

FIRST IMMIGRANTS TO CROSS THE CASCADES

Now that the people are building fine automobile highways across the Cascades, new interest has been aroused in the first band of immigrants that crossed through Naches Pass to Puget Sound in 1853. In that party were two boys of almost exactly the same age. I was born in Fountain County, Indiana, on May 8, 1844, and George H. Himes was born at Troy, Bradford County, Pennsylvania, on May 18, 1844. Although we boys were only nine years of age, we had to do all we could to help with the hard work in the mountains. Probably we have just as keen memories of those days as do those who were older at the time.

It is hardly necessary to add that Mr. Himes and I have been warm personal friends during all the sixty-three years since those strenuous days through Naches Pass. Mr. Himes has become famous as a historian of the Northwest. On June 19, 1907, he gave the annual address before the Oregon Pioneer Association and told well the story of that famous immigration of 1853. His address was published and with it a list he had compiled of the members of that party, which was the first to cross over the Cascade Mountains to Puget Sound. I kept his list and have been able during the last few years to correct it a little and to add some names that had been omitted. His list as I have corrected it is as follows:

Aiken, A. G.	Biles, George W.
Aiken, James.	Biles, James B.
Aiken, John.	Biles, Clark.
Baker, Bartholomew C.	Biles, Mrs. Kate (Sargent).
Baker, Mrs. Fanny.	Biles, Mrs. Susan Belle (Drew).
Baker, James E.	Biles, Mrs. Euphemia (Brazee)
Baker, John Wesley.	(Knapp).
Baker, Leander H.	Biles, Margaret.
Baker, Elijah.	Bowers, John.
Baker, Mrs. Olive	Burnett, Frederick.
Baker, Joseph N.	Brooks, Mrs. Martha (Young).
Baker, William LeRoy.	Byles, Rev. Charles.
Barr, James.	Byles, Mrs. Sarah W.
Bell, James.	Byles, David F.
Bell, Mrs. Eliza (Wright).	Byles, Charles N.
Biles, James.	Byles, Mrs. Rebecca E. (Goodell)
Biles, Mrs. Nancy M.	Byles, Mrs. Sarah I. (Ward).

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| Byles, Luther. | Judson, John Paul. |
| Claffin, William. | Kincaid, William M. |
| Clinton, Wesley. | Kincaid, Mrs. William M. |
| Davis, Varine. | Kincaid, Mrs. Susannah (Thompson). |
| Day, Joseph. | Kincaid, Joseph C. |
| Downey, William R. | Kincaid, Mrs. Laura (Meade). |
| Downey, Mrs. William R. | Kincaid, James. |
| Downey, Christopher Columbus. | Kincaid, John. |
| Downey, George W. | Lane, Daniel E. |
| Downey, James H. | Lane, Mrs. Daniel E. |
| Downey, William A. | Lane, Edward. |
| Downey, R. M. | Lane, William. |
| Downey, John M. | Lane, Timothy. |
| Downey, Mrs. Louise (Guess). | Lane, Albert. |
| Downey, Mrs. Jane (Clark). | Lane, John. |
| Downey, Mrs. Susan (Latham). | Lane, Mrs. Elizabeth (Whitesel). |
| Downey, Mrs. Laura Belle (Bartlett). | Lane, Mrs. Abigail. |
| Finch, Henry C. | Light, Erastus A. |
| Fitch, Charles Reuben. | Light, Mrs. Erastus A. |
| Frazier, ———. | Light, Henry. |
| Frazier, Mrs. Elizabeth. | Longmire, James. |
| Guess, Mason F. | Longmire, Mrs. James |
| Guess, Wilson. | Longmire, Elcaine. |
| Gant, James. | Longmire, David. |
| Gant, Mrs. James. | Longmire, Mrs. Tillathi (Kandle). |
| Gant, Harris. | Longmire, John A. |
| Gant, Mrs. Harris. | McCullough, ———. |
| Greenman, Clark N. | McCullough, Mrs. ———. |
| Hampton, J. Wilson. | McCullough, Mrs. Mary Frances (Porter). |
| Himes, Tyrus. | McCullough, Flora. |
| Himes, Mrs. Emiline. | Meller, Mrs. Getrude (DeLin). |
| Himes, George H. | Moyer, John B. |
| Himes, Mrs. Helen Z. (Ruddell). | Melville, George. |
| Himes, Judson W. | Melville, Mrs. George. |
| Himes, Mrs. Lestina Z. (Eaton). | Melville, Mrs. Kate (Thompson). |
| Hill, Mrs. Mary Jane (Byles). | Melville, Robert. |
| Horn, Thomas. | Neisan, John. |
| Horn, Mrs. Thomas. | Ogle, Van. |
| Judson, Peter. | Ragan, Henry. |
| Judson, Mrs. Peter. | Ragan, John. |
| Judson, Stephen. | |

