

## NOTES AND REMINISCENCES.

LAYING OUT AND ESTABLISHING THE OLD IMMIGRANT ROAD INTO AND THROUGH SOUTHERN OREGON IN THE YEAR 1846.

BY LINDSAY APPLGATE.

## Conclusion.

No circumstance worthy of mention occurred on the monotonous march from Black Rock to the timbered regions of the Cascade chain; then our labors became quite arduous. Every day we kept a guard over the horses while we worked the road, and at night we dared not cease our vigilance, for the Indians continually hovered about us, seeking for advantage. By the time we had worked our way through the mountains to the Rogue river valley, and then through the Goose Creek Hills and Umpqua chain, we were pretty thoroughly worn out. Our stock of provisions had grown very short, and we had to depend, to a great extent, for sustenance, upon game. Road working, hunting, and guard duty, had taxed our strength greatly, and on our arrival in the Umpqua valley, knowing that the greatest difficulties in the way of the immigrants had been removed, we decided to proceed at once to our homes in the Willamette. There we arrived on the 3d day of October, 1846, having been absent three months and thirteen days. During all this time our friends had heard nothing from us, and realizing the dangerous character of our expedition, many believed in the news which had some time before reached them, that we had all been murdered by the Indians.

As soon as we could possibly make the arrangement, we sent out a party, with oxen and horses, to meet the immigrants and aid them in reaching the Willamette settlements. For this assistance, we made no demand; nor did we tax them for the use of the road, as was alleged by parties inimical to our enterprise. It had been the distinct understanding, from the first inception of the undertaking, that the road should be free, and that the consciousness of having opened up a better means of access to the country than was afforded by the expensive and dangerous route down the Columbia, which we had tried to our sorrow, would be ample compensation for all our labors and hardships in opening the south road.

Of course our enterprise was opposed by that mighty monopoly, the Hudson's Bay Company, whose line of forts and trading posts on the Columbia afforded them rare opportunities for trade with the immigrants. Many of the immigrants who followed us during the fall of 1846, had a hard time, though not as hard as they would likely have experienced on the other route; and some of them not understanding the situation fully, became infected with the spirit of persecution, which had its origin with the Hudson's Bay Company, and joined in charging us with leading the travel away from the northern route for purposes of personal speculation. Certain members of the party were singled out to bear the burden of persecution, whereas, if any member of the party was animated by improper motives in seeking to open the road, all were equally guilty, as the party was governed in all its proceedings by a majority vote of its members.

The efforts of the Hudson's Bay Company to put down the road, proved an eminent failure. Its superior advantages were better and better known and appreciated every year. It never ceased to be an important route of travel, and a large portion of the population of our State entered by this channel. It is a very significant fact that the great thoroughfare of to-day,



SKETCHING SOME OF THE BEAUTIES OF NATURE—See page 148.

from the Willamette to the Siskiyou chain, and thence out through the Lake country and on to Humboldt, departs rarely from the route blazed out by the road company, 32 years ago.

Those who are conversant with the facts, know that that portion of the route, from the Humboldt to the Lake country, presents no serious obstacles in the way of the construction of a railroad, and had the Central Pacific company located their road on that route, from Humboldt as far as Goose Lake, and thence down Pitt river to the Sacramento valley, they would doubtless have saved millions of money in the original cost of the road, as well as in keeping it in order, since the snow-fall would never have been seriously in the way, even in the severest winters.

In conclusion, I will recall the names of the road company, with a few facts relative to their history. I regret that it is not practicable to make this record more ample, but the company was made up, almost to a man, of active, energetic characters, who were not satisfied with quiet, spiritless life, and many of them, long ago, were lost to the little community "over in Polk," where they first settled, as they removed to other portions of the State or went out into adjacent territories to seek their fortunes. Under the circumstances, it has been impracticable to learn the whereabouts of some of them, or to gather such facts relative to their later history as would amplify and add interest to their biographies. Perhaps few companies of men ever performed such a campaign without repeated quar-

rels and even serious altercations, but the members of the Old South Road Company bore together the trials and privations of the expedition with a "forgiving and forbearing" spirit, and their mutual burdens and the dangers to which they were alike exposed, continually developed and strengthened their friendship. A reunion of them, were such a thing practicable, would be a season of peculiar joy, one to be remembered by the veteran survivors with pleasure, until they, too, shall pass away into the great unknown.

