

## DOCUMENTS

### *Narrative of James Longmire, A Pioneer of 1853*

Introduction: Members of the Longmire family have retained a manuscript copy of this valuable document. It was loaned to the writer by Mr. Willis E. Rambo, Principal of the Lacey Consolidated School. Since the manuscript had the appearance of having passed through the hands of printers, an inquiry was sent to Mr. W. P. Bonney, Tacoma, Secretary of the Washington States Historical Society. He replied that the *Narrative* had been published in the *Tacoma Ledger* for August 21, 1892, covering more than a page of that issue. He strongly advised reprinting it in the *Washington Historical Quarterly*, since few libraries had saved the newspaper of forty years ago and the document has real historical value. Readers should bear in mind the date, 1892, as many of pioneers mentioned as then living, have since passed away. The subhead of the manuscript is: "Description of the trip across the plains from Indiana and of the events prior to and during the Yakima Indian War of 1855-1856."—EDMOND S. MEANY.

The following account was prepared several years ago by Mrs. Lou Palmer, from personal interviews with Mr. Longmire: and she deserves the thanks of all pioneers for her commendable work.

As my father's family formed part of the immigration westward from the Rocky Mountains, alluded to by Mrs. Longmire, many of the events and experiences related came under my personal observation. In fact, all the pioneer families of that day had kindred experiences, and these formed a bond of fellowship almost as enduring as the ties of blood. Until my father's death, on April 22, 1879, it is probable that no two families were more intimate than Mr. Longmire's and ours. Hence all the experiences of crossing the plains and of the Yakima war were often recounted in my presence, which, in addition to my own opportunity for observing, made a lasting impression upon my mind. From this point of view I consider the narrative, as given by Mrs. Palmer, a valuable addition to the stock of historical data regarding the lives of the early settlers of the original "Oregon Country" which I am endeavoring to save, because it embodies the personal experience of a man who was an essential in the scenes he attempts to describe—a man, too, whose

reputation for uprightness and honorable action was never questioned.—GEORGE H. HIMES, Secretary of the Oregon Pioneer Association.

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The events here presented are as they were given to me by Mr. Longmire himself, a few years before his death, as he sat on one side of a small table, I on the other, at the summer resort at the foot of Mount Rainier, known as Longmire Springs, which he discovered, and which in later years of his life was his pet scheme, for which he labored industriously, in the belief that it would prove to be a valuable piece of property, and a famous retreat for invalids and tourists, whenever easy means of transportation were secured. I can see him now, as he would promenade the long porch in front of his home, his hands folded behind him, as he watched the snow of Bald Hills, in anticipation of his first trip to the springs, which he made every spring, to see that all had remained as he had left it in the fall. When the snow on Bald Hills melted so that portions of the hills were bare, the prospect was favorable for him to succeed in his attempt to reach the springs, as the snow in the foothills reached such a depth that it was impossible to travel in the early spring months. When the signs were favorable his favorite riding horse "Buck" was brought out, and "Snoqualmie," his pack horse, loaded with necessary supplies. At the time of the discovery there was no stopping place for a traveler but Indian Henry's farm, on the Mashelle River. With faithful "Buck" though deaf as a post, and "Snoqualmie" who enjoyed the distinction of having reached the highest elevation on the mountain that was ever reached by a horse, and perhaps the further distinction of having made more trips across the Cascades into Eastern Washington and return than any other horse living, the pioneer was equal to any adventure, from swimming swollen streams that were sometimes necessary, to walking a bridge made of two trees felled side by side to span a stream which had to be crossed to reach the springs.

