

WS30037 - Sons Daughters

Q1: Start by telling your name and your connections.

PRITCHARD: I'm Margaret Pritchard. I'm the Treasurer of the Sons and Daughters of Oregon Pioneers. And my fore bearers are the Mason family, who came west from Illinois. They left in April and got to Oregon city in September. And the one thing that was noted in my family's diary, was Mrs. Phillip Foster's squash pie. Now they had endured the hardship of crossing the Barlow trail, and for the entry to be made in the diary about Mrs. Foster's squash pie, was quite an event for them. And it was the middle of September, because they signed in to Oregon City on the 23rd, so it would have probably been about on my current birthday, about the 18th of September, when she had squash pie at Mrs. Phillip Foster's. The train that they came with was the UBC -- The United Brethren and Christ church train. And it's referred to in several of the journals as the pastor's train, or the church train. And some of the logging points, where they had to log in, they are listed as a train, and not individuals, as they were at the Foster, and at the Barlow. But on the forts on the way from Illinois they were listed individually as families.

And David Mason brought 14 children to [Fallomouth?] Oregon.

Q1: Thank you very much. Do you have any other stories from your days?

PRITCHARD: They didn't celebrate, they were just glad they got here! Put that on tape, Harley.

Q1: Tell us your name first.

BUSHER: Oh, I'm Arlene Curry Busher (sp?) And my ancestors came in 1846 on the so-called Southern Applegate Route. Janet, who's next to me, and I share a great, great grandfather. Alfonzo Boone, who is the grandson of Daniel Boone. I guess we never actually heard why he came west, except he was probably following in the footsteps of his grandfather, who if he had lived long enough, he would have come west. He brought 7 of his 8 living children. His wife had died in 1838, and they parted company at Fort Hall and came south on the California trail until they got to southern Idaho, northern Nevada, where they went west across the desert and suffered, I think, as many hardships -- more -- than they would have if they had come through the Barlow trail. Then they came up the southern Willamette (sp?) valley. They lost almost all their possessions. Their wagons broke down, the weather was horrendous. It rained, rained, rained, if they were down low enough. If

they were up high, it snowed, snowed, snowed. And it was recorded in the journals that it was the worst snowfall of that area. It came early. If they hadn't come early, they would have made it through OK. They ran out of food, they sent ahead for food from the ^{Wilatamete} Walymut valley. And people met them. They got to Mary's river, which is Corvallis now, gee, was it Thanksgiving? They got to a [ricrial] called La Creole, at Christmas, and they were so fortunate. They were so glad that's where they went. Our great grandfather -- do you want to take it from there?

BOONE: Yeah, I could, sure.

BUSHER: Go ahead.

BOONE: Arlene and I are cousins. Like I said, my name's Janet Boone McGurigal (sp?) Once they arrived to what is now the Wilsonville area -- and this was the end of the year in 1846, at holiday time, Christmas time -- they homesteaded along the banks of the ^{Wilatamete} Walymut (sp?) river, as did the Curry family. And at that time, the Curry and Boone families had not intermarried. But they did soon after (laughter). And Governor Curry was the territorial Governor of Oregon. He married Chloe Boone. But to take it back, Alfonso and the boys homesteaded along the banks of the river there which is now Wilsonville and built the

Boone's Ferry, which operated for -- I can't remember just off the top of my head --

BUSHER: It was 1972.

BOONE: Well they -- built it -- yeah.

BUSHER: In 1847 and 1878 they built it with the Indians, [Roeing].

BOONE: [Roeing], the [Calipuit] engines were the source of power for the first ferry. And it operated until I was 12 years old, in 1954. I was fortunate to be able to ride the ferry across for the last time with my father and my little sister. And when the I-5 freeway opened and the Boone Bridge was christened later that same day. So that was a fun memory that I have in my lifetime. The town was called Boonesville for a number of years, and it later became named Wilsonville after Charles Wilson who was the postmaster. The Boones started spreading out to an area greater than Wilsonville, and it's my good fortune now to have my family -- all four of my grandchildren are being raised in the area that my family first homesteaded, which is just coincidental. I never dreamed that would ever happen, but it's kind of fun to have them all be going to Wilsonville schools and my daughter being really active in community events. I'm going to pass it back to you. I

don't know how much we want to include that would be interesting for people to know. What can you think of?

BUSHER: Well first of all, Alfonzo received a letter from his brother in law, Littleburn Boggs, that alerted him to the fact that there really was a gold rush, or a gold strike in California. He wasn't going to go down there unless he heard from his brother in law. Well he heard from his brother-in-law and the boys went off through southern Oregon down into California to Feather River.

