

Dedicated To The Pioneer Men & Women of Harney County, Oregon.

This historical sketch makes no pretensions of having any literary merit, but I have made a study of the subject, read many volumes of Oregon history, made many personal contacts with pioneers, was personally acquainted with many of the characters mentioned in the sketch, received many letters from pioneers devoted much time to research, and believe that the statements made in the sketch are historically correct.

Sincerely yours,
James J. Donegan

Read at Harney County Pioneer Reunion June 12, 1937. ¹

¹ Recopied using the same form, spelling and word usage as the original. S.C.

“The settlement of Oregon was started by a wave of religious enthusiasm. Prior to the advent of Jason Lee in 1834, Oregon had no place on the map of the world except as a vast game preserve for the taking of furry skins of wild animals. Its native Indian population of eighty thousand had no standing or consideration in the minds of civilized men, prior to the mission of Jason Lee.” (Gaston)

To Spaniards, Englishmen, and Americans, all alike, the fur trade was the sole excuse for any action in relation to the Oregon Territory.

I have read many histories and journals of the Oregon Country, and as far as I can determine, John Sillies, with three companions, trapped on Silvie's River in the winter of 1824-25, getting 3,000 beaver skins.

In the summer of 1826, Peter Skene Ogden explored the Harney Country and the Steens Mountain in search of furs. The next year, in 1827, Jed S. Smith, a member of the Missouri Fur Company, passed through the Harney Valley on his way from Salt Lake to the California Coast. Smith was the first white man in history who made an all land trip along the California-Oregon Coast. In 1828, he started north from San Diego, California, following the coastline. When he reached the mouth of the Umpqua River, his camp, consisting of 18 men was surprised by the Indians. All but Smith and two men were killed. Smith made his way to Ft. Vancouver and told his story to the factor, Dr. John McLaughlin. Dr. McLaughlin sent a troop of his men to the Umpqua country, recovered the furs taken from Smith, and punished the Indians.

In 1857, Lieutenant Stein with a company of U. S. Soldiers, camped on the Blitzen, and named it Donner and Blitzen (Thunder and Lightning).

The first immigrant train to reach the Harney Valley, of which we have any history, was the train of 1845, organized and led by Captain T. Vault. When this train reached Fort Hall, near the present site of Pocatello, Idaho, they were met by Stephen Meek, a brother of the famous Joe Meek, and the Rev. Elijah White, who induced 200 of the 1,000 members of the train to follow them on a short cut to the Willamette Valley, through the Central Oregon Country.

John Hampton, the father of the late Eliza Riggs of Burns, was the captain of the train.

In that train was the Riggs family, Packwoods, Tetherow, Bagleys, Herrons, Wilcox, Parkers, Warmeirs, Forrests, and Stratts families.

The party followed up the Malheur Valley to Bully Creek, crossed over the Ben Deer Mountains, and reached the Agency Valley. At this point, one of the women of the train, Mrs. Chambers, died and was buried there.

From the Agency Valley, they traveled west, crossed the Stinking Water Mountains, and reached Little Rock Creek on the East border of the Harney Valley. From that point they traveled south and skirted the East side of Malheur Lake. Unable to cross the Blitzen River at its mouth, they ascended the Blitzen until they found a ford, descended on the West side of the River until they reached the South side of Malheur and Harney lakes. From this point they traveled west until they reached the Wagon Tire Mountain.

After they left the lakes, they began to suffer for water, sickness broke out, and their livestock began to die. When they made camp at Wagon Tire, the members of the train made up their minds that they had been betrayed by Meeks and White. They came to the conclusion that Meeks and White were leading them on a “Wild Goose Chase” and that they had never been in the country before—so they gave Meeks and White a camp trial.

A large number of the party wanted to hang them, but wise counsel prevailed, and they were allowed to leave camp with their horses, guns, and a small amount of provisions. Meeks and White started north and west and in due time reached the settlement of The Dalles. They reported the sad plight of this train and immediately led a rescue party in search of the lost train. The late Eliza Riggs always insisted that Meeks had been through the country before, and that he knew of the existence of the lakes, the Steens Mountain, and the location of rivers, springs, and water holes.

In the meantime, the train after leaving Wagon Tire Mountain, traveled northwest to the head of Crooked River, and finally reached the breaks of the Des Chutes River. The rescue party found this train in the canyons of the Des

Chutes River and what was left of them finally reached The Dalles, and later settled in the Willamette Valley.

I will not attempt to detail the hardships of that trip as told to me by Mrs. Riggs, the Parkers, and other members of the party. It was the usual story of immigrant travel. Loss of livestock, shortage of food and water, sickness and death. The mythical "Blue Bucket Mine" was supposed to have been discovered on this trip.

The next immigrant train that reached the Harney Valley was one led by Tom Clark of Missouri in the year 1853. This train consisted of ninety persons, including women and children. In this train came George C. Smyth, his sons, D. H., John, George, A., and Presley—Wm Cummings, the father of Chancy Cummins, James Watson, the father of E. B. – Loren and Finley Watson, Bob and Charles Clark, and a number of others that settled in the Willamette Valley.

This party followed the old immigrant trail until they reached a point on the Snake River at what is now Ontario, where they crossed the Snake River, followed the tracks of the train of 1845, reached Harney Valley at Little Rock Creek, at what is now the Buchanan Ranch. From there, they traveled south to the south side of Malheur Lake and crossed the Blitzen at the Sod House Ranch. The party traveled west and after many hardships, reached the Des Chutes River.

When this party crossed the Snake River at Ontario, Oregon, Captain Clark sent his two brothers, Bob and Charles Clark, ahead with two pack horses, to notify the settlers in the Willamette Valley that the train was on its way and asked for assistance in cleaning the road over the Cascade Mountains, and for relief for the party. Bob and Charles Clark became lost and did not reach the valley until late in the fall; when relief was sent to the immigrants after they had reached a point about half-way down the middle fork of the Willamette River.

During the early sixties, the Harney country was crossed by a large number of expeditions of miners, enroute to Auburn, Canyon City, and Idaho mines. To protect these miners, the west bound immigrants, military posts were rendered necessary and Camp Alvord was established September 5th, 1865,

Camp Curry in August 1865, Camp C. F. Smith, at White Horse, May 1866, Camp Wright in 1865, and Camp Harney in August 16, 1867. Camp Harney became the permanent military post. It had a military Post Office, and received regular mails from Canyon City. There were many civilians around the camp for the time of its inception, but they were dependent upon the camp for their livelihood, and can not be classed as settlers, A. T. Clark was sutler at the camp, and Adam Adrian was an enlisted man and did the butchering for the soldiers. Carlos Bonham was post blacksmith until 1878. W. W. Johnson was an employee from 1876 at the agency until the Indians broke out in 1878, and then came to Camp Harney when Bonham resigned, became blacksmith.

John S. Devine was undoubtedly the first permanent settler. In 1869, he came into the White Horse Country with cattle. Later he drove cattle into the Harney Valley and in 1877, bought out, Venator and Cooksey, and established what is now known as the Island Ranch of the P. L. S. Company. Mace McCoy was next making a settlement in Diamond Valley in the fall of 1870, and sold his interests to Robie in 1873, then going to Walla Walla. Peter French settled in the summer of 1872 and Jim Abbott in the same year at Alvord. The Venators, Jim Sheppard, came in 1872.

In 1871, A. H. Robie moved cattle from Idaho into the Harney Valley and also moved a saw mill from Idaho to the left ford of Coffee Pot, and furnished shingles and lumber for Camp Harney. Abner Robbins, traveled and traded with the Indians long before any white man had established a residence, but Robbins was a trader, not a settler.