The narrative is as follows:

I started from our home on Shawnee Prairie, Fountain County, Indiana, with my wife and four children, Elcaine, David, Tillatha and John, on the 6th day of March, 1853. My youngest child was not able to walk when we started, but spent his evenings while on the trip in learning, which he did by supporting himself by holding to the tongue of the ox wagon while in camp. John B. Moyer, a

very fine young man, who had studied for the ministry but who at that time was teaching our district school, went with us, also Joseph Day, a son of one of our neighbors. I got a neighbor to drive us to Attica, the nearest town, where we took passage on the U.S. *Ariel*, a little steamer running on the Wabash River, as far south as Evansville, at that time a flourishing town of 4,000 or 5,000 inhabitants.

A shocking incident of our first start was the bursting of the boiler of the steamer *Bee*, twelve miles from Evansville, which caused the death of every person aboard. Our steamer took the poor, mangled creatures aboard and carried them to Evansville, where they were met by sorrowing friends, who had sighted the signal of mourning displayed by our steamer. From Evansville we took the steamer *Sparrow Hawk* for St. Louis, thence by the *Polar Star* up the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers to St. Joseph. We were now upwards of 2,000 miles on our westward journey. Here I bought eight yoke of oxen and a large quantity of supplies, and traveled in wagons along the river to Kaneshville, now Council Bluffs, where we camped, as it was yet too early to start on our long journey, the grass not having grown so that it would afford food for our cattle along the route; so we decided to remain for several weeks and make some preparations for another start. I bought a carriage and a span of horses for \$250 which my wife and children were to use as far as the road would permit. I also got a sheet-iron stove which, with cooking utensils, only weighed twenty-five pounds but which proved a real luxury as we were able to have warm biscuits for breakfast whenever we chose, besides many other delicacies which we could not have had by a camp fire. I only paid twelve dollars for this stove but it proved invaluable to me.

At Kaneshville I stood guard at night for the first time in my life, in company with Van Ogle, who was also camped here preparatory to going to Puget Sound. It was dark one evening as I finished feeding my cattle so that I could not see the person who spoke in a fine childish voice, saying: "Is there a man here by the name of Longmire?" I thought it must be a boy by the voice, and answered that that was my name when he introduced himself as John Lane, a man of whom I had often heard but had never seen, a tall, well built man with a smooth, boyish face and fine, squeaking voice much out of keeping with his great body. He invited me to his camp nearby where I met Asher Sargent and his family, Sargent being his brother-in-law, and after some conversation we made arrangements to continue our journey together. While here we met a young



man by the name of Ivan Watt who was anxious to cross the plains, so I arranged with him to drive one of my ox teams, and found him excellent help at various times when we met obstacles that were hard to overcome. His friend William, Sargent's two sons, Wilson and Francis Marion, and Van Ogle drove the others.

The time had come when we decided the grass was sufficient to feed our cattle on the way, and we moved twelve miles below Council Bluffs to a ferry where we made our final start for Puget Sound on the 10th of May, 1853. We camped for the night about one mile from the ferry where we were joined by E. A. Light, now of Steilacoom, who was a friend of John Lane's. Nothing occurred worthy of note until two days afterwards when we reached the Elkhorn River where we found a ferry with only one boat and so many emigrants ahead of us that we must wait two or three weeks to be ferried across the river. A party of emigrants were lucky enough to get three canoes and while they were crossing we all went to work and made one more. By this time they were across so we bought their canoes and with our own proceeded to ferry our goods to the other side. Here occurred an accident which proved disastrous and spoiled in a measure the harmony existing up to this time in our little company of emigrants.

John Lane had started with some fine stock among them a thoroughbred mare of great beauty and very valuable which we would not allow to swim with the rest of our stock safely across the stream. With a rope around her neck held by Sargent and myself on one side of the river, and by himself and E. A. Light on the other side, we towed her across, but Alas—dead. We landed her according to Lane's instructions and tried to revive the beautiful creature but failed.

Poor Sargent had to bear the blame, unjustly, I think, and only escaped blows from Lane, whose rage knew no bounds, by my interference. But he left our party, after begging me to go with him, and in company with E. A. Light, Samuel and William Ray, and a man named Mitchell, continued his journey. We regretted the loss of his beautiful mare, and the unpleasantness between him and Sargent, which caused him to leave our party, for friends were few and far from home consequently much dearer. But these friends were to meet again, which we little expected when we parted.