Unfortunately he passed away down there from fever, and Janet and her sister Carolyn Boone Grandfil (sp?) and I and some of our grandchildren, my grandchildren, dedicated a tombstone on Alfonzo's grave. His grave was unmarked, but we were able to find it with the help of others.

Especially from Buke County, down there on the Feather river because they built a dam there. And fortunately the old gravestone, the old graves, there were five graves.

And they were saved, they weren't the part that was flooded, which was fortunate for us. So we went down in 2002 to place the tombstone. I still have relatives, I mean our son and his children live in Twaiton, and so they're still in the same area. And I think the love story was Chloe Boone and Governor -- well, governor to be -- George Law Curry met on the wagon train, and she went south

for the Applegate trail. He came over the Barlow trail and was one of the very first who came down on the Barlow trail in 1846. He was single, so all he had to worry about was his horse -- although I think by that time he said he had mules. And they met again after they were down here in Oregon City, and he courted her by carrying schoolbooks, text books, to her as she started the first non-religious school in Oregon. And her name was Chloe Boone, which later became Chloe Boone Curry. Oh, and Janet's great grandfather, that's Chloe's brother, he didn't come on the Oregon trail. He was off scouting for the Indians, and when he came home, he found his family had gone. (laughter) So he signed up for a year to fight in the Mexican war, and he signed up for one year. And after that one year was up, he left right in the middle of a battle and led a wagon trail out here in 1848. And he says in his letters that he got to Oregon City, and he gave the date, and there, who should he meet on the street walking towards him but his father and his brothers. And they took him home to Chloe's house, his sister's, for dinner.

Q1: Great, more stories, of the arrival time, and the celebration of finally getting here, and the holiday.

WETZL: Is it on? OK I'm Norma Wetzl (sp?). My ancestor was -
- well I have more than one that came on the Oregon Trail,

but the one that I shall share is the Reverend John Foster. He was the first reform minister to come to Oregon. This was in 1845. On the way, according to the diary of Captain Joe Palmer, he writes of a celebration that they had which was, they stopped because people were so tired, for a rest day. And during that time, he speaks of -- they put up some kind of tent-like thing. And he speaks of the Reverend John Foster, holding a service, and people singing and praying and giving thanks for the safe journey that far. Well they did come on to Oregon. He settled in ~~Clackamas~~ ^{Clackamas} ~~Clackmus~~ (sp?) on the banks of the ~~Clackmus~~ ^{Clackamas} (sp?) river, and along the banks. And a few years later, in 1852, the next bunch came along, and their names were Pettigo (sp?) and they settled along the banks of the ~~Clackmus~~ ^{Clackamas} river too, and the two families had a daughter and a son that got married. By the way, they daughter actually was John's granddaughter who came. He had a very large family, and she was a baby, just one year old when they came across on the trail. And she eventually married the other one. Particular things that I like to remember and that I'm proud of are that he was a minister, he died in ~~Clackmus~~ ^{Clackamas} county, he was kind of old to be on the trail. I'm not exactly sure if I can remember his age, but he was pretty old. I want to say 68, but it -- yeah, it was 68. The

other family, their name was Pettigo (sp?) they were very old too, and they brought their sons, their daughters, their grandchildren, their cousins, huge families. Anyhow, the Pettigo's, Edward Pettigo was the one who named Damascus, Damascus. He coined the term from the Bible. And that's it.

Q1: Thank you very much. So more Thanksgiving or Christmas stories.

NELSON: To add to some of the Boone history. She wants it!

(laughter) My name is Eleanor Nelson. I have heritage from several people that were here in the Oregon Territory. The one that we have the most information about is Jarius ~~Barney~~ ^{Bonny} (sp?). He was in a train that started out in 1845 but didn't get here until 1846. They were met in Fort Hall by representatives of Captain Sutter (sp?) that had a fort down in California. You may recall, I'm saying this was 1845, gold had not been discovered yet. And Sutter was trying ever so hard to get folks to come down and settle on part of his Spanish land grant. He could provide them land and he would also be very glad to get any grain or whatever for his mill. It was going to be a sweetheart deal. Anyways, his representatives at Fort Hall said you mustn't try to go on to Oregon through the Oregon trail because it was terribly dangerous, and you would be killed or starved