## THE ROAD COMPANY.

Capt. Levi Scott, a native of Illinois, came to Oregon in 1844, from near Burlington, Iowa. He was, in the early days, quite a prominent man in Oregon affairs. He was a member of the State constitutional convention. Capt. Scott located Scottsburg, on the Umpqua river. He is now over eighty years of age, and, I believe, resides in Lane county.

John Jones, usually known as "Jack" Jones, the wag of the south road expedition, came to Oregon, from Missouri, in 1843. Since then, he has been quite a wanderer. For many years he resided in California, and, if living, is now in Idaho, I believe. Native State, Missouri.

John Owens crossed the plains in 1843, from Missouri. He was, I think, a native of that State. Have no knowledge of his whereabouts.

Henry Boycus came from Missouri in 1845. He was a fine looking, jovial and intelligent young man, and we were all much attached to him. Was

probably murdered by Indians, near Fort Hall, after he left us, in 1846, to return to his home in Missouri. Native State, Missouri.

William Sportsman crossed the plains in 1845, from Missouri, which was, I think, his native State. He left Oregon in 1847, and I have no knowledge of his present whereabouts.

Samuel Goodhue, a native of New York, came to Oregon in 1844. He afterwards became a son-in-law of Davidson, the old pioneer, and a number of years resided about Salem. When I last heard of him, he was in Ohio.

Robert Smith came to Oregon in 1843, from Missouri. Native State, Virginia. He now resides at the head of the Yoncalla valley, in Douglas county. Mr. Smith is a son-in-law of Charles Applegate, and brother to Mrs. Governor Chadwick.

Moses Harris, called "Black Harris," came to Oregon in 1844, from the Rocky mountains, where he had been a scout and trapper for many years. He spoke the Snake language fluently, and was of great service to us on the plains. He returned to the States in 1847, as guide to Dr. White, the Superintendent of Indian affairs in Oregon, and died at Independence, Mo.

John Scott, a son of Capt. Levi Scott, came to Oregon with his father in 1844. He now resides near Dallas, Polk county, Oregon.

William G. Parker, a native of Missouri, came to Oregon in 1843. He resided many years in California, but is now a resident of Lake county, Oregon, and keeps the Half Way House, on the road from Ashland to Linkville. Mr. Parker is a son-in-law of Capt. Solomon Metherson, the old mountain man, and a brother to Mrs. Jesse Applegate.

David Goff came to Oregon, from Missouri, in 1845. He resided in Polk county, Oregon, until his death, which occurred, I believe, in 1873, and was universally respected. He was the father-in-law of Gen. J. W. Nesmith.

Benjamin F. Burch came to Oregon, from his native State, Missouri, in 1845. Mr. Burch has long been a prominent man in Oregon affairs. He now resides at Salem, and is Superintendent of the State Penitentiary.

Jesse Applegate was born in Kentucky, and came to Oregon in 1843. He now resides on Mount Yoncalla, in Douglas county, Oregon.

Lindsay Applegate, also a native of Kentucky, came to Oregon in 1843. Now a resident of Ashland, Jackson county, Oregon.

With the consciousness that I have endeavored faithfully and impartially, though briefly, to relate the history of the South Road Expedition, I close this narrative, hoping that my effort to preserve this much of the history of the early days may inspire other "old timers" to relate their experiences, also. I am fully aware that memory is uncertain, and that a number of errors may have occurred in my narrative from this reason, but I place it before the people with confidence that it is, in the main, correct. In doing so, I ask no other reward for the labor of its preparation, than that its perusal may cause the people to think more kindly of the old pioneers.

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AMERICAN QUAIL OF THE NORTHWEST—See page 148.