Two hundred miles farther on we came to Rawhide Creek, a pretty stream with banks bordered with graceful, waving willows, cool and green, and the last that we were to see. In fact, not another

tree or shrub for two hundred miles. Here we stopped to rest our thoroughly tired, foot-sore oxen and do our washing, which was not done always on Monday to the annoyance of our excellent housekeepers who at home had been accustomed to thus honoring "blue Monday." We had killed a few antelopes along the road, which furnished the camp with what we thought the best steak we had ever eaten, and were fired with the resolve to secure a still greater luxury in which we had not yet indulged. We had already seen several small bands of buffalo, but had no opportunity of capturing any of them: so I selected Ivan Watt, a crack shot, by the way, as my companion, and with bright hopes and spirits high we started to bring in some buffalo meat and thus further prove our skill as hunters from the Hoosier State. We left Moyer and Day to guard the camp, assist the women with the washing, and kill jackrabbits, game too small for us. We rode about fifteen miles north, whence we came upon two buffaloes quietly feeding upon a little slope of ground. We dismounted, picketed our horses, and on all fours crept toward them till barely within range of our muzzle-loading rifles when they saw us. We ran for our horses which we luckily reached, and lost no time in mounting, when the buffalo turned and ran from us across the level plain. Going on a little further we came to a ridge or elevation which afforded us protection for our horses which we once more picketed and, walking about a hundred yards, commenced firing into a herd of the coveted game, which we came upon suddenly, selecting for our target a large bull. We fired nine shots apiece but our game did not fall but would snort loudly and whirl around as if dazed, not knowing from where the bullets came and not seeing us from the ridge of ground where we were hid from view. Seeing that our shots did not bring the game to the ground I told Watt we were aiming too high, and reloading, we took aim and fired together, but lower, and to our great joy the huge creature fell, as we thought dead. Rushing back to our horses we mounted and hurried to secure our prize which lay on the ground only wounded and upon seeing us staggered to his feet and ran about a hundred yards and fell again. The rest of the herd, frightened at seeing us, ran wildly across the plain with uplifted tails and were soon out of sight. Seeing that our buffalo could not run I sprang from my horse and taking fair aim at his head fired and killed him, much to my surprise as I had heard a theory that a buffalo could not be killed by a shot in the head. Again we secured our horses and began to strip our game of his smooth coat selecting the hind quar-



ters for our share, judging these to be the choice of cuts, which we were to put into a bag which we had carried for this purpose. Little did we know of the life and customs of the plains. In about fifteen minutes after we began our work we were surprised—yes, perfectly horrified—to see about thirty big, hungry grey wolves coming rapidly towards us attracted, no doubt, by the scent of blood from the dead buffalo. Nearer and nearer they came till, hearing a noise, we looked in the direction of our horses, we saw them running in wildest fright to the north, in a directly opposite course from our camp. We hurriedly left our game to the wolves, most willingly, having no wish to contest their claim to it, and went in pursuit of our rapidly fleeing horses. We had intended to be in camp with our meat in time for dinner and had set out in the morning without a morsel of food in our pockets. So nightfall found us hungry, tired, afoot and miles,—how many we knew not—from camp and friends, our horses gone and hardly knowing which way to turn. However it was a starlight night and fixing my eye on one bright star, I told Watt that we must take that star for our guide and go on as far as we could that night. We went on, Watt complaining of hunger very often, until the sky became cloudy and we could no longer see our guide, when we sat down and placed our guns on the ground pointing towards the star that had been to us so far a welcome guide. The time we could not tell, as neither of us carried a watch, but it must have been far in the night. From the time of leaving camp, the many mishaps of the day, and our extreme fatigue, it seemed an age. Soon all trouble was forgotten in the deep sleep from which we awoke to find the sky clear and our late guide ready to light us on our weary journey. We arose and started once more neither stopping for an instant or turning aside for rock, bush or bramble, but keeping as nearly as possible in a straight line never forgetting our star till it grew dim before the coming daylight. Thus we went, still fasting, over the beautiful rolling country till about nine or ten o'clock in the morning when we climbed a steep bluff and below us saw the Platte River Valley through which slowly passed a few straggly emigrant wagons. The very sight of them brought joy to our hearts, and also relief to Watt's empty stomach for the first thing he did on reaching the wagons was to ask for food which was freely given. I inquired the way to Rawhide Creek, which the emigrants told us was two miles behind them—welcome news to us in our tired and almost famished condition. But as we were so near our own camp I did not ask for anything to eat. Watt, however,