to death, or just have all kinds of problems. So they got suckered into it, they were sort of wrong way Corrigans (sp?) and they went through Idaho. They ended up taking a route through the mountains that later was to be known as the Donner Pass. This was not a particular happy thing as they ended up in California at the start of hostilities with the Mexicans, and they were told they'd have to leave or change their citizenship. They did argue that they needed to spend the winter because it was so severe weather-wise, and there wasn't an established trail up to Oregon and they already had had a few deaths. Anyway, they did actually have permission to stay the winter and then came up the following year. Now what they did to celebrate was to stop off in the Oregon city district, when they finally got to Oregon. And they had a meeting where they talked to the people from the Oregon spectator that had just recently started operations, and depositions were taken, and they sent a committee back to Fort Hall to waylay these folks that were spreading all of this false information so that other settlers would be spared the hardship of this long trail to be met with hostility in California. That's about the biggest celebration they had, was just, "OK, we gotcha."

BUSHER: Do you know who the editor was who started the Spectator?

NELSON: I don't have that information.

BOONE: My great grandfather, George Lacur (sp?)

NELSON: (laughter) Oh that's wonderful! I do have a copy of the general history of Oregon. I'm quoting out of the general history of Oregon, published by Benfords and Moore (sp?). In the spring of 1846, some disappointed California settlers reached the ~~Walymut~~ ^{Wahamette} Valley by trail coming from the south and bringing information that Landsford Hastings (sp?) he was the agent that gave them the wrong information, was planning to divert settlers from the Oregon trail and to induce them to turn off and go to California. The California that brought this story and preferred Oregon included a number of people, two of my relatives are there, Jarius Bonny and Truman Bonny (sp?) This plan of Hastings seemed to ~~Walymut~~ ^{Wahamette} valley citizens as an effort to lead astray by misrepresentations, persons who were on their way to Oregon. A mass meeting was at once held at city hotel Oregon City, where after organization steps were taken to get affidavits and procure for their investigation. Depositions were taken and were published in the Oregon Spectator. A fund was raised to send Colonel Finley, J.S. Reiersen, (sp?) and W.G. ~~Devault~~ ^{T'VAULT} (sp?) to

meet the emigration from the United States to this country in order to prevent settlers from being deceived and lead astray.

Q1: One of our members has done some work here about the Boone family, in fact, so I don't know if -- is that Boone book in there Duffy? If some of the Boone people here might want to know about that work that one of our members did. So how about some more stories? Thanksgiving holiday celebrations?

DUNCAN: Well I'm Verne Duncan, a member of the Board of the Sons and Daughters of Oregon Pioneers. My family members that came on the wagon train of 1847 on the Joe Palmer wagon train were the Whitneys and the Hubbards. I guess when they arrived at the Whitman mission, there was talk that it was kind of late, and they were encouraged to stay, but they decided they would press on, and I'm glad they did, because I think the massacre happened just a short time after they had left there. The Hubbard who was on that train would have been my great, great, great uncle and his nephew, who was my great, great, grandfather, had come with his uncle. His father didn't come until 1852 I guess, Joseph Hubbard. But they settled where Hubbard is now. I always thought that if you had a town named after your family, I wish that it developed a bit more than Hubbard

had, but nevertheless that was the town that was named for them. I think they donated the land to Rivert. So they settled in that area. Charles Hubbard married Alice Whitney, and her father was my great, great, great grandfather, and William Whitney and Elizabeth Taylor. It's not the best tale that you generally think of. They had come from England. Obviously, I imagine they were in pretty dire straights. William Whitney signed his donation to the land claim with an x, so he couldn't obviously read or write at that time, but he did fairly well. He did go to the California gold mines, made a little bit of money, I don't think he really got rich. But when he died in 1878, in his will he had about \$20,000, money, he had about 6,000 acres of land out in French Prairie. During that time one of the traveling salesmen of the period of time used to come and stay with him oftentimes. And by the way I heard this story and at first you know you don't always believe some of the tales you've heard through the years but this is all documented and I've found all the records. It was Aaron ~~Myer~~ ^{Meyer}, and Mr. ~~Meyer~~ ^{Meyer} wanted to start a store, and he thought maybe Portland would be a good place to start out in Oregon city because he thought Portland was really going to develop. And so my great, great, great grandfather loaned him money on two different occasions. We have

copies of all the notes. He loaned them the money at about 10% interest. I think one of them was about \$6,000 and the other one was about \$8,000 and thus he was in on the start of they ~~Myer~~ ^{Meier}-Frank stores. I had hoped that some point along the line they had missed the April payment on some month, and I was going to go to my friend ~~Jerry~~ ^{Gerry} Frank and say, about that April payment in 1972, but we do have the records and everything was paid, darn it. So the Whitney family, I think there were seven or eight, so by the time he divided up his land, no one -- well he was probably pretty wealthy for that period of time, it certainly didn't get handed down to the rest of us by the time we split it up with the family. But pretty interesting characters I think for coming out signing the land claims with x's and he did very well.

