble and perhaps do some shooting, as shooting was his strong suit. George and Ed Bush were a little cooler and more reasonable and did not take to drink much, if any. Hawk Bush, the youngest son, died in his boyhood. The father was blustery with a very bad temper and would fight at the drop of a hat. Of course that fanned the row after it was once started and then, to still more worry the Bushes, Bradford and the steamboat company consolidated and formed what was later known as the Oregon Steam Navigation Company. They also formed the Cascade Rail Road and got some kind of a charter from the Territorial Government. They started to build a real railroad, five foot gauge with iron or steel rails, to run from a little below the Lower Cascades on Hamilton's Island to the Upper Cascades.

But here I am ahead of my story. I forgot to mention a very noted character, Colonel Joseph R. Ruckel, who in the meantime had been building a wooden track road on the Oregon side of the river in opposition to the Bradfords. He was a wonderful man. It is said that he came here from California broke, without a dollar. He started to build the road which at that time was a huge undertaking even for a man with money. I do not know

just when he started to build it, but he was working on it when I first came there in 1859. It is said that he in some way got some Indians with a canoe and came up the river from Portland to where Bonneville now is and climbed around the edge of the river to where the Cascade Locks now are. It must have been a huge job for him, as he was at that time past middle age and not a sign of a road, not even a trail, only boulders and brush, but he made the trip up and back around the Cascades Falls and went back to Portland with his Indians and canoe and exploited his ideas thoroughly among the business men of that time. He made the statement that he would build a railroad around the Cascade Falls on the Oregon side if the people would stay by him, and he must have got some encouragement somewhere because he started in to build.

His first plan was to only build from the Middle Landing (or the Block House as it was called then) to the Upper Cascades and he would build a more powerful boat that would stem the rapids at all stages of the river as far as the Block House. He really had a tough time with the project, as he could not get enough money to do things as he wanted so he had to dicker and scheme in all kinds of ways to make ends meet. He finally got his steam boat completed, a very pretty modeled, staunch side-wheel boat. He had left the building of the boat to the best boatmen and builders that he could find and they had built on the style of the best eastern river boats then in use, but lacking in power. He named it *Mountain Buck*, but when he tried her out she would not stem the rapids to his Middle Landing even at a low stage of water and after seeing the current of the river at a high stage he concluded it was futile to try to build a boat that would make it in a high stage so he concluded to extend his road on down to where Bonneville is and build the extension stronger so he could use a small steam locomotive and a donkey engine to pull the cars up a short incline from the river to the main line.

Now this man Ruckel was really the cause of the formation of the O. S. N. Company. Prior to that formation the traffic on the river was handled by several private parties or maybe companies in some cases. R. R. Thompson had built a little steamer on the river above the Dalles Falls called the *Colonel Wright* and he, like Ruckel, had a tough time getting means to complete it. He tried to get W. S. Ladd to furnish him funds; Ladd refused. But Thompson got through in some manner. However, the Bradfords

owned the little portage road at the time and a little steamer between Cascades and The Dalles and I think the boat between Portland and Cascades was owned by Captain Ainsworth, W. S. Ladd and S. G. Reed, and perhaps others, I am not sure about that.

When Ruckle first started to build his transportation line the Bradfords and their partners in the river business laughed and scouted his confidence and said it would be short lived. But they soon found he was a rustler and a financier. His first move was to go after the United States Government freight that was going up the river, for the Indian Department, which was quite an item in those days. Had the Bradfords been wise enough, he would have failed in that for they already had control of the Government freight, which at that time was handled by the Indian Agent who was an old man and a cripple. About that time he was on his way down the river to Portland and the Bradfords had a little short incline at the Middle Block House and a car that they pulled up with a windlass and lowered with a brake.

