

The Oregon Argus.

A Weekly Newspaper, devoted to the Interests of the Laboring Classes, and advocating the side of Truth in every issue.

VOL. VI. OREGON CITY, OREGON, NOVEMBER 24, 1860. No. 33.

The Snake River Massacre—Account by one of the Survivors.

COLUMBIA RIVER, NOV. 10, 1860.

ED. ARGUS: The survivors of the Snake River massacre arrived at Walla Walla last week—12 in number, namely, Mr. Myers, wife and five children; Mrs. Chase and child; Miss Triable, Mr. Munson, and Mr. Chaffy. Joseph and Jacob Reith came in some time ago to the Unatilla Reservation, and Schneider, who was the first to get in. The last is the man who came in on Willow Creek. His story was very contradictory, and did not agree with the facts as afterward developed. Of 44 emigrants, only 15 are known to be saved. Four children (three girls and one boy) are supposed to be taken prisoners by the Indians. One of the girls was 14 or 15 years old, one 12, and the others younger. All the others were either killed or have died of starvation. Mr. M. Myers, of Salsan, went out to meet his brothers, and found them on Grand Ronde River. The emigrants, Mr. Myers and family, came down from Walla Walla on the steamer last trip, on their way to Salem with their brother. From them I obtained the following answers to questions which I asked them. From this report you can draw your own conclusions of the whole affair nearly as well as if you had heard it yourself:

The train consisted of eight wagons, and was from Wisconsin, excepting the Chase family, who were from Geneva, Kane co., Ill., and the Reith boys from Minnesota. They left the Missouri River June 5, and and were not molested by the Indians till the time of the massacre. The discharged soldiers joined us at Ft. Hall; five of them were regularly discharged, and one was a deserter named Chaffy. The five discharged all had money or checks, and some got their checks cashed at Camp Floyd. They each had from \$400 to \$700. But Schneider did not get his cashed, and I think he had coin; but I hear it said he had plenty when he got in. Those in the train were as follows: Jos. Myers, wife and five children, the latter from one to ten years old; his brother John Myers, single man; Elijah Utter, wife and 10 children, three of which were his wife's by a former marriage, their name Trimble, and aged as follows: Eucelie, 14 years, Christopher 12, and Elizabeth 9; Daniel Chase, wife and 3 children, boys 8 and 6 years, and girl 2;— Alexis Van Norman, wife and 5 children, Mark 17, Ellza 14, girl 11, boy 8, and girl 6; the following named young men were with Van Norman's family: Judson Cracey, Lewis Lawson, and — Munson;

also Samuel Gleason; discharged soldiers who joined at Ft. Hall—Murdoch, Snieder, Shanberg, Keicennell, and Utley, and Chaffy, the deserter, who gave himself up at Walla Walla; total, 44. The train was attacked some 90 miles beyond Owyhee River, Sept. 8, about 350 miles beyond Walla Walla. The Indians first attempted to stampede the stock, but did not succeed. The train immediately 'corralled' for defense—had a favorable position, but no water. The Indians, finding they could accomplish nothing, threw down their arms and made friendly signs—came up, and made signs for something to eat. We fed many of them, and they appeared to be satisfied, and made signs for us to go on to the water, that they were friendly. So we started toward the river. After we got out of our strong position they commenced on us, but we expected some kind of treachery, and were on the look-out for them. Before we got corralled and our cattle chained, two of our men were shot down, Utley and Lawson. The attack commenced about 10 a. m. and lasted till the night of the 9th. Two more of our men were killed, Keicennell and Judson Cracey. It was very warm weather, and

we were all nearly famished for water, so we hitched up; we left four wagons, and considerable things in them, thinking that would satisfy them. We were compelled to go to water some how. We had been hemmed up there two days and one night without a drop of water, and the cattle were getting very uneasy. The loose stock had been driven off by the Indians, but we had our teams tied on the inside of the corral. What was left to the Indians did not seem to satisfy them at all. While they had us hemmed up, we killed not less than 25 or 30 of them; it was certain death to an Indian if he showed his head, for we were all pretty good marksmen—but they were too many for us. The Indians would come right up to the wagons, cut holes in the covers, and shoot their arrows in at the women and children—but few of those who were so bold as to thus come up got away without getting a shot. Chas. Utter (a lad) shot five Indians as fast as he could load and shoot; he was in the hindmost wagon. Mr. Utter got wounded, and could do nothing. We hitched up and started about sundown, but the cattle were so hungry we could hardly get them along, they would keep biting

