

I was born twenty-eight miles southwest from Chicago, Illinois. My parents moved there from Ohio in 1826. My father was born in Bedford County, Pennsylvania; my mother was born in Virginia. They both came to Ohio when they were very young, and were married in Ohio in 1823, when my father was twenty-three years old and my mother nineteen years old. They acquired farming land in Illinois when that country was unsettled except by Indians. Three times they went to Fort Dearborn when the Indians were on the war-path. At that time Chicago was not known, and Fort Dearborn was the nearest place where there were any white people.

I was born August 16, 1833, and was raised on the farm. In 1851 I went to Green Bay, Wisconsin, where I spent the summer fishing for Mackinac Trout and white fish, and in the Fall went home and spent the Winter. At this time I got the gold fever, and have never got cured yet. On the 29th of March, 1852, I started for the gold mines of the west, and landed in Jackson County, Oregon, on September 23rd. In the placer mines I sold my outfit, and commenced prospecting for the yellow gold. Within two years I accumulated enough to buy sixteen mules, and started packing, from Crescent City, California, to Jacksonville, Oregon, Yreka and the Klamath River and Scots River, California.

We left home with four yoke of fat four-year-old steers, in company with two more light wagons, each manned with four men. We had no difficulty with Indians, until we got to Goose Lake. Here the Piute Indians stole twenty-one head of our stock, sixteen head of steers, and two mules and four fine mares, the latter animals belonging to Captain Constance, with whose train we were traveling after we left Green River.

At the time we struck the Piute nation, we over-drove eight miles on account of misunderstanding the directions of the guide, and our ox-teams were weary and sore-footed. We drove eight miles further that evening than we should have driven, and we didn't get our stock turned out until it was getting dusk. This was the only time we failed to put out a guard on the whole trip

across the plains. In the morning we got up early, and got ready to get around and start, and found that we had no animals except two saddle horses, and a span of white mules that were too wild for the Indians to stampede. The mules belonged to the captain's family carriage, and were always so wild that only one man could handle them, and the Indians could not get away with them.

The Indians had taken seventeen head of our work oxen (we came across the plains with ox-teams) and two of the captain's mules, the wheelers, as they were fleshy, not having done their share of the work. We got out early in the morning and found that our stock was almost all gone. My brother and I struck the trail of the oxen going south in the Goose Valley, at the head of Pitt River, that flows into California. We struck this trail about eight o'clock in the morning. It was a hard trail to strike. The cattle were sore-footed, and it seemed almost impossible for the Indians to drive them. We followed the trail from twelve to fifteen miles, right through the valley. On Oak Ridge we found thirteen head of these cattle. They had arrows shot into them, from three to five arrows in each animal, and most of the arrows were still sticking into them. They were all humped up and could hardly move on account of their sore feet.

Three of the steers had shoes on, and the Indians got away with these. There were no Indians guarding the cattle we recovered. Probably they thought the cattle couldn't travel, and that we would not find the track.

We cut the arrows out of the cattle, and we drove them back to camp, and arrived there about half past ten o'clock that night. We had had nothing to eat, and not even a drink of water, since daylight that morning.

The captain had lost three valuable mares, worth five hundred dollars apiece, and the two mules, and we had also lost some other horses, including a saddle horse that we boys owned. The captain had traced this stock due east from our camp, twelve miles to the mountains across the valley, and struck the trail going up a creek. He followed that trail up the creek possibly ten miles or more,

when it crossed the creek and came back on the other side, and right opposite where it went up.

When my brother and I were returning to camp with the cattle, we had seen a fire on the butte that was in the edge of the valley, about twelve miles east of us, right close to where the captain had trailed these animals. When we got into camp the captain proposed that if nine men would go with him (leaving only a few to guard the camp) to try and get these animals back, that he would go as one of them, and he asked for volunteers, and not one of the men said a word. My brother said to me, "Sam, I'll go if you go." I said I would. We got the outfit filled up, and left a bodyguard in camp.

About half past three o'clock in the morning, I think it was, with the captain of the train as our guide, we started to strike the trail of the Piute Indians, and we got to the trail that he had traced up, very early in the morning, and traveled up this creek about ten miles, and crossed the creek where the Indians had crossed, and then we trailed them right down the other side to a place opposite where we had struck the trail. Here we stopped for lunch and a drink of water. We had brought with us bread and butter and raw bacon. At the foot of the hill the Indians had killed one of the mules, and here we found part of the carcass of the mule, lying up in the limbs of a tree. The Indians had eaten part of the mule. We also found, in the same place, at least a hundred bushels of dried seeds and berries in baskets. After cutting off a few slices of this mule, we made a bonfire (for spite, I must admit) and burned up everything that the Indians had left there. We went down to the creek and built a fire, and roasted our bacon and mule meat, and took our lunch, the first we had eaten since three o'clock that morning. We were then ready to start for camp, with just about twelve miles to go. We didn't find the other horses.