The incline was quite steep so the old crippled Indian agent wanted to ride down on the empty car to the steamboat. Whoever was handling that part consented and let him down with a run and when the sudden stop came the old man could not hold to the car and he went into the river and was badly shaken up besides. They fished him out and thought it a good joke and one Laurance Coe, who was quite an artist, made a cartoon picture of the old man with a lot of additions which made it look quite comical. But the old man did not see the joke as they did so when Ruckel tackled him for the contract, he signed up with him. When the Bradfords learned that they began to stand up and look around and they soon made up their minds that it was their next move and their next move was to combine and fight Ruckel all together. Ruckel said nothing but kept on sawing wood.

After the combine was made it consisted of J. C. Ainsworth, president, and W. S. Ladd, R. R. Thompson, S. G. Reed, D. F. and P. F. Bradford, Jos Bailey, and possibly some other parties that I do not remember now.

The new company soon got fairly under way building and equipping two portage railroads one at The Dalles of twelve miles and at the Cascades six miles and buying and shipping all the equipment from the east including four locomotives and all material for their cars, spikes, rails and castings everything needed except lumber almost had to be shipped from the east at that time

around Cape Horn and mostly by sailing vessels which consumed a lot of time and money. Some of the new company soon began to realize that the man they wanted to strangle (Col. Ruckel) would be ready to operate his line long before they could. Ruckel was always on his job of trouble. Some of his best men were getting discouraged and were quitting him and selling their account for what they could get either from necessity or lack of confidence that worried Ruckel (and he never forgot a man that deserted him nor one that stayed with him but they received very different treatment later on). But with his bulldog tenacity he was gaining slowly all the time. His little locomotive was about ready in San Francisco, the first to turn a wheel in the state of Oregon; he called it "Pony."

The new company held a council and decided it would be best for them to make friends with Ruckel if possible and get him into their combine. That was all on the quiet, so I was told by one of the company, years afterwards.

The new company decided to send one of their ablest men to approach Ruckel quietly. There is no doubt in my mind that Ruckel was as anxious to join as they were to have him, but he was foxy and wanted the best end of the stick. Therefore he held back a little under the pretext that he wanted to consider the matter thoroughly before he decided. Finally when the deal was made Colonel Ruckel was to be president of the company. Now he was in the saddle where he could get even with the men that left him and favor the ones that stayed by him; which he surely did later on. Captain Harry McNulty was one that stayed by him from start to finish and, of course, there were others.

When the new company commenced to build their new rail road across the Bush Donation Land Claim, the title to which was still undecided in the courts, Bush objected to the building of the road and he and his three sons and quite a number of his friends formed a guard to keep the workmen back and some bad threats were made. I can't remember now just how the company got around the guard, but I think they had the leaders arrested and while their cases were being disposed of the company built the road. I don't think that there was any real clash at that time, anyway Edmond Sullivan was by that time sheriff of the county and was about the only person that did not really fear the Bushes and their friends. He would go and get them every time they were wanted for breaking the law. Of course, that made the Bushes



hate him as bad as they did the Bradfords. But they well knew that they could not bluff him and they were at a loss to know just how to get back at him.

It is almost a certainty that they plotted to kill him the first opportunity. Their chance came early in June, 1864, on the Territorial Election day. I do not remember the exact day of the month.

Jay Bush had been in several rackets and had been arrested several times between the completion of the road and this date, but his friends always got him clear in some way or other. The Election was held at the Ferguson Hotel right off the bank of what was called the Bradford slough, which was in high water a branch of the river through which flowed a strong current. Just opposite the Hotel on a little Island stood the Bradford Store with bridges connecting it to the mainland. The hotel at that time, I think, was conducted by a man by the name of Denison, at least the saloon belonging to it was his. He was a fearless, law-abiding man who had never been in any trouble there at least.

The election officials were counting the votes in a room next to the saloon when the trouble started. The Bushes had adopted an Indian boy and raised him with the family. He was known as Johnny Bush, according to the evidence later. He and the three Bush sons and a man known as "Five-fingered Baker" were the main plotters. Johnny Bush fired the first shot.