In 1871, Robie, Snyder, J. M. Clark, and Frank McBean acquired rights under the swamp land act, to large tracts of lands in the Blitzen Valley, which were shortly after purchased by Dr. Glenn and Peter French, thus laying the foundation of the famous "P" ranch, noted in song and story. Peter French expended hundreds of thousands in draining the reclaiming the swamp lands of the Blitzen Valley, and now the government of the United States is spending hundred of thousands of dollars to reconvert this land to its original swamp

condition. After a period of 64 years, the circle is complete-from swamp to swamp.

The first plowing in the valley was done by J. J. Cozart and E. C. Buckley near Camp Harney in the year, 1867. They seeded 40 acres to grain, but the experiment was a failure.

The actual settlement of the Harney Valley began in the year 1872, when George A. Smyth, with his sons, D. H., John, George A., and Presley Smyth, Stilly Riddle, John Boone, and the Chapmans came in with horses and cattle. The Smyth family first settled at the Warm Springs, five miles south of Burns, which is the present site of the Hines Mill. It was at this point where the first white child was born in what is now Harney County. Maggie L. Smyth, now Mrs. James J. Donegan, was born here September 29, 1873.

The winter of 1873 was the winter of the deep snow. Snow covered all of the native grass, and the old Indians told me that even all of the sage brush was covered to great depths. The Smyths and their friends became alarmed, and on the advice of Robie, they investigated conditions south. When they reached the Lakes they found no snow, and an abundance of feed. They returned to their camp at Warm Springs and removed their families and livestock to Happy Valley.

John S. Miller, J. Cooksey, the Venators, Tom Prater, James Sheppard, and the Curry family with horses and cattle arrived in 1873. In the fall of this year the Cummings family came in with sheep. Frank McLead and Maurice Fitzgerald arrived this year. When the Smyths arrived in Happy Valley in November, 1873, they found located in the country Chapmans, Weavers, Krumbos on Krumbo Creek, Peter French at the "P" Ranch, Mace and George McCoy on McCoy Creek, Marion Scott in Catlow Valley, John Catlow on Trout Creek, and several others scattered around the country. P. F. Stenger and Thomas Whiting brought in stock from Douglas County. Stenger settled at the Sod House, afterwards moving to the Peter Clemens place on poison Creek. Whiting settled on the Silvies River. They came in 1874 and the Whitings, R. E. Reed, Doc Anderson, and Thomas Howard settled in 1874. The Howsers,

Bakers, W. W. Johnson, Chas. Ram settled in 1876. Carrol Cecil in 1877. The Sayers, Goodmans, Clemens, Creason, C. W. Jones, Jennie Baker Jones, Tom Allen, Tom Baker, George Marshall, H. C. Levens, Stancliffs, and Joseph Robertson came in 1878.

In 1879 the Hanleys, Mahons, Terrills, Caldwelles, Bedells, Hughets, M. H. Brenton, George I. Miller settled.

In 1875, Riley and Hardin established the Double OO Ranch with Tennessee Murphy in charge. Ike Foster replaced Murphy when the latter was made foreman for Todhunter and Devine.

In 1876, Frank Burns settled on Crane Creek and sold out to Stauffer a few years later. Frank McLead was the first to settle on the present site of the city of Burns. He built a stone house on the point of the hill just north of the Locher property, in the summer of 1873.

The first business house established in what is now Burns was a saloon and store built by Jim and Joe Fitzgerald, who came from Goose Lake and who later sold out to a man named Josephson. This shack was located on the present site of the Burns Hotel.

In 1879, Wm. Curry brought and moved the Josephson stock to the present location of the town of Hines and named the place Egan. Wheeler was the first Justice of the Peace.

In 1879-80 the military post at Harney was abandoned and the so called "Cattle Barons" began to buy out smaller settlers and stockmen. In 1881 P. M. Curry came and established the Post Office at Egan. In 1882 George McGowan, the Martins, and A. O. Beddell located. McGowan and Martin opened a store at Egan and the next year Peter Stenger bought out the Martins interests and moved the store to the present site of Burns. In 1883 George McGowan named the Post Office located in the McGowan and Stenger store "Burns", in honor of the famous poet of this native land.

DREWSEY

No story of the early settlement of the Harney Country would be complete without mentioning the Drewsey section and I am indebted to my friend, I. Milton Davis, for the following sketch of the Drewsey section.

The real settlement of the Drewsey section began in the spring of 1883 when it was a part of Grant County. The best ranches were held under the "Squatters Rights" as the land was not thrown open to settlement until the year of 1883.

The spring and summer of 1883 brought enough people to occupy the better claims, but the Indian scare late in the summer of 1883 caused many of the faint hearted to vacate any claim that they may have acquired, but again in 1884, every good location was taken.

Abner Robbins, held a "squatters claim" on the land on which Drewsey was built. Having exhausted his rights to Government lands, he formed a partnership with Elmer Purrington who filed and made final proof on the quarter section of land which is the present site of the town of Drewsey.

Robins and Purrington established a mercantile business in a small box frame building 10 X 12 built by Gobe Rush in the summer of 1883. Their first load of goods was hauled by Wesley Miller from The Dalles and it took three months to make the trip. (Our tobacco and overalls cost some money those days). The firm soon developed into what we considered a real store.

Jim Ragley opened the first saloon in a tent when he shot Bob Moffett and then left for parts unknown. Drewsey was making history and could not long be deprived of such an important business and there was a real demand in those pioneer days for red liquor (no beer) so Al Jones and Sam Kelley supplied the demand. In those days nickels were unknown in these parts. We were all young and enjoyed our work and thought of meaning something to the future of our country.

Mrs. Tom Howard taught the first school in Drewsey, a successful teacher with business ability, and greatly respected by those who knew her.

You ask me how Drewsey derived its name. Away back in Maine, Mr. Purrington's native state, he left a little sweetheart whose name was Drewsey for whom he gave to this town her name-Drewsey.

In pioneer days, Drewsey was almost an exclusive cow town, and like all pioneer cow countries it was infested with its "bad men" and a few outlaws who darkened the serenity and disturbed the peace of the good citizens. The influence of the better elements finally prevailed, settling down to law and order.

Jack Bales, started the first hotel, but it soon burned down. Mrs. Tom Howard then constructed and operated a hotel, which at a later date she sold to Perry Ruherford, and he in turn sold to Mrs. A. J. Bartlet. The hotel is now owned by W. A. Capps.

John Mitchell built the first feed barn and then sold to Jim Hamilton. We have two churches, Catholic and Baptist.

I. M. Davis was the first regular deputy sheriff under A.A. Cowing and was also the first stock inspector of Harney County. A. I. Johnson started the first blacksmith shop and at a later date opened up a store.

Dr. W. L. Marsden, began the practice of medicines here and was well liked and was a successful MD. The following is the list of names of the first settlers of the Drewsey section. Of the list as enumerated below all except eleven are dead.

