Hays-Cowan Train 1852

Introduction

The following wagon train listing was made possible by Colin O'Neill, a Benjamin Franklin Yantis descendant, who compiled the listing and supplied biographical information on the Yantis families. Additional information on associated families was added by Stephenie Flora [oregonpioneers.com/ortrail.htm]

The emigration year of 1852 stands out as the year of illness and death on the trail for humans and animals alike. Most of the human toll was the result of cholera as well as black measles, drownings and accidents. While the diaries often suggest that the cattle died from an imaginary disease called "hollow horn", it is thought by some experts that the loss of cattle was actually due to anthrax with the stress of the journey as a contributing factor.

The diaries and journals available for that year mention seeing wagons "as far as the eye can see" both ahead and behind. While it has been estimated that over 10,000 adventurous souls started out for the Oregon Territory in 1852, an account of how many actually arrived is hard to determine. It is thought that as many as 1,000 emigrants may have turned back before completing the journey to their chosen destination. And then there were those who, at the last minute, turned off for California. The emigrants going to California that year were estimated at upwards of 50,000.

Indians were not as troublesome in 1852 as some of the other years. This was due, in part, to a treaty that was engineered by Thomas Fitzpatrick "Broken Hand" in 1851. The size of the emigration also no doubt had a bearing. Trains were traveling so close to each other that it provided extra security.

Most of the trains for 1852 were smaller due to the difficulty in finding water, camping spots and grass for the cattle. A larger train was simply too hard to manage. Most companies were made up of family and friends with single men hired to drive wagons and assist with the cattle. Some trains were larger and some were made up of only a few wagons. Assuming an average train consisted of 50 or fewer individuals it would mean that there were at least 200 separate trains headed for Oregon. And this would not account for the approximately 1000 companies headed for California.

One report states that the Hays-Cowan Train had 14 wagons and 99 individuals, but at this time only 74 individuals have been documented. The train eventually split at Fort Hall over whether to rest on the Sabbath or not. Some elected to rest on the Sabbath and others chose to move forward and traveled daily. It resulted in one group arriving about 2 weeks earlier than those resting. There have been no diaries found for this train, so a view of their experiences has been left to reminiscences, biographies and obituaries

Bibliography

1. Benjamin Franklin "Frank" Yantis – [Early History of Thurston County, Washington by Mrs. George Blankenship 1904 p. 272-74]

2. James M. Yantis – [WPA Interview 1935-1939 with Descendants Amelia and Kate McCune; published by Linn Benton Genealogical Services Volume 4, Pioneer Families of Linn County, Oregon]

3. John L. Yantis – [Letter from Portland, November 30, 1852 published in Liberty Weekly Tribune, v. VII, no. 46, February 25, 1853, p. 1 col 2-3 Transcribed by Dianne Brenner with edits by Colin O'Neill]

4. Dr. Nathaniel Ostrander – obituary [Seattle Post Intelligencer, Seattle, Washington, Saturday, February 8, 1902, p. 8]

5. Gilmore Hayes - [Excerpt of interview with Mrs. John G Parker in Early History of Thurston County Washington by Mrs. George Blankenship 1904 p. 95-106]

6. Andrew L. Cowan – obituary [Albany Democrat, Albany, Oregon, Friday, May 14, 1901, p. 7]

7. James L. Cowan Biography [An Illustrated History of Oregon by Harvey K. Hines, p. 1015-16]

8. Hillory Butler – obituary [excerpt, The Seattle Post-Intelligencer, Tuesday, February 4, 1896, p. 8]

9. Thomas R. Prather – obituary [excerpt, The Washington Standard, Olympia, Washington, Friday, May 10, 1918, p. 1]

10. George Frederick Freye – obituary [excerpt, The Seattle Post Intelligencer, Seattle, Washington, Friday, May 3, 1912, p. 1]

Hays-Cowan Train 1852

1. Benjamin Franklin Yantis, 45

wife: Annie G. Hall, 42, [died on the trail of cholera]
Children:
Maria Barnes Yantis see: William Pullen family
2. Sarah Jane Yantis, 17
3. James Hall Yantis, 15
4. William Button Yantis, 13
5. Robert Lapsley Yantis, 9
6. John Vivian Yantis, 8
7. Fannie A. Yantis, 3

8. James Madison Yantis, 43, s/o John and Priscilla (Lapsley) Yantis
DLC 4270 Linn Co arrived Oct 1852

9. wife: Sarah Ann Hamilton, 41
Children:
10. Robert Franklin Yantis, 17
11. Priscilla Owsley Yantis, 15
12. Eliza Jane "Judy" Yantis, 12
13. Amelia Ann Yantis, 10
14. Mary Katherine Yantis, 8
15. Thomas L. Yantis, 7
16. James A. Yantis, 4
17. William Worthington Yantis, 1

18. Rev John Lapsley Yantis 48, s/o John and Priscilla (Lapsley) Yantis
DLC 350 Linn Co arrived 07 Oct 1852

19. wife: Eliza Ann Markham Montgomery, 45, died on trail
Children:
20. Priscilla Katherine Yantis, 19
21. William Lapsley Yantis, 17
22. John Marshall "Marsh" Yantis, 15
23. Edward Montgomery Yantis, 12
24. Elizabeth Ann Yantis, 10
25. Robert Franklin Yantis, 5
26. Alexander Van Court Yantis, 3
27. James Aull Yantis, 1

