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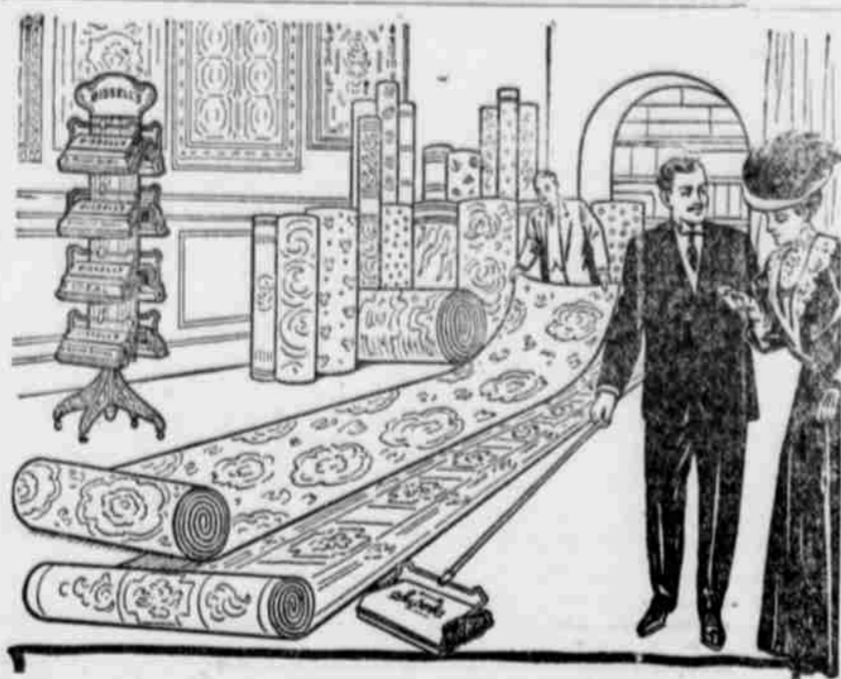


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The Heroes of Battle Rock

Exciting and Interesting Events in the Pioneer History of Coos County.

BY J. M. KIRKPATRICK.

Just as we reached the foot of this mountain the Indians stopped a few minutes and divided their forces. One party of over one hundred turned off to the left and ran up a short ravine toward the north. They soon disappeared over a low pass to the left and went back toward their village at the mouth of the river. Their object was to get their canoes, cross the river, overtake us and kill or capture us. When we had ascended this mountain some distance we could see the Indians crossing the river in their canoes. We hurried on as fast as we could travel and between sun down and dark we reached the top of the mountain, tired, hungry and nearly worn out. Here we determined to rest and get some sleep. We worked our way into the thicket of brush where we found a kind of sink hole, about twenty feet in diameter and about three feet deep, covered on the bottom with a rank growth of grass with thick brush all around it. Here we all laid down and were soon fast asleep. Just as soon as it began to be light in the morning, notwithstanding there was a thick fog, we were up and off, traveling in a northeasterly direction as hard as we could. In about an hour we struck the river again at a point where the timber came down close to the water. We found a lot of dry drift wood and soon made a raft large enough to carry the three men who could not swim and our guns and the balance of us swimming and pushing the raft ahead of us. The river at this point was about two hundred yards wide. When we reached the opposite bank and landed we supposed that we had crossed the river but we had only landed on an island and did not know it until we had taken all our ropes off of the raft and let the logs go. We had not gone more than three hundred yards when, to our consterna-

tion, we discovered that we had another branch of the river to cross nearly as wide as the one we had crossed. There was not a stick of timber on the island to make a raft out of, and as the fog was beginning to break away, there was no time to lose, so one of the men, George Rideout, volunteered to swim across with the ax and cut off a dry pine tree that projected out over the water towards us. Our intention was to get the three men, who could not swim, on to the tree, let them hold our guns and the balance of us swim along and guide the tree. Just as the tree fell into the water three Indians came around the bend in a canoe. They were busy watching the man that was chopping and did not see us until they were close to us. We hailed them and made signs that we wanted them to land and take us over the river to where Rideout was. This they refused to do, but when they saw three or four rifles leveled at them they concluded to come to where we were. We all piled into the canoe and they landed us on the main land just as the sun broke through the fog. We did not tarry long till we were on our weary tramp again. We were now very weak, not having eaten anything for three nights and four days. We saw plenty of game, but did not dare to fire a shot, for it would have brought at least three hundred Indians on to us in ten minutes, and they would have made short work of us. The men who were with me had no knowledge of woodcraft and but little of Indian warfare. They were on an average as brave a company of men as the same number that could be found. There was not one among them who could have taken the lead and kept a course without running around in a circle. When I found this out I saw that their lives as well as my