1879 Joe Lamb	1882 John Robertson
1880 Roberts Bros.	1882 Polk Gearhart
1881 W. M. Moffett	1883 Bill Wiley
1882 Abner Robins	1883 Dan Davis
1882 Al Masterson	1883 E. E. Pennington
1882 Eiph Hepenstal	1883 E. J. Howard
1882 Frank Kingsbory	1883 Fred Miller
1882 Gabe Rush	1883 H. S. McGowan
1882 George McDowell	1883 I. M. Davis
1882 Joe Robertson	1883 Jack Bales

1883 Jay Gould	1884 James McDowell
1883 Jess Davis	1884 John Armour
1883 Joe Holbos	1884 John Farley
1883 Joe Sturtevant	1884 John Feuton
1883 John Farrens	1884 John Howard
1883 O. J. Dorst	1884 Lenn Stallard
1883 Rudolph Miller	1884 McAfee Bro
1883 Thos. Howard	1884 R. A. Miller
1883 Tom Overfelt	1884 Tom Delaney
1883 Wesley Miller	1884 Tom Kenton
1883 Wm. Altnow	1884 Turkey Johnson
1883 Wm. Farrell	1884 Wesley Kenton
1883 Wm. Gearhart	1884 Wm. Fredricks
1883 Wm. Robertson	1885 C. T. Riley
1884 August Muller	1885 John Beatty
1884 Bud Howard	1885 Lon Bradfield
1884 Cicero Stewart	1885 Sam Williams
1884 Dell Overton	1885 Wallace (Dude) McClain
1884 Ed Miller	1887 Jessie McMullen
1884 Elliott Bros.	
1884 George Farley	

All of the above settled prior to the year 1886. Joe Lamb was first in 1879.

Mrs. Tom Howard was the first post master of Drewsey, the office being established in 1884.

**THE PIUTE INDIAN
AND
CAUSE OF THE BANNOCK-PIUTE WAR OF 1878**

The land question was at the bottom of this and all Indian wars. The Hudson's Bay Co. did not seek lands for colonization or agricultural purposes. They sought to keep the wilderness as a vast fur preserve. That policy coincided with the idea of the Indian and that sort of white man was welcome by the Indian.

The Indian exchanged his furs for the goods and trinkets of the Hudson's Bay trappers and could understand that transaction as a benefit to him. It was not so with the American. He came hunting new lands for farms and homes, clearing away the forests and driving away the game, the natural food support of the Indian (Gaston)

With the single exception of Wm. Penn in Pennsylvania who bought and paid for the Indian lands, the white men disregarded the Indians rights and titles to the lands, with the result that it cost millions in money, and thousands in lives, before the Indian question was finally settled, as a matter of fact the administration and final adjudication (sic) of Indian lands is not satisfactorily settled to this day. I mention the land question for the purpose of pointing out to you the reasons for the Bannock-Piute war of 1878 which raged in the Harney Valley. To give you the back ground and a brief history of the Piute tribe I quote from Sarah Winnemucca, grand daughter of chief Truckee, and daughter of chief Winnemucca, from her book "Life among the Piute" published in 1883, from General O.O. Howard in his book "My Life among the Hostile Indians", and from personal interviews with men now living who participated in the Bannock-Piute² war of 1878, and from research from other sources.

Sarah Winnemucca was born near Humbolt Lake in Nevada in the year 1844. Her grandfather was Truckee-Truckee and is an Indian word meaning

² Spelled, Piute, as used in the original document.

“all right or very well.” Truckee was chief of the entire nation, which was scattered over nearly all of the territory now known as the State of Nevada and a part of Southeastern Oregon. The Piute nation had a tradition “In the beginning of the world there were only four, two boys and two girls, one boy and one girl were dark, the other boy and girl were white. Our fore-father and mother were only two, and we are their children. At first they were a happy family, but finally quarreled, and the father and mother said, “Depart from each other, go across the mighty ocean and do not seek each others lives.” So light girl and boy disappeared and their parents saw them no more. And by and by the dark children grew into a large nation, and we believe it is the one we belong to, and that the nation that sprang from the white children will some time send some one to see us and heal all the old trouble.

The first white men that the Piutes ever saw was in 1841. The Indians remembering their old tradition, Truckee made an attempt to be friendly with this party but the whites were afraid of the Indians and did not welcome them. Truckee said they will come again and I want you to be friendly to them and not hurt a hair in their heads, but welcome them as I tried to do.” The next year came a great emigration and camped near Humbolt Lake. This party was in charge of Captain Johnson. They stayed three days at Humbolt Lake and held friendly intercourse with the Indians. The third year more emigrants came and that summer Captain Fremont who is now General Fremont “The Pathfinder” arrived at Humbolt Lake.

Lieut. Fremont (who was a son-in-law of Thomas H. Benton, the great friend of Oregon) led a military expedition to explore Oregon and California. Fremont and his party left Kansas City, Mo. On May 29th, 1843, and after visiting the Great Salt Lake, arrived at The Dalles, Oregon. On November 25th, 1843 his party started south exploring the Deschutes River country and the Klamath Country. From Klamath Fremont turned East and South and finally arrived at Humbolt Lake where he first met Truckee, Grand Chief of the Piute Nation. Fremont induced Truckee and a part of his tribe to cross the mountains into California and enlist in the Mexican War in 1846. When Truckee left for

California, Winnemucca, his son, succeeded Truckee and became the Great Chief of the Piute nation. The following spring before Truckee returned home there was great excitement among the Indians on account of the news coming from different tribes, that the people whom they had been calling their white brother were killing every Indian who came across their path and all the Indian Tribes fled to the mountains to save their lives. At this time Winnemucca and the Indian Doctors prophesied just the thing that later happened, the ruthless killing of the Indians, and the loss his land. When Truckee returned from California he was still loyal to the whites and pleaded with the tribe not to kill the white settlers who had settled on the sinks of the Carson and at Humbolt Lake. At a later date Truckee with thirty families returned to California and worked for the whites. After a year or two, Truckee returned to his tribe to find that a large number of them had died with small pox. The sign of mourning is to cut off the hair. The Indians claimed that the whites had poisoned the waters of the Humbolt River but Truckee refused to believe this to be true—still loyal to his white friends. He said, “You all know the tradition says ‘Weep not for your dead, but sing and be joyful, for the soul is in the spirit land.’” The original Piute nation had high ideals of domestic and social morality.

A short time after, Truckee died and his son Winnemucca was elevated to the position held by him.

Sarah Winnemucca and her brother Natchez were sent to school in California in the spring of 1860, but did not stay long.

In 1860 war broke out between the Piutes and the whites, but time does not permit to go into the details of this war. After this war which was caused by the kidnapping of two Indian girls, and the killing by the father of the two men who stole them, the Indians in 1865 were placed on the reservation of Pyramid and Muddy Lakes—two beautiful lakes. When the reservation was created, no whites lived there. The railroad ran through the reservation in 1867, and the white men took the best part of the reservation and one of the lakes. These lakes were teeming with beautiful mountain trout, and when the Indians lost their lakes they lost their livelihood. The administration of the Pyramid and

Muddy Lakes Reservation was the usual administration of Indian reservations. The Indians were beaten, robbed, and killed. Colonel C. E. S. Wood, who was a Lieutenant under General O.O. Howard in the Bannock-Piute War, told me years ago that the darkest and the most damnable spot in the recent history of the United States was the cruel, dishonest manner in which the Indians were treated and robbed by the agents of the Indian Department.

In 1875, Sarah Winnemucca came to camp Harney to see her father. Sam Parrish was the Agent at the Malheur Agency and with him was his brother, the late Charles W. Parrish and his wife, teachers at the Agency. Sam Parrish was the one Indian Agent who had the confidence and respect of the Indians. He treated them fairly, secured horses and farm implements and taught them how to farm and gave them the products of their work. Sarah says, "Charley Parrish is a good man and he has a lovely wife. She is a beautiful woman and a good one." Parrish sent for Sarah to act as his interpreter.

A short time after Sam Parrish was appointed agent, the agency was visited by a band of Columbia Indians who wanted to trade with the Piutes for their furs. The Piutes knew nothing of the value of furs and the Columbia Indians, and did not want Sam Parrish to know about their trading with his Indians. Oytes, a sub-chief, took thirty Indians off the reservation to trade with the Columbia Indians.