and reaching at every spear of grass.— We mounted four men on horses, Murdock, Shamborg, Sueider, and Chaffy — the two Reith boys on foot. The object of having these six men ahead was to keep the road open, and keep the Indians from closing in ahead, while we could get our wagons and families along. The Indians pitched in on all sides, and these men, instead of staying and helping us, put off us fast as they could go, without firing a shot, and left us to our fate. The Indians had a few guns and plenty of arrows. If those men had stayed with us, I believe we could have got through to water, and then we could have defended ourselves till we could get assistance. We kept getting along as fast as we could, fighting our way; it was getting dark; our help weakened; cattle hungry; it was slow traveling. My brother (John Myers) was driving the team, and I was walking along, with my gun and revolver, when I saw an Indian raise up behind a big sage bush and level his piece at one of us; I raised mine, but his gun went off first, and my brother fell

dead without a struggle. The next instant I fired, and the Indian gave a whoop, jumped up, and fell dead. Mr. Utter attempted to treat with them, and made signs that they might have all if they would only spare their lives, but to no purpose. Mrs. Utter, two daughters, and a little son refused to leave their wounded parent; they stopped with him, and the presumption is they were killed outright. We concluded to leave everything and go on foot, as so many of our men were now gone and disabled that we could not get the teams along and protect ourselves at the same time. Mary Utter was in my wagon, and just as I was helping her out, a shot passed through my coat, just grazing the skin—the ball went into her breast, when she fell, but got up again, and cried out 'O, my God! I'm shot!' and called on some of the men to help her; two young men took hold of her and helped her along a little way, when she commenced sinking, and was getting helpless; so they had to leave her; she was about 23 years old. I helped my family out of the wagon, and we all went on as fast as we could, traveling all night. We could see fires behind us, and suppose it must have been the wagons burning. We laid

by in the day time and traveled at night, all afoot, and nothing to eat except one loaf of bread that Mr. Chase took out of the wagon. We were well armed, and an Indian dare not show his head. They would not attack us in the night, and they were afraid to come about us in the daytime. My wife carried the babe, about a year old, till she almost gave out, and I the next one; the others had to walk.— The Indians followed us four days, but did not come in gun-shot, but kept up a yelling and whooping. It seems as though they were out to haunt us all the time, but they did not trouble us after that except to get on the hills and roll rocks down toward us. Finally they gave up the chase, and let us alone. We had nothing to eat, so we killed one of two dogs which followed us, and roasted and ate him. A few days after, we ate the other dog. We caught fish in the streams when we could, sometimes with pretty good luck, some days not any. We would eat rose-buds and berries when we could get them; we ate snakes, lizards, and frogs, and muscles out of the streams; sometimes shoot ducks

and geese; and if the Indians had not afterward robbed us of our guns, we could have made a living by killing game, which was tolerably plenty where. we camped on Owyhee River. A wild stray cow came along—we made out to shoot her, and that lasted some time. We traveled in this way some eight or nine days, and were entirely given out when we got to Owyhee River, so we stopped, and made us a house of willows and grass; we piled a lot of grass inside; we crawled into the hut at night; we had no blankets, and but little clothing. It was about the 17th of Sept., when we stopped traveling; we had then gone about 90 miles. There we stopped till Capt. Dent's party came, which was about the 25th of Oct., which makes it about 47 days from the time of the attack till Capt. Dent came up.

After we had been in camp on the Owyhee about three weeks, the Van Norman family, consisting of himself, wife, 5 children, and Samuel Gleason, Chas. Utter, Henry Utter, concluded to leave, and travel on as well as they could. They got together what provisions they could, and started. They refused to allow Miss Trimble to go with them. That is the last we heard of the Van Norman family, till Capt. Dent's party came. They found the Van Norman family on Barot River, all murdered, apparently but a few days previous. Capt. Dent found all the bodies, excepting those of four children, three girls and one boy; the eldest girl was about 16. It is supposed they were taken prisoner, and probably are yet alive. The bodies

were brutally beaten and scored with knives, and the arms of the woman were tied. While in camp, after the Van Normans left, we kept alive by hunting everything we could. The Indians would bring salmon to trade for any little things we could spare, such as needles, pins, the rags on our backs, till we were reduced to a state of nakedness. Mr. Chase ate too hearty a meal one day on salmon, which threw him into the hiccougs; he died one night, we knew not when, and we buried him next day. After we had sold everything, the Indians refused to bring any more salmon unless we would give them our guns, which we did not wish to do, but they were determined to have them; so I buried my revolver and ammunition. The Indians took the guns, and gave us what salmon they pleased, and promised more, which they never brought. One of the Trimble boys volunteered to go home with