Sullivan, the sheriff, was in the room where votes were being counted. When he heard the shot he thought sure it was Jay Bush and went directly to him. Finding him sober and not excited he asked him who fired the shot. Jay said he did not know, that it was done outside. Sullivan went outside and met Ed Bush, who was asked the same question. Ed did not answer but drew a knife and struck Sullivan in the side of his neck. Sullivan answered back with a knife. About that time shooting commenced all around. Sullivan would have made short work of Ed Bush only that George Bush was standing nearby. Seeing that his brother, Ed, was getting the worst of it, he shot Sullivan, I think in the neck but missed his aim and did not kill him instantly. Denison, hearing the row outside, rushed out just as George Bush was ready to shoot the second time. He grappled with George and took his gun and fired it at him, shooting him through the hand. George fell over backward and went into the river. Being a good swimmer he went on down with the current to his father's house, about four hundred feet below. Jay Bush, who had up to this

time been standing watching the fight, now seeing George, as he supposed, killed, and Ed badly cut, shot Denison, mortally wounding him, and then turned his gun on Sullivan. By this time Ed Bush was on the run as fast as he was able, which was not very fast. Sullivan was also very weak from loss of blood but he did not pay any attention to Jay Bush's shooting but followed Ed Bush one hundred feet before he fell.

And here is the strangest part about the whole affair. Sullivan had a good navy revolver in a scabbard on him and well loaded and why he did not attempt to use it nobody knows. It was supposed that Jay Bush followed Sullivan and Ed Bush until he was sure Sullivan was done for and then hurried on to see how badly his brother Ed was hurt. When he got home he found his other brother George there, only shot through one hand, otherwise all right. Ed was pretty badly chopped up. Jay supposed until then that his brother, George, was dead, for he had seen him shot and seen him fall backward into the river.

Denison lived until the following day, but expired on the boat before he reached Portland. Each of the men, Sullivan and Denison, left a wife and children. Sullivan had one son and two daughters. Captain Edmond Sullivan, now a first class pilot on the Lower Columbia River, is the son, and Mrs. Sim Barton of Portland is the oldest daughter. The youngest daughter, I think, lives in Klickitat County, Washington, but I am not positive. Mrs. Sullivan later married J. L. Ferguson, who was later United States Inspector of hulls in Portland for a long time.

That was a wild night, there being a large crowd gathered there for election and waiting for the votes to be counted when the shooting started (which I think was intended to frighten the people as all the shooting except what George and Jay Bush did did not seem to be aimed at anybody in particular). The crowd scattered in all directions. One lot that belonged at the Lower Cascades lit out on foot without any light of any kind down the railroad and when they got about the center of the highest trestle there was on the road they heard a hand car coming. Afraid to make a try to cross the bridge they dropped through between the ties and hung on to the ties until the car passed over them. But they misjudged the distance that the car was from them and they had to hang on there so long that some of them were unable to raise themselves up again. One, however, was able to get up and by hard work managed to get the others up, but one large man by

the name of Peter Dulgerson was exhausted and came very near falling to the ground, which would have added one more death to the feud, as the bridge was over seventy feet high.

One man, S. M. Hamilton, who was one of the judges of election, had a stray bullet pass through his beard that burned his face. For several days after the shooting the Upper Cascades was topsy-turvy. There were over twenty men hunting for the Bush boys everywhere through the woods but for some reason none of them went to the Bush home for two or three days and it seems to me that they had cold feet. I don't remember that they had any trouble taking them into custody; I think that they gave themselves up peaceably.

It was established at the trial that "Five-fingered Baker" and the Indian boy, Johnny Bush, did all the shooting, that is, nearly all, but they did not hit anybody. Baker swore in court that he fired twenty-six shots. My memory is that the Bush brothers were all acquitted. I do not know their plea but I think it was self-defense. I did not hear the trial as they were tried in Vancouver. At that time Skamania County had no jail or courthouse.

After the land case was finally settled Isaac Bush, the father, was awarded his allotment of land nearly one mile west of where he had lived so long. I do not think that Bush ever went to see the land. He got ready and sartered for Mexico with his whole family; he would not even go down the river on the O.S.N. Company's boat. He procured a large open boat and loaded the whole family and his goods in it and went down the river.

TURNER F. LEVENS.