In about three weeks these Indians returned to the reservation. Oytes was a medicine man and claimed he was immune from the white mans bullets. When Oytes returned to the reservation he sent word to Parrish that he was going to kill him. Egan, Chief of the Snake River Indians, brought Oytes to see Parrish who said to him, "Oytes, I have three hundred dollars. If you will let me shoot at you, if my bullets do not go through your body, the money is yours. You say bullets cannot kill you. The agent shook him and Oytes cried out, "Oh, my good father, don't kill me. I am bad, but I will do anything you say. I will not go away if you will forgive me!" Parrish said he would forgive him; they shook hands and were good friends afterwards.

Two hundred and ninety-two men living at Canyon City petitioned the Government to throw the west part of the reservation open to settlement. Egan and Leggins, sub-chiefs, protested against this movement, stating that the Pyramid Lake was too small for all of the Indians and the white people had already taken the best part of it. Sarah said that all times the soldiers have been the friends of the Indians. It has always been the Indian Agents (with the exception of Sam Parrish) and the settlers who made trouble for the Indians. Parrish and the Army Officers at Camp Harney sent in a protest against the division of the Reservation. General O.O. Howard paid a visit to the agency about this time, accompanied by his daughter and Captain Sladen.

General Howard wanted to build a military post at Otis Valley and move the Camp Harney Post there. General Howard wanted to learn the Indians reaction to this move. Egan said, "I like all the soldiers very much, but must first see what Winnemucca says. "You are our big soldier father. We would like to have you come and see us, and see that no bad men come and take away our land." General Howard said, "All right, I will do what I can to help the Indians to keep their lands." Through political pressure, Sam Parrish was removed. The Indians made a violent protest against his removal but it did no good.

The agent who succeeded Parrish resorted to the old time methods of Indian administration and soon the seven hundred Indians on the Malheur Reservation were in open revolt. On the 23rd of April, 1878, Bannock John and his band visited the Malheur Agency and told the Piutes that all of their ponies had been taken from the, also their guns for something that two of their men had done. They got drunk and shot two men.

One of the Indians had a sister out digging some roots, and these white men went to the woman and caught this poor girl and treated her shamefully. The other women ran away and left this girl to the mercy of those white men, and it was on her account that her brother went and shot them. This was the real start of the Bannock-Piute War. General O.O. Howard in his book, "My Life among the Hostile Indians" makes the same statement.

On June 7th, 1878, Sarah Winnemucca left Canyon City for Silver city. They traveled for three days and heard nothing about an Indian war but saw houses standing along the road without anybody living in them. On the 12th day of June, they met a man near Fort Lyon who told them that there was the greatest Indian war ever known raging. He said that no stages had been running for three days and a battle was fought at South Mountain. In a chapter following this I said that Buffalo Horn was killed at the battle of Silver Creek but on further research I am satisfied that statement is an error. In 1925 I met Johnny Connors who at that time was a deputy sheriff and he told that he was a scout under Major Bernard and he knew positively that Buffalo Horn was killed at South Mountain by Piute Joe. Piute Joe made the following statement to Sarah; "The Bannocks are all out fighting. They are killing everybody and everything, Indians and Whites, and I and two more of my people went with these white men out to South Mountain to fight them and we came on to Buffalo Horn's camp and had a fight with them and the scouts ran away and left me to the mercy of the Bannocks. I saw I could not get away when they were all mustered on me, so I jumped off me horse and placed my horse between me and them, and laid my gun over the saddle and fired at Buffalo Horn as he came galloping up ahead of his men. He fell from his horse, so his men turned and fled when they saw their Chief fall to the ground, and I jumped on my horse again and came to Silver city as fast as I could. General Howard makes the positive statement that Buffalo Horn was killed at South Mountain.

At this time Major Bernard employed Sarah to carry dispatches to General Howard and she served in this capacity through the entire campaign, and made many hard and dangerous rides. She like her grandfather, "Truckee", her father, "Winnemucca", and her brother, "Natchez", were friendly to the whites. After the war was over, she made several trips to Washington D. C. in an attempt to have her people released from the Yakima Reservation. Her valuable services have been acknowledged by General O.O. Howard, C.E.S. Wood, James W. Forsyth, Lieut. Colonel, Irving McDonald, Major General,

General McDowell, and many other Military Officers. I am leaving the details of the war to the following chapter, which was written before the above.

BANNOCK-PIUTE WAR OF 1878

The most exciting event of the history of Eastern Oregon since its settlement by the whites was the Bannock-Piute War of 1878. Nearly every county in Eastern Oregon was embraced in its field of operation, and every section affected. Before this was ended with the betrayal of Chief Egan by the Cayuse Indians near Pendleton, the United States Government was forced to call out practically all of the military forces stationed in the West.

In 1877, Chief Joseph, Chief of the Nez Perce Indians in the Wallowa territory, fought a war in an attempt to drive the whites from the west. History says that Joseph was the greatest Indian strategist since the days of King Phillip. He fought the whole army of the West, conducted a retreat for over 1,000 miles, and did not surrender until he reached the Bear Paw Mountains on the border of the Canadian line. When he surrendered, he surrendered in the honors of war. Many honors were heaped upon Chief Joseph.

Buffalo Horn, Chief of the Bannocks, was jealous of Joseph. Buffalo Horn was a good politician, but events proved he was a poor General. Buffalo Horn sent his scouts and runners to all of the Oregon, Washington, and Idaho Indians, asking them to join in a confederacy to run the whites across the Mississippi. Buffalo Horn secured guns and ammunition at Fort Hall, and started on the war path, in the early spring of 1878. His warriors plundered, killed, and destroyed property in southwest Idaho, crossed the Owyhee River into Oregon, came through the Barrow Valley Country to the East side of the Steens Mountain, killing and burning as they traveled. The first intimation that the residents of the Harney Country had that the Indians were on the war path is best told in a letter to me written in 1936 by Maurice Fitzgerald, Sergeant Troop K., U. S. Cavalry-Scout Modoc War 1872. I quote, "On the 3rd of June, 1878, a carrier arrived at Camp Harney from fort Boise, Idaho, with the official information that the Bannock Indians had left the Fort Hall reservation, taken the war path, and were headed towards Oregon. The messenger was a one-legged man but showed evidence of being an expert horse man and had made

the 200 mile journey in two days. The troops at the Fort were put in readiness when the circumstances should warrant it, and a call be issued.

In a few days Jim Croly, a stock man of Barren Valley, rode into the Camp with the startling information that the Bannocks and all of the Piutes of the Malheur Reservation were in Barren Valley holding a big pow-wow, or council. Before coming to Harney, Croly, had sent a messenger to notify the scattered settlements of the Steens Mountain country of the impending danger. Soon all of these stockmen and settlers flocked into Camp Harney for protection. The Post Commander decided to send an immediate telegraph to General Howard, commanding the Department of the Columbia at Fort Vancouver, Washington, advising him of the critical situation. The nearest telegraph station was at Malheur City, 110 miles distant. Now the question was who would take the telegram, as the route lay mostly through the Malheur Reservation and the agency which was supposed to be evacuated by the Piutes, but no one was sure of the facts.

A partly civilized Indian named Savage who worked around the post traders store and who could talk and understand our language, agreed to carry the dispatch. None of the civilians in camp had ever traveled in that direction so a horse was furnished Savage who was given the dispatch. The horse given Savage was a spirited animal and seemed to resent the idea of having a red skin on his back, started bucking, tossing Savage over his head and he was fatally injured, dying within a few days thereafter.

Finally John Smyth volunteered to go. However, his family and neighbors would not consent that a married man with young children should assume such a dangerous task. Under such pressure he withdrew. Had he taken the journey he would have escaped the tragic fate that befell him a few days later.