Q1: We at ~~Tualatin~~ ^{Tualatin} are proud that we have an Aaron Meyer donation land claim right down south of town. And we have a map here if anyone's interested in the donation land claims of our particular town. Somebody did some work on that. And there it is down there, the blue L is Aaron ~~Meyer~~ ^{Meier}. So the story was that he came through these areas with his wagon as a peddler (overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

MORT: Well I don't have a celebration necessarily. My name is Richard Mort (sp?) I was given up for adoption at birth, and I never found out who my birth mother or father were until several years after the law changed. I was adopted by Ralph and Bernice Mort (sp?) and I was raised in a publishing family, Binfords and Mort (sp?) so I was still publishing books. But I did find out that my mothers name was Bonebreak, Laureen Bonebreak , and my father's name was Owen Barton. And they both came from families, my great, great, grandfather, on both sides, had donation land claims in a small agricultural area called Day's Creek. It's a little south and east of Roseburg. My mother was a school teacher, Owen Barton was a logger. And The family was very religious and a friend traced that heritage back to the 16th Century in northern Switzerland and southern Germany and they were all either ministers or teachers or both. That's about it.

Q1: Well thank you very much for helping us build our oral history collection. Let's have Gary next.

SALIERS: I'm Gary Saliers(sp?), I'm president of the Sons and Daughters of Oregon Pioneers. Our family story is kind of the westward movement. My great, great, grandfather was born in Bourbon County Kentucky in 1810 and my great, great grandmother was born in east shore Maryland. And my great

great grandfather's parents had moved from East Shore Maryland, so we're talking about leaving the Atlantic Ocean and starting west. My great, great grandfather's name was Thomas Henry Umfrey (sp?) and my grandmother was Nancy Jane Driscoll. And the reason they came to Oregon is kind of an interesting story to me because their oldest daughter Julia had married Alan Parker, and crossed the plains on their honeymoon trip in 1852. They settled on a claim near Albany in ~~Lyme~~ ^{Linn} County. Julia is said in the reflections book, it's kind of an interesting little side note about her. She was tall, striking, dark-haired lady who and Indian chief on the way wanted to buy from her husband, and he offered 17 ponies for her, but was turned down. And he couldn't understand why the husband wouldn't sell her for 17 ponies. Anyway, she wrote back to her parents about the free land, and her parents were farmers by this time in Bloomington, Iowa, which is right on the Mississippi river in eastern Iowa, and told them that there was free land in Oregon. So her parents sold their farm, sold many of their belongings, packed up their five children that were still at home, and came to Oregon. My great grandmother, Matilda Samantha Umfrey (sp?) was born in October and on the trip to Oregon she became two years old in October on the trip. She arrived in Oregon in the fall of 1853. My wife Jeanie

and I have traveled the Oregon trail and it's been fun for us to realize that my great grandmother and my great, great grandmother and grandfather had come on that trail. You can see the rugged ruts still are available at some locations. Another thing that I thought was interesting about these two was that Nancy was 45 years old and Thomas was 43 years old when they sold out and headed for Oregon. So at that time, when you're at that age, that's quite a decision to make I think to just close up and move. When they got to the ~~Dales~~ ^{Dales} (sp?) they took the water route and they went to Oregon City and then they settled on a land claim near the Parkers who the daughter had married, Alan Parker, in ~~Lynne~~ ^{Linn} County. In later years they moved to Albany and they lived good long lives. Thomas died at 78 and Nancy died at 81. My great, great grandmother Matilda married Columbus William Cowen (sp?) in 1867 in Albany, and she died though at the age of 38 and is also buried in Albany. Their son Thomas William Cowen was born in 1873 and he was my mother's dad and my grandpa, and in his later years, he lived with my parents and my in ~~Claskini~~ ^{Clatskanie} (sp?) area. In fact I shared a bedroom with him for a number of years. So he is my tie to the Umfrey family. And the Parker family and the Umfreys still have a family reunion every two or three years and it's held in the Albany area.

Q: Well I just wanted to thank you again for coming today. I'm sorry for -- we're doing other things today, not just your meeting. As you noticed, the art show going on, plus, getting our famous 15,000 year old Mastodon tusk teeth installed finally today here, since 1962 this project's been worked on. Since a student at Portland State University made it a biology project.

End - WS30037 - Sons Daughters