insisted on sharing his portion with me, which I accepted and must say relished after my night's fast. We hurried back to camp where I found my wife almost crazed with grief at our long absence thinking, of course, we had been killed by hostile Indians. My friend Sargent was thinking of continuing the journey the next day if we did not return; but my wife was thinking of some way by which she could return to our old home on the banks of the Wabash. However, when we told them of our danger and narrow escape, even with the loss of our horses and game, grief turned to joy and peace reigned once more in our camp.

After resting the remainder of the day we prepared not for a buffalo hunt but for a hunt for our horses the next morning. Mr. Sargent loaned us two of his horses which we rode and in case we did not return that evening he was to put two other of his horses to my carriage and proceed, with Moyer, Day, my family and goods, the next morning, we to overtake them somewhere along the line. After making this arrangement we went back to the scene of our disaster and our late adventure where we found large herds of wild horses but no track of our own which being shod were easily tracked. We hunted until sundown when we came to a mound or hill from one hundred to one hundred and fifty feet above the level with a circular depression or basin on the top of it which we selected for our camp. Taking our horses into the basin we made them secure by hobbling them, took our supper without drinks and cold. Here we witnessed from our elevated position a grand buffalo show—fully 5000 scattered over the vast plains, many of them quite near to the mound on which we stood; but we had not the least temptation to hunt buffalo although it seemed to be one vast herd as far as the eye could reach. We arose the next morning and continued our hunt till the middle of the afternoon, when we gave up all hope of finding the lost horses and, taking a westerly course, set out to overtake the wagons which had stopped before night for our benefit. A buffalo hunt proved a source of joy as well as sorrow to our party for soon after camping for the night Moyer saw two men, buffalo hunters who, like Watt and myself, had been lost, riding our lost horses leisurely along the road. Going to them Moyer said the horses belonged to our camp. They told him that they had seen the horses on the plains and knowing that they had escaped from some emigrant train caught them and gladly rode them into camp. They declined the five dollar reward that Moyer and my wife wished them to accept for the great service which they had done us. The



previous day my wife had rode in the ox wagon leaving our carriage at the service of Mrs. Sargent and family in part payment for the borrowed horses but the next day she gladly gave up the cushions and comfort of the ox wagon for those of the carriage which was again drawn by the lost horses.

Nothing further happened except the occasional killing of an antelope or stray buffalo, my desire for buffalo hunting not being fully satisfied although I had vowed, after my late adventure, never to hunt buffalo again. Sargent and I killed one about this time that weighed fully 5,000 lbs., whose meat was so tough we could not use it, he evidently being the patriarch of the vast herd. We crossed the Rocky Mountains at South Pass according to the instructions given in "Horns Guide for Emigrants," which we had carefully observed during our trip. It gave minute instructions as to proper camps, roads, and where to find good water and grass, the crossing of streams, and other information which we found of great value as our experience afterwards in regard to grass and water proved. Some days after crossing the mountains our party was increased by the families of Tyrus Himes, father of George H. Himes of Portland, Oregon, and Judson Himes, Mrs. W. H. Ruddell, and Mrs. Nathan Eaton, of Elma, Washington, and Mrs. John Dodge, the first of whom settled on their arrival here on a place five miles east of Olympia and the last on Mima Prairie. Accompanying Mr. Himes were Joel Ridson and son Henry, C. Ruben Fitch, Frederick Burnett, James and Charles Biles and family, "Bat" and Elijah Baker with families, two Woolery families, William Downey and family, Kincaid and family, Peter Judson and family, beside a number of single men—all told numbering somewhere near one hundred persons.