During the day I was hunting horses in Silvies Valley and upon my return to Camp Harney, I was surrounded by a crowd of soldiers and civilians who insisted I was just the man to take the dispatch. I protested that I had never been more than sixteen miles east of the Camp and the region beyond was

unknown to me. They would not accept an excuse. I must go. I had to give in finally with the proviso that I should be furnished the best horse procurable.

There was then a horse in the stable that had been purchased for cavalry service, but was classed as a kind of outlaw. He was a Roan raised near San Diego, half American and Spanish, named "Fandango". I made no claim of being a bronco rider, but had ridden some of that kind and frequently "bit the dust". In the case of stamina and endurance were the most important requirements and "Fandango" filled the bill.

I got the dispatch, saddled "Fandango", took no weapon but a six shooter. In the event of running across any hostiles, I relied upon my horse. I had no trouble in keeping the old Creighton road traveled in 1866, and not since. The night was balmy and clear. I encountered no living thing during the night and reached the Agency in the morning. It was tranquil as a grave yard. The Indians had all gone south, and the whites struck out for the John Day Valley. I unsaddled my horse, fed him and rested an hour, again took the road to Malheur City about 1 o'clock and found no telegraph operator there. This was bad, the message was important and should go that evening. I groomed and fed "Fandango", resaddled and reached Baker City, 32 miles away, at 7 o'clock, sent the message and took a needed rest of about 36 hours. It took four days to go back to camp Harney, traveling via Canyon City; only back one day when I was again called on to take another dispatch to Malheur City. The day previous Col. Bernard had overtaken and attacked the Indians on Silver Creek.

On this occasion I was given a splendid horse. Before starting Major W. V. Rinehart, the Agent of the Malheur Reservation, came to see me and asked if he could accompany me, as he wished to see if the government property in his charge at the Agency had been damaged since the recent abandonment. It was a beautiful night and we reached the Agency about day light. Everything about the place was still as death, and the property just as he left it. We rested and fed our horses and resumed our journey, going via Bully Creek and upon reaching the table land above, saw a great dust rising ahead and coming toward us. It

turned out to be General Howard with four Companies of Infantry and a number of two-and four-horse wagons.

I handed the General the dispatch I carried, which he read, then wrote another which he asked me to carry to Malheur City. The cavalcade moved on towards Harney.

Major Rinehart returned with them, while I, alone, headed for Malheur City. This time the operator was on hand to telegraph the message. Early the following day, Frank J. Parker, correspondent for the Walla Walla "Statesman", came along anxious to catch up with General Howard. We traveled together that day, reaching Camp Harney the following afternoon. The same day, Lieut. C.E.S. Wood arrived at the Fort, coming from Ft. Vancouver, via Canyon City. He was then Gen. Howard's adjutant. Howard had gone on to catch up with Col. Bernard's command, then at Camp Curry.

Two days afterwards, I was called to Lieut. Wood's office to give him the number of days I had put in on both the dispatch carrying trips, and likewise to take a dispatch the next morning, and hiring me as a special carrier and scout for as long as the campaign lasted. That was on the 25th of June, 1878. Next morning I set out for Camp Curry. On the morning of the 27th, I caught up with the command on the north extremity of Buck Mountains where Howard appointed me as a guide for the command, as no one seemed to know exactly where they were; neither did I, except that we were close to the breaks of the South Fork of the John Day River. I was connected with the campaign from that time on.

Lieut. C.E.S. Wood joined the campaign in the John Day and saw the whole thing to the close.

From Barron Valley the Indians traveled north to Happy Valley, where they killed John Smyth and his father. From Happy Valley, they went west to Diamond Valley. Peter French, with his buckaroos numbering 16 people in all, was working cattle at the Diamond Ranch. Sylvester Smith, a resident of Happy Valley was returning to his home from a visit to the Willamette Valley. When he reached the divide between Happy and Diamond Valley, he saw the ruins of

the Smyth Ranch and also saw the Indians. The Indians also saw Smith and gave chase, but Sylvester out-ran the Indians, beat them to the Diamond Ranch and warned French and his men that the Indians were on the war path, and a large number of them were only a short distance behind.

French had a repeating rifle and after ordering his men to retreat to the “P” Ranch, fought the Indians off until the men had a fair start. Those present at that fight were Peter French, Henry Robie, John Witzell, Sylvester Smith, Sid Thomas, the Dixon Brothers, one of whom was later killed by the Indians at the “P” Ranch, Taylor, Juniper Jack, the buckaroo cook, the Chinese cook who fell off his horse and was killed on the retreat to the “P” Ranch, John Dale, Chas. Luce, the man who assisted John Wetzel when his horse was killed and he wounded, George Bollenbaugh, Joseph Hochneedle and his brother George, Doc. Kiger, Sam Miller, and Dixon’s Indian Joe.

Prim Ortago, (Tebo), was also at the fight and on orders from French, took the news of the skirmish to Camp Harney. On his way to the Fort, he found the buckaroos encamped at the Malheur Slough. Upon learning the news of the Indian outbreak, the buckaroos rode to the fort and later some of them joined French and the other volunteers in the Silver Creek fight with the Indians. After French and his party reached the “P” Ranch, they gave the alarm and all the women and children were taken to Fort Harney.

D. H. (Rye) Smyth, Frank Kingsberry, and Barton, encountered the Indians at Happy Valley after the death of the two Smyths and the burning of their buildings. They retreated to the camp at the Malheur Slough, and also warned the settlers of the outbreak.

A troop of volunteers was organized at the Fort, who followed the Indians. From the Fort they took up the trail at Barton Lake and followed the Indians to the Narrows, and from then to the “OO” Ranch, and up Silver Creek.

John G. South was the buckaroo boss, and was with his men at the Malheur Slough when Smyth, Barton, and Oratgo gave the alarm. As stated before, the cowboys made a run for Fort Harney and joined the volunteers, but South returned to the Diamond Ranch, discovered the body of the dead

Chinaman and on (t)his road to the “P” Ranch he found the horse that was killed from under John Wetzel. When South returned to the “P” Ranch, he found Dixon and Nixon camped on the river at the ranch and warned that the Indians were on the war path. They disregarded South’s warning and advice to flee to Fort Harney and at a later date they were killed by the Indians. Dixon was a relative of the late Harvey Dixon.

When South started back from the “P” Ranch he met Bill Shirk from Catlow Valley and told him of the outbreak. Shirk returned to Catlow Valley to warn the settlers of their danger and on his way to Catlow Valley was shot at by an Indian who lay in wait for him. The Indian missed. The Indian was mounted on one of French’s horses and the only thing that saved Shirk was that the Indian’s horse stumbled and fell and that the horse that Shirk was riding was fleet. Shirk warned all of the settlers of Catlow Valley and they gathered at the White Horse Ranch where they constructed a juniper fort for their defense.

I again quote from Maurice Fitzgerald---

“The Indians camped on Silver Creek many days and conducted a series of raids from that point. They visited Wagonfire Mountain, thirty miles west and killed 400 head of cattle.

A short time after, the Bannocks left Silver City, Idaho, to form a junction with the Piutes at Barron Valley. Col. Bernard with two troops of cavalry, A. and G. pursued the Indians. He entered the Harney Valley a day or two after the Steens Mountain raids. Accompanying him were fifteen Idaho scouts under Rube Robbins of Boise as Chief. They were experienced scouts and going ahead of Bernard’s command, soon located the camp of the Indians on Silver Creek without being seen by the Indians.

On the evening of June 20th, 1878, Bernard moved his band to a secluded spot within three miles of the Indians and made a dark camp.

