

FAMILY HISTORY

THE PIONEERS OF 1853

(This is the history of the pioneers of 1853 but it actually hinges around the Williams family. I, being a son of Elias Williams and grandson of Thomas Williams, naturally I have learned more of the part that they have taken than the others, also I have endeavored to get the names of as many as possible of all the rest that were on the train and the part that they have taken.)

In the year of 18 hundred and 20s there were three Welch brothers immigrated to Pennsylvania, U S A. The eldest of the three, was Thomas Williams, he was an architect and the other two were carpenters. It was in Pennsylvania that Thomas met a Welch girl, fell in love with her and they were married. One child born to them in Pennsylvania died in infancy. Later they immigrated to Cincinnati, Ohio. While in Ohio, four children was born to them. Elias, Mary, Cecilia and Martha. The mother died when Elias was ten years old.

Now these are the words of my father, Elias Williams as I remember them. " Mother was never well since I can remember, she was always sickly and thin. I often wished that she would get strong and healthy like other women as I was afraid she wouldn't live very long. Her last sick spell she called all of us children to her bedside and told us that she was going to leave us and told us all to be good children and some day we would meet her in Heaven. Then she kissed us all goodbye and she died that night. We mourned her loss and she was buried in Cincinnati, Ohio."

A year or two later (Thomas Williams) met a widow woman by the name of Hannah Wagner. She had two children by the name of Esther and August Wagner by her former husband. They were married and had one son which died in infancy of Typhoid Fever. There was a epidemic of Typhoid in many places, so Thomas Williams decided to take his family and go west with a train that was getting ready to start from Joplin, Missouri. There were certain specifications a person had to meet before they were allowed to accompany a train.

There was an inventory taken of all your goods and the health of all persons must be good. ( They had to have not less than 60lbs. of bacon for every adult) They also must have some money so they wouldn't have to be on charity.

They sold all their property but one lot which they were unable to sell. Then they boarded the steamboat at Cincinnati and started down the Ohio River, to the mouth, then up the Missouri

*Martha Emma Williams  
b. 14 Aug. 1845  
m. Bonds Denton  
Ohio*

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to St. Louis. There they purchased some milk cows and calves which they intended to have as a foundation for his herd in Oregon as he was going into the cattle business. This plan never worked out because the Indians stole their loose cattle, later on their journey the Indians stampeded a bunch of horses through their camp and made away with their two horses. There the carriage had to be abandoned but they continued on and when they didn't have wood they built their fires with buffalo chips. They had no further trouble with the Indians but when they got to the Platte River they lost a few of their oxen to the quicksand.

They continued on to the Snake River and there they met a Mr. Elliot whose wife was on the train. He explained to them that he knew of a much shorter route than the old road. Among those that took the old beaten trail were Jim Parvin, Joe and Jim Parker and a sister, Cecilia. The Judkins family and the Stoop family and Samuel Knox. Those that took the short cut were Thomas Williams and family, Mr. Isaac Wm. Bond, Mrs. Bond, Fred Warner and wife, Tom Warner and wife, and John Warner and wife and an orphan boy, John Johnson, the Pettys, the McClures, Mistrees Elliott and the Harlow's. NOTE: (The Harlows were already in Oregon, having come in 1850-1, however Mrs. Harlows brother, a Mr. Robert Tandy on his way back east met up with this train and for some reason turned back to Oregon with it.)

They were going over a route that never a wheel had gone over before and no one knew the exact location of how they should go. Thomas Williams had maps of the surrounding country and a long telescope. The going wasn't good even at the best, for they would run against rims and would have to make a road so they could go over. It was twenty or more miles across a desert and then they would hit a rim rock and they would have to let their wagons down with ropes. There was one cliff too high for the rope so they had to kill one of the oxen and used the hide to make rope. They spliced out the rope they had and let the wagons down. They continued on to the Malheur Lake and they followed the lake along until they came to the Malheur River and followed it up.

Many years later Elias Williams visited his son, Joe and the Dunten boys Bery and Charles, his nephews, on the Malheur River and he recognized the old trail.

*Done of Thomas J. Dunten and Martha Emma Williams, June 4, 1861. This has to be the Malheur River they followed up, as the Malheur River does not connect with the Snake.*

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He told them that the old trail went right up through their ranches and on to where Fort Harney was. Then they went across Harney Valley till they came to the Silvies River where they met up with a white man with a squaw wife and he rode a fine iron grey horse. Silvies River wasn't wide but it was deep and there no ford, so they had to unload the wagons and they swam the cattle across and pulled their running gears across. There was a number of waterproof wagon boxes which they used to ferry their goods across. From there they continued east to Wright's Point and on to the Warm Springs, which was afterwards known as the William Hanley Ranch. They went on and passed Silver Lake of Harney Co. and on to Wagontire. Just before they got to Wagontire a lady discovered, in an old lake bed, some yellow nuggets-- not knowing what they were, she brought them into camp, they told her it was gold. Her husband left a little blue bucket close by on some rocks and afterwards the spot was known as the Blue Bucket Mine.