Ray, Henry.	Woolery, Jacob Francis.
Ray, Sam.	Woolery, Daniel Henry.
Risdon, Henry.	Woolery, Mrs. Agnes (Lamon).
Risdon, Joel.	Whitesel, William.
Sarjent, Asher.	Whitesel, Mrs. William.
Sarjent, Mrs. Asher.	Whitesel, William Henry.
Sarjent, E. N.	Whitesel, Mrs. Nancy (Leach).
Sarjent, Francis Marion.	Whitesel, Margaret.
Sarjent, Wilson.	Whitesel, Alexander.
Sarjent, Mrs. Matilda (Saylor).	Whitesel, Cal.
Sarjent, Mrs. Rebecca (Kellett).	Wright, Isaac H.
Steward, Mr. —.	Wright, Mrs. Isaac H.
Steward, Mrs. —.	Wright, Benjamin F.
Steward, Miss —.	Wright, Mrs. Benjamin F.
Stewart, Celia.	Wright, James.
Watts, Evan.	Wright, Mrs. Eliza (Bell).
West, Newton.	Wright, Mrs. Rebecca (Moore).
Woolery, Isaac.	Wright, William.
Woolery, Mrs. Isaac.	Wright, Byrd.
Woolery, Robert Lemuel.	Wright, (Grandfather).
Woolery, James Henderson.	Wright, (Grandmother).
Woolery, Mrs. Sarah Jane (Ward).	Wright, Mrs. Annis (Downey).
Woolery, Abraham.	West, Newton.
Woolery, Mrs. Abraham (Aunt Pop).	Woodward, John W.
	Young, Austin E.

Attention should be called to the fact that Rev. Charles Byles and James Biles were brothers who had different ideas as to the correct spelling of the family name. The list needs further corrections, as a number of the names are incomplete, and it may be well to state that some names are still missing. I am glad we have the list in this form and hope it may yet be made perfect.

Since you have asked me to record my own reminiscences, I will do the best I can.

My father, James Longmire, was born in Indiana on March 17, 1820. My Mother, Virinda Taylor Longmire, was also a native of Indiana, born in 1829. The family started for the "Oregon Country" from Attica, Fountain County, Indiana, on March 16, 1853. There were four of us children; my brother Elcaine, who later became widely known through his work at Longmire Springs on Mount Rainier, myself next, Tillatha Longmire Kandle, now of Yakima, and John Longmire of Yelm.

The first part of our journey was by water to St. Joe, Missouri. There father bought eight yoke of oxen and two wagons. We travelled to Cainesville (now Council Bluffs, Iowa) and there we obtained a full supply of provisions, medicine, guns and ammunition for our long journey across the plains.

We travelled down the Missouri River and crossed on a ferry operated by a man named Sarpee, who was part Indian. Where we camped there was not a house at that time but since then Omaha City has risen on the site. At Wood River we crossed the wagons on canoes and swam the stock across. At Luke Fork we crossed by caulking the wagon boxes and making temporary boats of them.

At one of these stream-crossings, a young man of our party, named Van Ogle, rode a horse to head the band, the others being driven in after him. When well started, his horse became unmanageable, reared up and threw the rider backwards in front of the swimming steeds. With rare presence of mind, the young man dove to the bottom and remained there until the horses had passed over. He then bobbed to the surface and spouted up water in great glee to amuse the rest of us. Mr. Van Ogle, an Indian war veteran, now lives at Orting, Pierce County, enjoying good health in his ninety-second year, a more honorable man we never had.

We traveled on past Independence Rock, where Lewis and Clark spent their Fourth of July in 1805. Indians were numerous but our train was never disturbed by them. However, we were always on the lookout, standing guard over our cattle each night.

We saw many droves of buffalo and some antelope. We encountered many incidents—too numerous to mention. Really we must have been in a fortunate train as we did not encounter the hardships endured by other parties. We crossed the Rocky Mountains with such ease that we did not even know when we reached the summit.

We crossed the Snake River twice. At the second crossing one man was accidentally drowned. When we crossed the Grand Ronde Valley, we left the Oregon Trail and started for a new route for Puget Sound. We passed by where Doctor Marcus Whitman, his wife and twelve other white people were massacred by the Indians in 1847. We reached the Columbia river at Fort Walla Walla (now Wallula) and had to remain there until we could whipsaw lumber with which to construct a scow to ferry our party across. When the scow was completed we placed thereon our wagons, bedding and a very little provision. Then we swam the stock which was very soon completed. Then we tackled the scow. While some were pulling, the others were busy bailing it out to keep it from sinking.

By September 8, we were ready to begin our march through the sand up the bank of the Columbia to the Yakima River, eighteen miles. There we parted with the head chief of the Walla Walla Indians. He and several of his tribe had been traveling with us for several days. The chief rode a fine large American roan horse with one ear slightly cropped. He had two large revolvers fastened to his saddle. He had about one hundred fine cattle, one of which he had butchered and sold to us for fifteen cents a pound, as I remember. The Indian chief treated us well.

We crossed the Yakima River, traveling up the east bank and camped for the night. That night Mr. McCully died. He had been ill for some days. We had no boards to make a box or coffin so he was buried in the ground with some brush covered over him to keep the sand from his body. So far as I know he was the first white man to be buried in Yakima Valley. He left a wife and two little girls.