At daybreak on the morning of June 21st, 1878, Bernard made an attack against the Indians who outnumbered his command six to one. The Indians were encamped on a flat on the west side of Silver Creek and their horses were grazing on a bench further west of their camp. Bernard made a sudden attack

from the east side and utterly demoralized the Indians by the suddenness of the attack.

The troopers dashed across the creek, and on through the scattered teepees, pouring volley after volley as they went. Occasionally a cool headed Indian would take a shot at the charging cavalry men, but there was no semblance of concerted action yet. In the meantime, the greater part of the Indians were rushing to the bluff to secure their horses. As they recovered their horses and seeing the small number of the attacking party, they recovered their courage and soon large numbers coming down the bluff began to assume an aggressive attitude. However, Col. Bernard did not give them much time to plan. When he and his troopers had galloped through the entire camp, they immediately whirled around and charged back over the same ground, firing as they rode through the wickiups. Being greatly outnumbered, and fearing an encircling movement, Bernard crossed his troops over to the east side after the surprise attack.

Meanwhile, the scouts and volunteers being on the right of the troopers, galloped up on the east side of the Creek and poured a galling fire on the Indians who were climbing the bluff on the north end of the encampment. But as Bernard and his men galloped back and recrossed the creek below, there was quite a distance between the troopers and the scouts and volunteers. The Indians were quick to see the situation and made a well executed movement in force to cut them off from Bernard's command and only by fast riding and fierce fighting were they saved from annihilation. At this juncture, Meyers and Weiser was killed and Robbins's horse was shot from under him. Peter French saw the danger of Robbins, galloped to his assistance through a rain of bullets, took the unhorsed chief up behind him, and rode to safety.

A few of Bernard's command were killed and several wounded in the engagement, but the losses of the Indians were far greater, owing largely to the complete nature of the surprise." (End of quote).

In this engagement Col. Bernard fought a duel with Chief Egan and shot Egan in the hand.

Many people take the credit of killing Chief Buffalo Horn, but Stilly Riddle told me that no one knew who killed him, as the Indians had retreated to a shallow cave, and the troops and volunteers poured shot after shot into the mouth of the cave, and that after the battle was over, they found the body dressed in his Chiefs War Bonnet, among the dead. After the battle of Silver Creek, Chief Egan succeeded to command.

From Silver Creek the Indians moved north to Grant County. The settlers of Grant, being warned, gathered at canyon City and used the miners tunnels as a defense.

The Indians moved through the Bear Valley Country, down Murderers Creek, along the John Day River, killing and burning as they went. The plan of Buffalo Horn was to have the Columbia River Indians join his forces at Pendleton, cross the Columbia River at Umatilla, and invade the Washington Territory. I quote from a letter from Colonel J. H. Raley to me, the closing chapter of this important but little known war.

“Indians of the Umatilla Reservation would tell the settlers that there was going to be a great battle soon. Rumors continued to increase in volume until Major N. A. Cornoyer, who was Indian Agent, reported that couriers from the Umatilla Indians, who were camped on the North Fork of the John Day River brought word that there was large body of warriors coming through this way, that a number Umatilla Indians who were camped in Camas Prairie and the North Fork of the John Day were holding them back and that a battle was taking place between the Indian near the North Fork of the John Day River. About the same time settlers of Butter Creek, Birch Creek, and Camas Prairie received like word and began to come to Pendleton and Walla Walla. Major Cornoyer called to his assistance some of the young Indians and went out near the John Day, met other of his Indians coming in, who reported that no battle had yet taken place but they were retreating from a large body of warriors who were coming in the direction of Pendleton. Major Cornoyer advised the people of Pendleton that they had better leave and go to Walla Walla or The Dallas. May of them did. Excitement ran high and on July 2nd, 1878, a company of volunteer scouts,

consisting of fifteen or twenty men, organized in Pendleton by electing D. S. Dellivan as their Captain, started south to investigate. This party left Pendleton at sundown July 2nd, and arrived at Pilot Rock, where they were joined by fifteen persons and James Wilson was elected Captain of the entire body. On the morning of the 3rd this company proceeded south via Willow Spring toward Camas Prairie and Snipe Valley. Near the summit of the mountain, at the head of Snipe Valley, J. M. Bentley operated a saw mill, which by reason of the report of hostile Indians had been abandoned. The company arrived at the mill at noon and there met a large body of Indians, being Indians from the Umatilla Reservation. These Indians were pillaging the mill, taking provisions and bedding. These Indians reported great danger, advising the Scouts not to go any further south, but to return and have all the settlers leave this part of the country before the Bannocks arrived.

They estimated the number of Indians from 400 to 1,000. The main body of the scouts returned on July 3rd. Captain James Dellivan, Clarence Townsend, and myself were not satisfied with the truth of the statement of the Indians and proceeded south to Camas Prairie. We saw Indians in war paint and their horses decorated for war. We went to a point near Albee, unsaddled our horses, shot a calf, rested and let our horses graze.

Two Indians came to camp dressed in War bonnets, informed us they were friendly and that there were no hostile Indians this side of John Day. Between sundown and dark, another company of white men which had been organized in Pendleton and was lead by Mac Donner Whittmore, consisting of twenty men came across the Yellow Jacket Trail to Camas Prairie. We informed them of the information we had and it was decided best to select some one of the number to go back to Pendleton and report. I was selected and started back over the trail at dark. It rained hard during the night and was pitch dark. I found it impossible to travel, tied my horse, stayed in the mountains until day break when I proceeded to Pendleton. I arrived in Pendleton about ten o'clock July 4th and reported no immediate danger. Whittmore's men consisting of twenty including Mac Whittmore, Bird Beagle, Clarence Townsend, D. W.

Bailey, J. S. Dellivan and other, camped on the night of July 3rd near Albee. On the Morning of the 4th they started south to the John Day. All the settlers left Snipe Valley and Camas Prairie, leaving provisions and house hold furnishings.

A few sheep herders remained with their flocks. Among those were John Crisp, John Vey, and two Campbell boys. Whittmore's men were traveling south when a lone Indian, decked in his war paint and bonnet, rode out of the timber. Some of the young men of the party started their horses and ran toward him. The Indian started to run away and the men began to fire. He was shot and killed.

The Scouts were just getting on their horses to go further when a band of 100 Indians rode out of the timber from which the lone Indian had come and commenced to fire on Whittmore's men. Whittmore's men, being greatly outnumbered, turned their horses and started toward Pendleton, followed by the Indians who kept up a continuous fire to the summit of the mountain at Mountain Home. No one was killed in this skirmish. D. W. Bailey's horse gave out and he was dropping behind when Whittmore saw his peril, returned, picked him up, took him behind his own horse, and brought him safely to Pendleton. The men who were compelled to take to the timber on foot all eventually arrived in Pendleton. Beagle was followed by two Indians in the timber. He shot and killed one of them and the other one fled.

Large companies of volunteers were immediately formed at Pendleton, Weston, Adams, and Athena under the leadership of Captains Sperry, Oglesby, and Blakely. The volunteers spent the night of July 5th in Pilot rock and were joined next day by other forces, all traveling south to Camas Prairie, via Willow Springs. At noon the next day, they ate dinner at Willow Springs. Many of them were tired and laid down for a nap. Scouts had been placed on the high hills, Willow Springs being in a deep canyon surrounded by high hills. Of a sudden Indians appeared to show up from every direction. The Indians had congregated in the basin hid from the view of the camp, and at the time of the outbreak came down the ridges and hillsides between the top of the ridge and the camp when the men were sleeping and taking dinner. Some of the scouts

were cut off and unable to get back to the Willow Springs. Many men, including Jacob Frazier, Samuel Rothchilds, Arthur Chrisfield, Marshall Peterson, Frank Hamns, George Titworth, Charles Henderson, Dr. Oglesby, and other, were wounded and one man, La Mar, was killed.

