

year ?

Dairy of Eugenia Hibbard Skeins

HARNEY COUNTY AS I SAW IT ON A THREE MONTHS TRIP OF COMBINED
BUSINESS AND PLEASURE!

Papa, Llewellyn (my brother) and myself rolled out of Burns in a cloud of dust May the 18th at noon. We sped over the smooth roads of Harney Valley and had soon past (sic) Harney City. We soon climbed the mountains that took us out of dear old Harney Valley, and shortly after we reached the top of the Stinkingwater Mountain on each side stretched the endless miles of sagebrush.

As we were coasting smoothly down the mountains we met two freight teams on one of the narrow portions of the grade. So Llewellyn drove our car out on the very edge of the high grade, thus just making room for the freight team to pass. The man slowed his team but at the sight of the car the leaders became frightened and backed into our car. As I was sitting in the back seat next to the horses with a trunk and a suitcase on the other side, I could not get out. The horses backed into me and began to lunge. Papa jumped out and grabbed their bits, but he could not hold them. The driver of the other team came up and they soon controlled (the horses). And they passed safely on. We went down into the valley crossing a river. Now and then passing a homestead cabin. About 4 p.m. we rolled into Drewsey where we purchased a few things. Then we went over the mountain and reached Agency Valley with the northern fork of the Malheur River winding its way through green fields of grain and alfalfa.

We stopped at the Agency Ranch owned by the P.L.S. Company where we remained for about a week. On our trip back to Drewsey it just pored (sic) rain, and in spite of the chains we had on our car it slid all over the road and sometimes out of the road. Our lights went out just about a mile out of Drewsey. We tried to get into town without them, but the first thing we knew we were astride the banister of the riverbridge.

Just a slight push and the car would of gone over into the river. Papa walked to town and got some men, a horse and a light. We reached the hotel just about half past eleven. I had carried a pie which a woman had given us for a lunch over all that bad road and just as I got out of the car I turned it upside down. With nothing but a few oranges for supper, we went to our rooms.

We were in Drewsey about two weeks when we left for Juntura. But about six miles this side of Juntura our low gear gave out so we had to go on in high. We were pretty well jammed up when we reached there. I was quite dissppointed in Juntura as I expected to see a very beautiful valley and quite a town. But very little of the land was fertile enough to pay to try to cultivate it. The town also was made up mostly of tents and bums. Like any new railroad town there were not many law abiding citizens so consequently I did not enjoy my week stop here. From there we went oversome very rough country to Riverside where the railroad was expected to reach by fall.

The next day we left for Barren Vallen which we did not reach until the following day about noon on account of getting into some quick sand. Our car mired down and we did not get out until dark so we were doomed to seek an old deserted house. We also made supper and breakfast on a dozen crackers and one orange so when we reached Barren Valley at noon the next day we appreciated the dinner we had with Mr. V..... . One would think by the name Barren the valley would look rather desolate but contrary it was really all in grain and alfalfa fields. The valley was five or 10 miles wide and about 25 miles long. We reached Follyfarm where Mr. Neal had turned the desert into a productive farm by holding the flood waters back by a large dike until he was ready to use it. On Sunday we visited the Neal girls who have homesteaded high upon Burnt and Dream (?) Flats, both being former graduates of the Harney County High School.

The antelope up there were so tame that they came very close to the house and did not seem much frightened at the sight of a person. From There we followed up the snow capped Steins Mts. which seemed as enormous walls to keep the settlers from passing over into Harney Valley. We past the small town of Alluson. We next etopped the Mann Lake Ranch (staid) where we stayed for about a week. It was at the foot of the towering Stein Mts. On and on south we rolled until we came to the Alvord Desert. It is about 12 miles long and 9 miles wide and as smooth and as bare as a floor. We all took turns of opening the car up and letting her flye. From here we passed over the divide to the Wildhorse Valley, pulling up at the hotel DeSmith (sic). We worked in that vicinity for 25 days. We also spent the glorious Fourth there seeing many strange sights. While there we visited the beautiful Wild Horse Lake nestled in the most iraccessible center of Stein Mts. Here the snow was in abundance although it was after the Fourth of July. We enjoyed some of the winter sports on the summer snow field.

Of all rough places, this town of Wildhorse takes the cake. Here we dressed gun wounds, knife wounds and broken heads.

On leaving we did not wish to take the sandy desert road leading to the Whitehorse so we went a longer way which took us by the hot lake and borax works. This we found a very interesting locality. One large warm lake in which we took a bath and many many smaller ones part of which were boiling. Some no larger around than a dollar. The old borax plant is now disused and is falling to peices. All of the houses here are built of sod. We soon continued our journey going up the beautiful Trout Creek over which there has been so much litigation. We passed over the devide to the White Horse Ranch where Todhunter and Devine once lived in all their glory.

Their race horse stables are still in evidence. They are

all built of white stone. While here we witnessed the operation of perhaps the swiftest hay crew in the world. They were putting up two and three large stacks of hay per day. Using 17 large horses and many, many men. We spent about a week here occupying the delightful little white house. On leaving here we passed up one of the most beautiful streams I ever had the pleasure of seeing. At the mouth of this stream was the old stone fort used in early days to protect the stage route. Then wishing to takewe followed up an old wood road 8 or 10 miles with out car. Here we found a beautiful place to stop. We had a little lunch now as it was noont ime. We ~~found some beautiful fish~~ found splendid fishing here. Also a splendid No. of rattlesnakes which I declared they were 10 feet long when two of them cornered me up against a large rim-rock. We fished on and on not knowing how far we went so by the time we reached the car again it was so dark that we decided to lay out. Without any covers, a few crusts of bread and plenty of fish we managed to pass the night with somed egree of comfort. We had fish for breakfast and fish for dinner. Then we left. That beautiful spot so gifted by nature and wound our way over the almost endless fields of sagebrush till we reached a small station called Oreville which takes its name from the numerous prospect holes that have been dug by miners hunting for copper and gold. After 4 or 5 days there, we went on south to Denio which is half in Oregon and half in Nevada. Here we spend some of the warmest August days which were made hotter by the dry hot winds coming off the sand deserts. While here we went up to see the large Ashdown gold mine which we found to be very interesting as we had the pleasure of being taken ~~through~~ through the mill and through one of the eight levels where we spent two or three hours traveling underground. And being told by the superintendent as we emerged that we had visited about only one hundreth part of the mine.

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We visited the Cowdan mine which was also situated in Nevada. We then turned our car north and east and went up the north Cottonwood creek where we spent a few days working and eating fruit. We then wind northwest to Field Station where we worked for five or six days. Here was where our Mr. ^{Saxion} Saxion was shot down by Harry Egbart. At last one morning we started over the divide that took us into Catlow. We passed a beautiful little reservoir where we found some fine shooting. We stopped at the beautiful P ranch that evening and found that locality improved very much by a splendid grade down the big hill and also an interesting side road down through the center of the swamp on the banks of the immense (sic) canal which drains the swamp. Mrs. Allen made it very pleasant for us while we were there and we feasted on the famous Blitzen trout.

It was only a half days drive from there to Burns but it was an interesting half day.

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