We travelled towards White Bluffs, then up Coal Creek and turned westward, crossing the Yakima River at Selah. There we met a Catholic priest and understood that there was another priest on the Ahtanum. Those were the only white men in the Yakima country. The next day we arrived in the Wenas Valley and camped on a beautiful spot owned by Chief Owhi. We remained here two nights. The chief was farming and our party bought of him thirteen bushels of potatoes. This was about September 20 and 21. Later we learned that George B. McClellan had camped at the same place the month before.

We followed up the Naches River toward Naches Pass. We crossed and recrossed the river about sixty-eight times. When we reached the summit and started down the western slope we came to a very steep place where we were compelled to lower our wagons suspended by the rear axle with a rope fastened to a tree while it was gradually lowered. There were thirty-six wagons to be let down that way.

Our party consisted of about one hundred and seventy-five persons, men, women and children. Of all the men of twenty-one or more years of age at that time there remains but one to my knowledge, that one being our friend Van Ogle.

We made our way very slowly, crossing Green river eighteen times and White river seven times. We wound round, made bridges of logs, rotten wood and bark and got through pretty well. It is hard to head off a sturdy pioneer. We crossed the Puyallup River and arrived at the Mahan place on the Nisqually Plains at Clover Creek on October 12, 1853. The place is east of Parkland and a monument

has since been placed to mark the spot. That is the place where our party broke up and scattered, never to meet together again.

Father took up a donation land claim near Yelm and that became his home until he found Longmire Springs. He filed a homestead there in 1883 and lived there when seasons permitted until his death in 1897 at the age of seventy-seven. Mother survived him until 1911. She was eighty-two at the time of her death.

During the Indian troubles of 1855-1856 we were kept dodging about to save our scalps. We knew Chiefs Leschi and Quiemuth very well. They were good neighbors until the war broke out. Then it was different. Leschi was captured for a reward by the Indian Sluggy, who could talk English well. Leschi was afterwards hanged. Quiemuth gave himself up to my father, being brought to the house by a Frenchman named Oska. Father and Oska took Quiemuth to Olympia at night. They were accompanied by Van Ogle, George Brail and Betsy Edgar, an Indian woman whose white husband had been killed by the Indians. The prisoner was turned over to Governor Stevens, but while sleeping in the Governor's office he was murdered, being both shot and stabbed.

I have had but little educational advantages. I started to school first in a log cabin school house in Indiana. When father took up his claim on Yelm Prairie, I helped to cut down trees and dragged them to the place chosen and then helped to build a log school in which I became one of the first pupils. One of the teachers in that school was Dillis B. Ward, now a pioneer citizen of Seattle. Later I went to school at Chamber's Prairie and part of the Indian war years I was in school at Olympia. Some of my pioneer schoolmates were John Yantis, John Miller Murphy, the veteran newspaper man, and Hazard Stevens, son of the Governor. Rev. George F. Whitworth was one of my teachers and so was Mrs. Hyde and Mr. Cornelius.

The Yakima Valley had impressed me so favorably that I made several trips there as a young man. On September 12, 1869, I was married to Elizabeth Pollard. She had crossed the plains with her parents in 1864. We moved to a farm I had secured in the Yakima Valley but we soon sold that and I acquired the old Chief Owhi farm that charmed me so when our party first camped there in 1853. Since then I acquired more land and now all my children have adjoining farms around me. These children are Mrs. Alice Longmire Lotz, Mrs. Martha Longmire Porter, Mrs. Burnetta Longmire Small, David E. Longmire, George B. Longmire and James Guy Longmire. My first wife died in 1888 and in 1890 I was married to Elizabeth Lotz Treat, a widow who had two sons—A. E. Treat of North Yakima and H. C.

Treat of Centralia. Her father, George Lotz, had crossed the plains and settled on Puget Sound in 1851 and her mother arrived in 1854. So you see we are all pioneers. I now have fifteen grandchildren and two great grandchildren. From my second marriage I have one son, Donald Longmire.

When we first moved to our farm our trading post was at The Dalles, one hundred miles away. The doors and other finishings for my house were shipped from Tumwater around to the Columbia River and hauled by team to the farm.

About July 9, 1878, my nearest neighbors, Lorenzo D. Perkins and wife, were murdered by Indians. Mrs. Perkins was a granddaughter of James McAlister, the first man killed on Connell's Prairie in the Indian war of 1855-1856. The victims of this Yakima murder were buried in the rocks. General Howard came up the Columbia River and received a promise from the Indians that the murderers would be given up. Nothing came of it. Then John Edwards, a young man of iron nerve, went into the Indian camp and had the murderers identified by a friendly Indian.

When he reported to the Yakima farmers, a hundred of them gathered horses, guns, ammunition and about twenty-five friendly Indians. I was one of the party. We selected William Splawn as our captain and we could not have made a better choice. His nerve stood every test. We crossed the Columbia River, captured Chief Moses and his braves. We made him give up the murderers of Mr. and Mrs. Perkins. These were tried, convicted and all put to death except the one who turned state's evidence.

Pioneer life is sometimes overshadowed with the blackest of clouds, though most of them have silver linings. I enjoy my memories of the old days and more especially do I enjoy meeting the friendly pioneers.

DAVID LONGMIRE.