The volunteers were completely surrounded and held at Willow Springs until after dark. Several Indians were killed in this engagement. After night it was decided an attempt be made to come down the creek from Willow Springs and escape through the Indian lines. They proceeded but a short distance when a volley was fired and Harrison Hale was killed. Some of the company that had been cut off out on the hill were wounded, but all managed to escape through the Indian lines. They then climbed the hill and traveled northward upon the high ridge toward Pilot Rock, and Jimmy Hackett brought the first news of the battle to Pendleton. This was the evening of the 6th.

First reports estimated the number of Indians from one thousand to twelve hundred. Immediately soldiers and volunteers, piloted by John Bowman, left Pendleton to go to the rescue of those who were reported to be surrounded or possibly killed.

The soldiers started for the rescue on the night of the 6th and followed an old Indian trail to Willow Springs. Just at daybreak the morning of the 7th, the soldiers met the returning volunteers with their wounded. Bob Thompson, Bud Ogle, and Captain Sperry were so overjoyed to see the rescue party and John Bowman, who led the soldiers to their rescue, that they pulled him off his horse and carried him to where the wounded were kept together. The bodies of La Mar and Hale were not recovered until the next day. La Mar was a nephew of L. Q. C. La Mar, Secretary of the Interior.

In the meantime, all had been wild excitement in Pendleton. A stockade consisting of cottonwood poles, set endwise in the ground was erected. The Byers Mill was used as a fortification. Sacks of wheat and flour were piled around while men stood guard surrounding the town.

A detachment of regular soldiers arrived and guarded the Indian Agency. Governor Chadwick sent arms from Salem, consisting of needle guns and

ammunition. Charles L. Jewell, State Senator, had a band of sheep at the head of Butter Creek in charge of a herder. He carried guns and ammunition to his herder, to Nelson and Skelly who also had sheep on the range. When Jewell arrived at the Nelson place, he was fired on by the Indians and fell off his horse mortally wounded. The Indians continued to fire on the house and at that time killed Nelson and Skelly.

Jewell hid in the brush and at night crawled out and wrote on a piece of paper, put it in the road on a stick, notifying that he was wounded and he was in the brush. Two days later a company from Heppner found the note and found Jewell. He was still alive. They brought him to Pendleton, where he died four days later. The Indians continued to occupy the territory between the head of Butter Creek and Meacham during the next few days. Little is known of just what happened in Camas Prairie and Snipe Valley after the first body of volunteers killed the lone Indian, for no one was left to tell the tale. The Indians had killed Vey, Crisp, and the two Campbell boys and their sheep left without guard scattered throughout the hills.

The Indians in the meantime, were endeavoring to cross between Pendleton and the Agency, going northward to the Columbia River in an endeavor to cross the river and join the Yakima Indians.

A boat was plying on the Columbia River and had been supplied with Gatlin guns from Fort Vancouver. Many squaws and old Indians had managed to get through the Switzlers Island, but the main body of warriors were in the foot-hills about the head of Birch Creek, Butter Creek, and McKoy Creek. A party of Indians managed to get a band of two hundred horses and mules across the Umatilla River. This was reported in Pendleton. A party from Pendleton recaptured 20 head of the horses, and one Indian was killed by Harry Peters. The Indians took the horses back south again across the Umatilla River and into the foot hills. Many of the older Indians and squaws arrived at Switzlers Island and the gun boat shelled them from the river. A number of Indians were killed on the Island. Twenty or thirty head of horses were killed by the gun boat. On the night of July 12th, Fred Foster, who ran the toll gate at Meacham, came in

town with his horse completely exhausted, bare headed, reporting that he, George Coggin, and Alf Bunker, were fired on by the Indians on the morning of the 12th. After they had passed the Cayuse Station, they were attacked by Indians. They started to run and the Indians fired after them. Coggin fell from his horse. Bunker stayed on his horse until he reached the canyon leading down to Pendleton and he fell from his horse badly wounded. Foster had barely escaped. A company was formed and went after Bunker. He was found under a bundle to tumble weeds, brought to Pendleton, and recovered.

On the morning of July 13th, the Indians came down on the reservation in force, and the soldiers and volunteers met them south of the Agency where a battle took place, lasting three hours. Captain Miles was in charge of the regulars, and the volunteers were each man for himself. There was much firing, mostly at long rang. Several Indians were reported killed and carried away by their companions. The Indians retreated southward up the mountain, Miles and the volunteers following all firing.

During this charge across the reservation, R. C. Thompson, S. L. Morse, Clarence Morse, and myself ran across the body of Coggin. One finger on which he had worn a ring was cut off the ring taken. No white men were killed in this engagement. The full force of Indians continued on southward and up the hill, into the timber where Egan was later betrayed and killed by Tenayowitz and Umapine.

Foster, upon his arrival at Pendleton, said that in passing over the mountains they had noticed some freight wagons near Parker Wells, which had been raided and that they saw Indians in that vicinity. On the 15th a part of the scouts went back to examine the wagons and found the bodies of McCoy, McLaughlin, Smith, and Myers all of whom had been murdered and their stock driven away. The depredation of the Indians covered a wide scope around the south end of the reservation, reaching from Dead Mans Hill, which derived its name from the killing of McCoy and his companions, to the Forks of Butter Creek. McCoy, Meyers, Smith and McLaughlin were killed at Dead Man's Hill. _____ was wounded at California Gulch. Crisp, Vey and the two

Campbell boys were killed in Camas Prairie, LaMar and Hale at Willow Springs. Coggin was killed at the forks of Butter Creek, besides many were wounded at different times.

Later on six Umatilla Indians were arrested for the murder of Coggins and the wounding of _____. The Indians arrested for this murder were all Umatilla Indians, White Owl, Quittatimps, Aps, Peo, Yeuoeca, and Lelochlit. Five of them were tried by jury at the November term of Circuit Court, 1878. Judge L. D. McArthur presided as Judge. L. B. Isen assisted by M. Baker of La Grande prosecuted and the Indians were defended by Judge J. H. Lassiter and A. E. Isham. Yeuma never went to the trial and he was used as a witness by the State.

Retribution was frequently taken by the whites upon the Indians for some time afterward. Doubtless many innocent Indians were killed. Frequently the dead body of an Indian would be found full of bullet holes, not many miles from Pendleton.

In some instances, trials were held, but there is no record of anyone being punished for killing an Indian. (End Col. J. H. Raley's letter.)

At Pendleton, Chief Egan tried to induce the Umatilla, Walla Walla, and Cayuse Indians to join him in this war against the whites. The Cayuse Indians invited Egan to a rendezvous, killed him, cut off his head and paraded before the Government troops. This event broke up the war.

The Indians drifted back to the Harney Valley in small groups and scattered over their former reservation. The next year the Government sent troops, gathered up the Indians, and took them to the Yakima Reservation in Washington.

In small groups, the Indians deserted from the Yakima Reservations and scattered over southeastern Oregon and Northern Nevada. The present Piute Indian is the descendant of what at one time was a rich and powerful tribe of Indians.

A great many people have criticized men like French, Devine, Hock, Mason, Todhunter, Hawley, and the old time "Cattle Kings" for acquiring such

large tracts of lands, but these men were the products of the times in which they lived – they believed in

“The good old rule, the simple plan,
That they should take who have the power,
And they should keep who can.”

Their whole lives were devoted to the building up and enlarging their original holdings and like the feudal Lords of old, they wanted to climb to the top of a mountain and say, “I am monarch of all I survey.” Do not blame them.