own depended on my keeping in the lead. I had a good knowledge of wood craft and could take a course and keep it as long as it was necessary. I had also some little knowledge of the cunning and trickery of the Indians, having crossed the Rocky Mountains in company with Kit Carson; and I will here say that of all the men that I ever came in contact with or associated with Christopher Carson knew all the tricks and cunning of the Indians better than any man I ever saw. I hope you will not think me egotistical when I say that I felt equal to the task of leading my party through to a place of safety. After crossing this branch of the river we struck out in a northerly direction, through the timber, intending, if we could, to reach the beach by night, and then travel as hard as we could all night if necessary. We traveled on through the thick heavy timber until it got so dark that we could not get along, so we all laid down by the side of a big log and slept until daylight. We then jumped up and were off in the same direction we had been traveling the day before. In about an hour we emerged from the timber and soon got down to the beach. We struck the sea at a point where a long reef of rocks extended quite a ways out into the ocean. These rocks near the shore were covered with mussels which we broke from the rocks and commenced eating them raw. They soon made us sick, so we built up a fire and began roasting them and that made them much better. We were eating our first lot of roasted mussels when one of the Indians, who had crossed us over the north branch of the Coquille river the day before, came down to us. As soon as he got near to us, he commenced talking Jargon. He said he had seen me in Portland, that he had kept right behind us in the woods after we left the river, and that he was afraid to come to us in the woods believing we would kill him. He said that the Indians were coming up on the beach from the mouth of the Coquille, and we must hurry as fast as we could. Each one of us took all the live mussels we could carry, but did not stop to cook them as we intended to roast them when we got to a place of safety. We now struck up the beach as fast as we could go, the Indian in the lead. We traveled on until about 3 o'clock in the afternoon,

when the Indian called our attention to a white pole about eight inches in diameter and twenty feet high, standing in a great pile of rocks at the edge of the beach. When we passed this pole and monument, the Indian said we were now safe, as the California Siwash would not dare to come above that pole, for the Coos Bay, Umpqua, Clickatats, and some other tribes he mentioned, would make war on them and drive them back. After resting a little while we traveled on for about two hours and, turning into a little cove, we built up a fire and roasted our mussels and ate them. We then took up our line of march and traveled till it was dark and then turned off to our right where we found some dry sand, in another little cove, and all laid down and slept until morning. As soon as it was daylight we were up and away. That afternoon we reached Coos Bay. The Indians met us more than a mile from their camp and brought us dried salmon, dried elk meat and salmon berries. They were extremely friendly and expressed themselves as being very glad that we had not been killed by the California Siwash. We staid all night with these Indians who seemed to vie with each other in doing everything they could for us. In the morning they took us across the bay and landed us opposite where Empire City now stands. They told us that we would make the mouth of the Umpqua the next day. We bid our friends goodbye and struck across the sand hills and through swamps, where sometimes the water was three or four feet deep. We floundered around in these sand hills and swamps until we were nearly tired out and struck for the beach again. About an hour before dark we reached the beach. The wind was blowing so hard from the west that it made it difficult and unpleasant to travel against, so we left the beach and sought shelter behind some sand hills that raised to more than a hundred feet above the sea. We found some dry pine logs near a thicket of brush and soon had a big fire going. Here we laid down and slept until morning, notwithstanding we were soaked with the mist that had been driven across the sand hills by the gale in the night. After we had dried ourselves a little by our fire, we struck out for the beach. The gale had subsided and the beach, for more than one hundred yards in width and

as far as we could see up and down the beach, was literally covered with fish that had been driven ashore the night before by the gale. "Luck at last," cried Eagan. "Here is fish enough for a feast for the Gods," and each one of us picked up two apiece, weighing 5 or 6 pounds each, and back we went to our old camp where we had left a big bed of coals, where we roasted our fish, eating all we could of one and taking the rest with us. That afternoon we reached the mouth of the Umpqua river. The Indians on watch for us had notified the white men on the other side of the river that the white men, who had shot a keg of nails into the Indians at Port Orford, killing many of them, were on the other side of the river. We could see the white men launching their boats at what was called Umpqua City; at that time it consisted of one house built of sheet iron and one tent. In about an hour they had reached us and taken us aboard. Having a fair wind they hoisted sail and just as the sun was setting on the 2d day of July, 1851, we were landed and made welcome in white men's quarters, after having an experience that not soon would we forget. Never did a set of poor, weary, ragged, hungry white men receive a more royal welcome than we did at the hands of Dr. Joseph Drew and his associates at their camp at the mouth of the Umpqua river. We rested there one day and on the morning of the 4th they took us in their boats and, having sailed up the river, they left us at another new town called Scottsburg. Here we landed about 1 o'clock and after I had eaten some dinner I bade farewell to my comrades and struck out for Portland. The rest were so worn out and footsore that they were compelled to lay by and rest.

(To Be Continued.)

There is more Catarrh in this section of the country than all other diseases put together, and until the last few years was supposed to be incurable. For a great many years doctors pronounced it a local disease and prescribed local remedies, and by constantly failing to cure with local treatment, pronounced it incurable. Science has proven Catarrh to be a constitutional disease and therefore requires constitutional treatment. Hall's Catarrh Cure, manufactured by F. J. Cheney & Co., Toledo, Ohio, is the only constitutional cure on the market. It is taken in doses from 10 drops to a teaspoonful. It acts directly on the blood and mucous surfaces of the system. There are one hundred dollars for any case it fails to cure. Send for circulars and testimonials. Address: F. J. CHENEY & CO., Toledo, Ohio. Sold by Druggists. Take Hall's Family Pills for constipation.

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