All went smoothly until we crossed Bear River Mountains when feeling some confidence in our own judgment we had grown somewhat careless about consulting our handbook, often selecting our camp without reference to it. One of these camps we had good reason to remember. I had gone ahead to find a camp for noon which I did on a pretty stream with abundance of grass for our horses and cattle which greatly surprised us as grass had been such a scarce article in many of our camps. Soon after dinner we noticed some of our cattle begin to lag and seem tired and others began to vomit. We realized with horror that our cattle had been poisoned; so we camped at the first stream we came to, which was Ham's Fork of Bear Creek River, to cure, if possible, our poor sick cattle.



Here we were eighty miles or a hundred miles from Salt Lake, the nearest settlement, in such a dilemma. We looked for relief—bacon and grease were the only antidotes for poison that our stores contained, so we cut slices of bacon and forced it down the throats of the sick oxen who after once tasting the bacon ate it eagerly thereby saving their lives, as those that did not eat it died the next day. The cows we could spare better than the oxen. None of the horses were sick. Had we consulted our guide book before instead of after camping at that pretty spot we would have been spared all this trouble as it warned travelers of the poison existing there. This event ran our stock of bacon so low we were obliged to buy more, for which we paid 75 cents per pound and 50 cents per pound for butter, which we bought of Mr. Melville one of our party.

We were joined at Salmon Falls by a Mr. Hutchinson and his family. Here we crossed the Snake River for the first time, a quarter of a mile above the falls. Hutchinson had a fine lot of horses and cattle which caused him much anxiety as he feared they might drown while crossing the river. There were many Indians here of the Snake tribe and he tried to hire one of them to swim his stock, for which he offered him money without making the least impression on the stolid creature. Finally taking off his shirt, a calico garment, Hutchinson offered it to him, which, to our surprise, he took—this was the coveted prize. He swam four horses safely and drowned one; when he reached the opposite side of the river he quietly mounted one of the best horses and rode rapidly away over the hills, leaving us to the difficult task of crossing the river which we did without further accident. We paid, however, \$4 for every wagon towed across. For 200 miles we wended our weary way on to Fort Boise, a Hudson's Bay Company's trading post kept by an Englishman and his Indian wife, he being the only white person at the post. Here we had to cross the Snake River again which at this place was a quarter of a mile wide, with poor prospects for a crossing as the agent kept the ferry and demanded \$8 per wagon, just twice what we had paid at other points. I tried to get an Indian to swim our cattle, but failing, Watt proposed to go with them if I would, which seemed a fair proposition, and as they would not go without someone to drive them we started across. Watt carried a long stick in one hand, with the other he held to the tail of old "Lube," a great raw-boned ox who had done faithful service on our long and toilsome journey. I threw my stick away and went in

a little below Watt but found the current very strong and which drifted me down stream. Thinking I should be drowned I shouted at Watt "I'm gone." He with great presence of mind reached his stick to me, which I grasped with the last hope of saving my life and by this means bore up till I swam to Watt, who caught on to the tail of the nearest ox thus giving me a hold on old "Lube's" tail—welcome hold, too, and one which carried me safely to shore. Only for Watt's coolness and bravery I would have lost my life at the very spot where Mr. Melville's men were drowned the previous evening.

At Grande Ronde a happy surprise awaited us. Nelson Sargent whose father was in our party, had met John Lane who had arrived in advance of us, with the welcome news that a party of workmen had started out from Olympia and Steilacoom to make a road for us through the Naches Pass over the Cascades, ours being the first party of emigrants to attempt a crossing of the Columbia North of The Dalles. Lane waited at Grande Ronde while Nelson Sargent pushed ahead to meet his aged parents.