My brother and myself were raised in the woods, and hunted a good deal, and knew how to keep our courses good. We took a mountain view so that we could keep

our course. It was not a very dark night, so that we could see. I don't think we went more than a mile before my knee quit, and I couldn't move. I begged my brother to go on to camp, but he wouldn't do it. He kept urging me to move a little, and insisted on it, but I lay there twenty or thirty minutes, and then got up to try it again. I was tired out and wanted to go to sleep, but he wouldn't let me at all, and when I finally got up my knee was all right for a time. I think we went about three miles further, and it quit me again, and then I was so sleepy and so tired and in such misery that I wanted to lie there and die. My brother kept urging me to try it again, and we finally started once more.

The other men, under the leadership of the captain, had taken another course, and had gone a little too far to the north and circled into camp, and we all got in about together. We slept well that night. We thought the cattle were all going to die from the effect of the arrows, but they did not. However, we killed one steer, and divided the meat.

We then proceeded on our way, towards the Modoc country. The Modocs were the worst tribe in the west, and had killed more than one-half of the emigrants who attempted to pass through their country, and would have killed our party, but sixty miners organized at Yreka under Captain Ben Wright, and killed about fifty of the Modocs, which cleared the road for us. They also furnished provisions for us, which we sadly needed. We had been living on rice, jack rabbits and sage hens for two weeks, and flour seemed good to us. The Klamath Indians were friendly, and we had a good escort through their country. Just such men as met us saved hundreds of emigrants. In after years almost every man in our company went on the same mission year after year, and escorted the pilgrims through the dangerous country. I myself went for two years.

Jacksonville was built altogether with canvas. It was a new camp situated in the most beautiful valley that I have ever seen.

Soon after I commenced packing, my troubles commenced. The Rogue River, Klamath and Applegate Indians, and the coast Indians, would go on the war path about once a month, and would kill people living away from the towns. It made it very dangerous to pack through a country that was sparsely settled. In the Fall of 1855 these raids occurred so frequently that the people had to organize to protect their families and homes, and make battle with the redskins. Governor Joe Lane sent out a call for three hundred volunteers. That was more men than could be spared then. California responded to the call, and we raised three hundred volunteers, and made battle with about three hundred Indians as well armed as the volunteers. We met these Indians in the battle of Hungry Hill. We fought them in their own style, and the battle raged for two days. It was a thickly timbered country. The Indians shot thirty-seven of our men, and nearly all the wounded died. We probably killed as many of the Indians. We were glad to leave them on the battlefield. We were suffering from hunger and thirst, as we had had no water, nor a bite to eat, for thirty-six hours, so we retreated with our wounded seventeen miles to our supplies, and carried the wounded on stretchers, before we could eat.

I followed packing and mining, and was in the horse business, until 1862, when I went north and packed from Umatilla to Elk City and Florence, Idaho. I spent the Winter in Grand Ronde valley. In March I went to Idaho City, and mined there for three seasons. In September I bought a band of cattle and brought them to Montana, where I spent the winter, in Deer Lodge Valley. In March I began butchering, in Elk Creek, and left that camp in July, 1867. I mined one year at Snow Shoe, near Blackfoot City. In 1869 I went to Hamilton and White Pine, Nevada, and then went to my old home in Illinois, where George W. Ervin and I were raised. The Ervins and my father were neighbors, and among the best

people I ever know. I remained there three years, and then came back to Montana, in July, 1873, and have prospected almost all the time since. I worked in the Garnet district for twenty-six years before I sold any ore, and I am still digging in the ground for ore. I struck ore in the Nancy Hanks mine in 1896. In 1897, 1898 and 1899 I took out \$550,000 in gold and silver from the Nancy Hanks, Cascade and Spokane claims. Since that time I have leased some ground, which has produced about \$150,000.

Was with Isaac Constant train

Sam Ritchie of Klamath Falls retired
 mgr of P.P.L. is a son of this Sam
 Ritchie - He was born when his father
 was 70 years old in 1904.

Swaner.