This kind of a policy did not encourage the settlement of the country, as a matter of fact, settlement was discouraged. The only exception to this rule was William Hanley.

The Hanleys – John, Bill, and Ed – settled in Harney County in 1879. John soon returned to Jackson County and Bill on the death of his father returned to Jackson County and managed the Hanley ranches in the Rogue River for a number of years. He did not return to Haney County until the year 1896, at which time he purchased the interests of Ed Hanley.

Bill Hanley saw the necessity of development and people and devoted his entire life to bring that about.

Nathan Brown built the first flour mill in the Harney Valley and also devoted his life towards the development of the country, having for its purpose homes for more people. Nathan Brown was one of the first merchants of Burns, A man of courage and vision, a builder always.

It was men who. Like Nathan Brown, Cal Geer, George McGowan, J. C. Foley, Stephen Lampshire, Grant Thompson, the Hayes brothers, the Mace boys, the Levens and Bakers, Millers, P. Q. Smith, George Young, Loggans, Howsers, the Cecils, Bakers, Beste, Vickers, Shown and Withers, Fred Haines, Bob Irving at Harney; Williams, Shields, on Silver Creek; Staffer, Venators, Petersons, Careys, A. E. Brown, and others on Crane Creek; the Dunns, Springers, Haleys, Otleys, Swains, Ausumis, Rhu, Sam Graves around the borders of Malheur Lake; C. B. McConnell and his associates at Burns, farmers and irrigators who saw the chance for agriculture development, and had the

vision to see that once the Harney Valley was irrigated under a system of controlled water, it would be one of the richest valleys of the West. Note: I have added a large number of pioneer names to the above.

Some day, I am going to write the real story of Burns; write about the “good old, bad old whiskey drinking, poker playing, horse racing days of old.” Write of the famous race horses of John Devine, Tom Stephens, Henry Richardson, and Scotty Bailey, their owners and riders. Of the days when men had no use for courts, when they settled their civil differences by arbitration and their personal grudges at the point of a gun. Write of Bill Brown and the horse thieves of the high desert, of the freight teams and the freighters, _____ stage coaches, their owners and drivers, of the legal fights over the Malheur Lake, the fight that indirectly resulted in the killing of Peter French at the Sod House Ranch on December 26th, 1896. The early pioneer settler of Harney County as a hard working, courageous, double fisted individualist. He believed in the thoughts as expressed in the poem of William Ernest Henley, Invictur (Unconquered)

INVICTUS

“Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever Gods may be,
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstances,
I have not winced nor cried aloud;
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds and will find me unafraid.

It matters not how straight the gate,
How charged the punishment the scroll,
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul.

THE "FIRSTS"
JAMES J. DONEGAN

1827 – In 1827 Jed S. Smith, a member of the Missouri Fur Company passed through the Harney Valley on his way from Salt Lake to the California Coast. Smith was the first white man in history who made an all land trip along the California-Oregon Coast.

1845 – The first immigrant train to reach the Harney Valley, of which we have any history, was the train of 1845, organized and led by Captain T'Vault.

1867 – In 1867 the first plowing in Harney Valley was done by J. J. Cozart and E. C. Buckley near Camp Harney. They seeded forty acres to grain but the experiment was failure.

1867 – In 1867 a man by the name of Walker carried the first mail from Canyon City to Fort Harney.

1869 – John S. Devine was undoubtedly the first permanent settler locating in 1869.

1872 – Peter French was the first man to settle on the Blitzen River, coming there in 1872.

1873 – The first white child born in what is now Harney County was Maggie L. Smyth, the late Mrs. James J. Donegan, who was born on September 29, 1873.

1873 – Frank McLeod was the first to settle on the present site of the city of Burns. He built a stone house on the point of the hill just north of the Locher property in the summer of 1873.

1885 – In 1885 Horace Dillard established the first newspaper.

1887 – In 1887 the first church was completed.

1887 – In 1887 the first brewery was completed.

1888 – Nathan Brown began the erection of the first flour mill in 1888.

1889 – The first railroad survey made in Harney County was in 1889.

1889 – The first marriage license issued in Harney County was to George S. Sizemore and Alta McGee in May, 1889.

1889 – In 1889 P. F. Stenger secured the first daily mail.

1889 – In 1889 the first notice of the creation of the local land office gave Drewsey, Oregon as the place of location. The settlers in Harney Valley and the residents of the town of Burns objected to this location and a movement to have the location changed to the town of Burns was started. At a later date the M. D. Land Office was located at Burns and J. B. Huntington was appointed the first Register and Captain Harrison Kelly the first Receiver of Public Money.

1890 – The first regular election in Harney County as held in June 1890.

1894 – Scaled proposals for the construction of the first court house were published by order of the County Court on February 15th, 1894.

1897 – In December, 1897 C. P. Johnson of John Day visited the business men of Burns in the interest of the construction of a telephone line from Canyon City to Burns. About that time the question of the establishment of a Public Library was discussed.

1919 – In the summer of 1919 Mr. E. W. Barnes, arrived in Burns and made the first start to interest the people of Burns in the development of the timber resources of Grant and Harney Counties.

1920 – The first creamery was built in July, 1920.

Wheeler was the first Justice of the Peace.

The first saloon and store was put up by a man named Josephson where the Burns Hotel stands.

ORGANIZATIONS

The Burns Brass Band was organized in November, 1889, with the following officers and members: M. N. Fegtley, President and Leader; C. W. Byrd, Vice-President; J. C. Welcome, Treasurer; M. R. Biggs, secretary; Members, E. B. Reed, Lee Brown, C. W. Byrd, George W. Grace, L. M. Caldwell, Henry Welcome, M. R. Biggs, W. R. Gradon, M. N. Fegtley, J. C. Welcome, Julian Byrd, Charles McPheters, Robert Huston.

The first volunteer Fire Company for Burns was organized in March, 1890 with Cal Geer, President; M.N. Fegtley, Vice-President; George Young, Secretary; Henry Chambers, Assistant Secretary; Ike Baer, Treasurer; Wm.

Wood, Foreman; Ed Joy, First Assistant Foreman; and P. G. Smith, Second Assistant Foreman.

Troop "A" Oregon National Guard was organized prior to 1893. A. W. Gowan was Captain of Troop "A".

The Order of the Eastern Star was organized in Burns on September 11, 1895 by Ike Baer, Deputy and following were the first officers: Captain, A. W. Waters, Worthy Patron; Mrs. Nellie Grace and Clara Marsden, Matrons; Sarah Miller, Secretary; Anna Sayer, Treasurer; Eliose Huntingham, Adah; Delia Dunkhenner, Ruth; Stella James, Esther; Elizabeth Waters, Martha; Delnova Gowan, Electa; Clara Hanley, Conductress; Rose Cushing, Warden; Donnie Gradon, Sentinel.

Inland Lodge No. 70 – K of P was organized October 6th, 1896 with C.C., I. S. Geer; V. G., J. W. Biggs; P. A., J. McKinnon; M of W., M. L. Lewis; M of E. Charles Voegtley; M of F, Charles Kengon; K, R & S, E. B. Loudon; Mat A, H. M. Horton; I. G. Sam Mothershear; O G, Frank Miller; Grand Lodge, H. E. Thompson and R. D. Scheiber.

The Harney Valley Camp of the Woodmen of the World was organized June 29, 1897 with C. C., J. J. Tupker; A. L., George S. Sizemore; Banker, A. M. Byrd; Clerk, F. T. Miller; Watchman, Grant Kesterson; Sentry, M. Ziegenfuse; Physician, W. L. Marsden; Managers, F. B. Shortridge, J. D. Moore and R. A. Miller.