Our party was re-united at Grand Ronde, E. A. Light, John Lane, and others who had left us at the Elk Horn River, met us here and continued the journey with us across the Cascades. We went 50 miles further to the Umatilla River where we rested two days and made preparations for the remainder of the trip. Lest our provisions run short I bought at a trading post here 100 pounds of flour for which I paid \$40 in gold coin—unbolted flour it was, too.

We left the emigrant trail at Umatilla trail and with 36 wagons struck out for Fort Walla Walla, a trading post fifty miles farther on kept by an agent of the Hudson's Bay Company of whom we bought lumber—driftwood from the Columbia River,—of which we made a flatboat on which to ferry our goods across the river, afterwards selling or trading the boat to the agent in payment for the lumber.

On the 8th of September, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, our boat was finished and the task of crossing commenced,—not a pleasant one but by working all night everything was safely landed by sunrise next morning, except our horses and cattle and these we wanted the Indians to take across for us. Nelson Sargent was the only man in the crowd that could speak Chinook, but not well enough to make a bargain with the Indians; so we got the agent to hire



them to swim our stock, but before they would commence work they must be paid. We gave them \$18 and they brought up twenty-five canoes, forming them in line below the crossing. We drove our stock into the river and they swam to the opposite shore in safety. Next came the horses and when they were about in the middle of the stream the treacherous Indians laid down their oars and made signs, which I understood to mean more money. Meanwhile our horses were drifting down stream, where high bluffs across on either side, and it would be impossible for them to land. I took out my purse and offered them more money, when they took up their oars and paddled across, landing our horses safely.

The Chief of the Walla Walla was *Peu-Peu-Mox-Mox*, or yellow serpent, a very important person, who rode, with the dignity of a king, a large American horse—a beautiful bay—with holsters on his saddle and a pair of navy revolvers. He was a fine looking Indian, fully aware of his power as Chief, which was well demonstrated when we divided among our party some beef we had bought of him, which he cut in pieces varying from ten to twenty pounds, but it must be weighed. The Chief went to Mr. Melville, the only man in our party who had scales for weighing and taking them in his hand examined them carefully, although he could not tell one figure from another. Then, looking carefully around at the many faces and seeming satisfied with his scrutiny, he came to me and gave me the scales with a sign that I do the weighing, at the same time seating himself flat on the ground among us. I weighed, Lane standing by with a book and pencil to tally. Every time a piece was weighed the Chief would spring up, examine the scales closely, give a grunt which meant "Yes" and sit down. He continued this until the last piece was weighed, Lane making the settlement with him for our party.

Yellow Serpent was killed at the battle of Walla Walla during a four-days' engagement in the spring of 1856, while he was trying to make his escape from the volunteers—who held him as a friendly Indian—to join his tribe which he had represented as friendly but were really waging bitter warfare against white settlers. A brother of this Chief we hired to guide us to the Nachez Pass. I must not neglect to say that near Walla Walla we saw the site of the mission station of the noble Marcus Whitman. A log house covered with straw, held in place by poles crosswise of the roof, stood near the bank of the Walla Walla, and a little garden and orchards were



inclosed near the houses and a little farther on we saw the graves of Whitman and his wife and the heroic little band of workers who were massacred by the Indians some years previous to our arrival. Our guide, who made a horse trade with Mr. Melville in which he considered himself cheated, grew indignant and deserted us and we were left in a strange country without a landmark, a compass, or guide—nothing to help us. We traveled on, however, to the Yakima River which we crossed and here lost by death one of our party, Mr. McCulloch, a relative of Mrs. Woolery, now one of Puyallup's esteemed citizens. Until this sad event Mrs. Woolery was the life, the sunshine of the party. Everyone loved "Aunt Pop," as she was familiarly called, but this occurrence cast a shadow over her bright face and made the remainder of the journey gloomy when we thought of the lonely grave on the banks of the Yakima.