The Indians, and we must be going to induce them to bring provisions to us. They used him very kindly—fed him, and gave a place to sleep. He, in company with some of the Indians, would come over to the camp every few days, and bring salmon. One day, some one happened to mention 'soldier' in the conversation. The Indians at once seemed to understand the word; they straightened up, and murmured 'Soja,' 'soja,' 'soja,' the word passing from one to the other, and a curious, devilish look seemed to pervade their countenances.— They went off, the boy following them, but he never returned. We waited, but no word from him; not an Indian after that made his appearance. They had been camped some three miles below, across the river; I went down one day opposite the place, and saw a few wigwams, but no sign of any Indians. On the way back, I saw where something had been dragged across the path; I followed up the trace, hoping it might be where some animal had dragged a deer along, and that I might find a piece to take home. But I found nothing except a lock of human hair, which I took home, and which was recognized as the boy's. (Capt. Dent followed up this sign, and found a head, an arm, and some things

showing the boy had been killed.) On my way home that day, I found the carcass of a horse that the wolves had deserted; I picked up a shank and took it to camp, and you may guess there was but little meat on it when the kiotas left it. We used that whole carcass; we burnt the bones and ate them, and the skins we roasted. When we could find a piece of a carcass, we made use of it; we were getting so weak that we could scarcely walk about. We ate weeds, grass, and anything at all we could find. Starvation was staring us in the face. Finally one of the children died; we cut it up and ate—and so on till we had eaten three of them. The mother help eat her own children. Mrs. Chase lost all her children but one. Some Indians came along one day and dug up Mr. Chase's body for the few rags it had on. We made up our minds to try and eat him—so we cut him in small pieces, a day's ration in a piece—but before we began roasting, Capt. Deat and party came along, just in time to save us from that awful meal. The body had been buried over ten days. We saved every one of our children, and Mrs. Chase might have saved

hers, if she had not been so selfish; she lived too well herself and starved her child. She would scold my wife because we gave our children so much; she argued that we were all bound to die right there, and that it was better that the children should die first, than for us to die and leave our children to the mercy of the wolves—but my wife said she believed that Providence would yet deliver us, and that we should all try to keep alive as long as possible.—(Mrs. Myers says she would dream of making large loaves of bread—dream a great deal about piles and piles of something to eat.)

Mr. Myers of Salem states that he did not get to Walla Walla in time to go out with Capt. Dent, and was spared the horrid sight. The survivors were nothing but skin and bone, and the children so weak they would tumble down when they tried to run. Their fingers were like birds' claws; eyes hollow-looking; cheeks sunken; they seemed to be half out of their senses; they would sit there and quarrel about who had the biggest piece of meat, and fuss about any little foolish thing. Sometimes they would be in fine spirits—talk about good old times, assistance coming, of their plans and prospects when they got into the settlements, &c.; then they would realize their true situation, and commence crying. When Capt. Dent came into the valley where the camp was, the first one he saw was Miss Trimble, who had wandered off a few hundred yards, gathering something to eat. (She is the young lady who picked up a infant at the time of the massacre, and carried it along till it died; she also defended the wagon some time with an ax in hand.) Capt. Dent spoke to her, and asked if she was hungry. No, sir, not much, and are you not afraid of the Indians?—and seemed to take every thing very coolly. She seemed to be half out of her mind. As soon as three poor, starved people saw the soldiers coming, they ran out and fell on the ground, crying that they were starving, and begging for something to eat. These that were about camp were put on horses, and the other survivors were taken between two mules. They got into Walla Walla on the 31st Oct. Miss Dent and child are stopping with Capt. Dent's family, and Miss Trimble is stopping with Lieut. A-

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