Then they continued on across the dessert which was a hundred miles or more and had very little water. What they did find was alkali and it killed some of their cattle. They continued on to the Pine timber and still no water. The cattle gave out entirely and couldn't pull the wagons any further. There wasn't any thing they could do except turn the cattle loose. Just before they got to the Pine timber they met some surveyors by the name of Bob Tandy, Les Nolan and Martin Blanding. They decided to go on ahead and get some help. They lost their way and couldn't find any way to get their horses down from the mountaines, so after wandering around for several days they left their horses, saddles and grub and came down the rocks and continued on afoot.

A number of the boys followed the cattle they had turned loose and that undoubtedly was the darkest part of their journey. There they were, sitting out on the dessert with no water, cattle gone, and the boys gone--they didn't know where. Provisions were running low and winter coming on with the Cascade mountains yet to cross.

In a little over two days all hearts were gladdened when they saw the boys coming back with the cattle. They had found the Deschutes River and an abundance of grass. The cattle were refreshed but the boys were hungry. Somewhere along the way the train had split again and one bunch went down the old Barlow route and the others went on, but they had lost so many cattle they couldn't bring all their wagons so they had to leave them

Little Harney Lake

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by the way. Thomas Williams had lost three head of his cattle and he had three wagons, so he left one wagon at the summit. Many years later it was found with a pine tree growing up through the spokes. They finally reached the Willamette River and it was impossible to leave the river so they had to go down, and the going was very rough. There was a number of places where they decided the banks were to steep so they chained poles to the lower axle and put the pole over the top of the load and the men would ride the poles to keep the wagons from tipping over. Provisions were mighty scarce, some were out altogether. So those who had, divided with those who hadn't and one woman had two children and she had a milk cow so she would milk about a cupful twice a day and give it to her children and do without herself until she finally went insane. There was another death on the train, a Mistress Petty was hit by a trunk falling from a wagon. She was buried there by the trail. Mistress Bond and some other women of the train dressed her out in some nice clothes so she would have a decent burial.

Many got discouraged and refused to move, they would bury their hands in the sand and others had to drag them away. Those that took the old route had made it through but the rest of the train wasn't heard of. So they decided to send out a relief expedition to try and find them.. Dan Hunsaker, David Mathews, Jim and Joe Parker, Joel Addington, Alexis Miller and Walker Young went out to find them, and they succeeded. They found them by the smoke of the campfires. Thomas Williams was in the train that had been lost and when they found them they had brought some supplies, it is said that Thomas Williams went to pull out a sack of what he thought was sugar to go on some huckleberries they had picked, but it turned out to be a sack of rice. That undoubtelly saved many lives.....

This is the story as told by Thomas Williams.

This is where Wagon 12 got its name.

From All County, 1910, The Oregon Historical Society, P. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000

More on Thomas Williams

Thomas Williams b, 10, Oct. 1803 at Columbia Co. Took out a D,L,C,  
No. 2101, Lane Co. Ore.. He was a carpenter and farmer.  
He was married to Ann Goodwin who died ca. 1847. in Ohio.

They had five children, namely.

1. Elias Pitzer b. 15, July 1837. Hamilton Co. Ohio. He 1st mar. Elmira  
Russell, 17, June 1858, Lane Co. Ore. mar, 2nd Gertrude Hutchinson, Lane  
Co. Ore.
2. Thomas, his second son died 1921 unmarried.
3. Mary S., b. 1840 m. Daniel Hunsaker. on 18, March 1855. Lane Co Ore.
4. Cecelia L. b. Ohio. mar. Henry Morgan on Jan. 1st, 1861. Lane  
Co. Ore.
5. Martha, born 14. Aug, 1845 Ohio Married Thomas J. Dunton on June 4,  
1861 Lane Co. Ore. He died Oct. 6th, 1906 at Camp Cr. Lane Co. Ore.

Note. This is where Sarah Dunton Tyler and the Williams meet.  
Some changes, from different histories (As follows)

Thomas Williams b. 10th Oct. 1803 Columbia Co. Pa.  
m, 1st. Ann Goodwin, who died 1847 in Ohio  
m. 2nd Hannah ( Levering) Wagner b. 1824 Pa.  
on Oct, 30th 1849. Glazier Co. Ohio.

Hannahs 1st husband was Michael Wagner.

She had two children by him. namely;

1. Esther Wagner b. 22 Aug. 1842 m. John W. Johnson the 25th Aug.  
1858 at Lane Co. Ore. Step\_daughter of Thomas Williams died  
1918 Lane Co. Ore.
2. Phillip Augustus Wagner b. 16, Jan. 1844, Ohio m. Jessie May  
Miner, 21, Oct. 1875, Lane Co. ORE. (farmer) Step-son of Thomas  
Williams. died, 27, May 1927. Lane Co. Ore.