Our next obstacle was a canyon at Wells Springs, which it seemed impossible to cross. From the Yakima River we had been followed by a band of Indians who had kept our wives and children in perfect terror, but they chatted and laughed as they rode along with us, the tyees or big men being dressed in buckskin leggings handsomely beaded and breach-clouts made of cedar bark. The squaws were dressed much the same, all with painted faces. The squaws carried the papooses done up in proper Indian fashion and hung to the horn of the saddles where they bobbed up and down in no easy fashion, especially when the ponies were in full gallop as they were most of the time.

At Wells Springs we sent out men to find a better road, as we thought we were lost. The Indians knowing from this move that we were lost, got off their ponies, cleared a small piece of ground and marked two roads, one leading to the northwest and the other to the northeast, making dots at intervals along each road, the latter having fewer dots than the former; one of them motioning his hand in an upward and curving line pointed with the other one to the dots saying at each one "Sleeps," "Sleeps," and at the end of the road "Soldiers," the only words we could understand and really all the English they could speak. Lane said to me "What shall we do?" I replied, "let us take the road with the fewest sleeps", which we did going northeast for one or two days when we discovered that we had taken the wrong road. We had no compass and we would have known little more if we had one. We saw before us a perpendicular bluff, which to us looked a thousand feet high, extending far away into the mountains, and which we later learned was White

Bluffs on the Columbia River. Here we camped for the night, ordering the Indians to keep at a respectful distance, which they did much to our surprise. However, we placed a double guard out as we supposed they had led us into this trap in order to massacre our whole party; but I really believe now that their intentions were good if they had only been able to make us understand them. The next day we retraced our steps to Wells Springs where we had left the proper course; but in due time we learned that our Indian guide meant to conduct us to Fort Colville, an English trading post, for the winter, thinking the snow on the Cascades would prevent our reaching Fort Steilacoom, where United States soldiers were stationed. Upon reaching Well Springs our Indians left us, much to our relief. We were further encouraged the same night by the return of Nelson Sarjent who, with others, had gone in advance to look out for a good road, with the glad news that after crossing the canyon a good road lay before us; and still better news that they had struck a trail which the Steilacoom and Olympia Company had blazed for the coming emigrants.

On the 18th day of September, as well as I remember, we crossed the canyon, or rather traversed it, for a mile of the roughest travel I ever experienced, and came out on a beautiful plain. We traveled along Coal Creek for two days when we came to Selah Valley on the upper Yakima, which we crossed taking our course along Wenas Creek about ten miles where we came to a garden, now the farm of David Longmire, my son, who was a little boy making his way with the rest of us across the plains. The garden was kept by Indians of whom we bought thirteen bushels of potatoes, the first vegetables we had had since leaving the Rocky Mountains—a real feast, though boiled in their jackets. It required a bucket full to make one meal for us. Following Wenas Creek to its source, we crossed the Nachez River which we followed four days, crossing and recrossing sixty-eight times, then left it and started for the summit of the Cascade Mountains, twenty-five miles north of Mount Rainier which we reached in three days, finding fine grass and good water. Here we stopped for two days rest, giving our tired oxen plenty of food which they needed for the rest of the trip.

Three miles farther on we came to Summit Hill where we spliced rope and prepared for the steep descent which we saw before us. One end of the rope was fastened to the axles of the wagons, the other thrown around a tree and held by our men and



thus, one by one the wagons were lowered gradually a distance of 300 yards, when the ropes were loosened and the wagons drawn a quarter of a mile farther with locked wheels. Here we reached Greenwater River. All the wagons were lowered safely, except the one belonging to Mr. Lane, now of Puyallup, which was crushed to pieces by the breaking of one of the ropes, causing him and his family to make the rest of the trip on horse back.

*(To be Continued)*