28. Abel Ostrander, 75

wife: Catherine Esterly [died prior to emigration]

29. Dr. Nathaniel Ostrander, 34
s/o Abel and Catherine (Easterly) Ostrander

30. wife: Eliza Jane Yantis, 33
children:
31. Priscilla Catherine Ostrander, 13
32. Mary Ann Ostrander, 11
33. Susan Charlotte Ostrander, 9 [died on the trail in Idaho]
34. Sarah Teresa Ostrander, 6
35. Margaret Jane Ostrander, 3
36. Maria Evalyn Ostrander, 0 [born on the trail in Idaho]

37. Capt. Gilmore Logan Hays, 42

38. wife: Naomi Knox Montgomery, 37 [died on the trail]
children;
39. Jerusha Jane Logan Hays, 16
40. James Montgomery Hays, 13
41. Samuel Hays, 11 [died on the trail]
42. Charles Marshall Hays, 10
46. Henry Hays, 9 [died on the trail]
43. John Hays, 4 [died on the trail]
44. Robert C. Hays, 2

45. William Logan Hays, 41

46. wife: Sarah Jane [unknown], 30
Children:
47. James C. Hays, 12 s/o of first wife Elizabeth H. Cowan
48. Charles Hays, 9: s/o of first wife Elizabeth H. Cowan

49. Andrew Cowan, 38
DLC 4464 Linn Co arrived 19 Sep 1852

50. wife: Nancy Hays, 32 sister of William L. Hays
Children:
51. Elizabeth A. Cowan, 13
52. Jerusha Jane Cowan, 11

53. James Logan Cowan, 9
54. Amanda C. Cowan, 4

55. John Scott, 60

wife: appears to have been deceased and John Scott traveled as a widower

children:
Samuel Scott, see single men listing
James Davis Scott, see single men listing
56. Mary E. Scott, 23
57. Caroline Scott, 21
58. Ann M. Scott, 16
59. George N. Scott, 11

60. Hillory Butler, 33

61. wife: Catherine Hickman, 21

62. William H. Pullen, 25

63. wife: Maria Barnes Yantis
children:
64. Sarah L. Pullen, 2 [died on trail at the Dalles]

25 Single men:

65. Thomas R. Prather, 20, s/o Thomas and Mary (Cowan) Prather

66. George Frederick Frye, 19, single

67. Aaron Webster, 24, single

68. Isaac Hays, 24, single, probably cousin to John P. and Isaac A. Hays

69. Isaac A. Hays, 20, single, s/o Samuel and Jerusha (Logan) Hays

70. John P. Hays, 19, single, s/o Samuel and Jerusha (Logan) Hays

71. Charles H. Cowan, 30, single, brother of Andrew Cowan

72. Samuel Scott, 26, single, s/o John Scott

73. James Davis Scott, 17, single, s/o John Scott

74. Black driver, 15, wagon driver for John L. Yantis

Spring of 1852

1. Benjamin Franklin Yantis

"Starting in the Spring of that year (1852) from the old home in Missouri, where, although money might be a little scarce, there was an abundance of the fat of the land for subsidence. Travelling all those long, weary moths over the old Oregon trail, leaving his wife and the mother of his children in a lonely grave on the sage brush plains of Idaho, with his motherless child, Fannie, an infant of three years of age, the prospect awaiting the hardy emigrant when he reached the El Dorado of his dreams seemed cold and forbidding."

2. James M. Yantis

"I have often wondered what madness or craze could have possessed the early pioneers to came to Oregon! For instance, what could have caused a man like my grandfather, a gentleman of the south as it was understood in those days – a man who had never even been used to building his own fires in the morning and who always had a servant to saddle and bring up his horse when he wished to ride – to load his nine children into an ox wagon, and leaving a comfortable home behind him, start out clear across the plains for Oregon. There seems no reason back of such an act. However, there was a great deal of trouble in Missour over the slave question at about that time and that may have had some influence in causing the change. My grandfather, in spite of the fact that he held some slaves at the time was violently opposed to the whole slave system and wished to get away from it. My grandparents, however, held very few servants. I think only a maid and a boy who had been given to my mother on her marriage. These servants were given their freedom and left behind in the care of family friends."

5. Gilmore Hays

"When I was a young girl of a little less than sixteen years of age, living in Saline County, Missouri, my father, Gilmore Hays, decided to leave the old homestead and take his family out to Oregon, as all this section of the country was then called. Father had been out West before and knew that the land was full of richness and opportunities for amazing wealth such as would never be found in the more settled country. There were six boys in our family and father thought they would stand a better chance to get on in the world when the time came for them to branch out for themselves in the new country. Father's enthusiasm spread to a lot of our kinsfolks, and they decided to join our train and cross the plains with us.

I can't tell now just how many wagons there were in line when we pulled out for our start for the long journey over the Oregon Trails. But the ones whom I am able to recall were the family of Dr. N. Ostrander, Uncle Frank Yantis with his family, George Scott and wife, Mr. and Mrs. Hillory Butler, my father's brother Isaac Hays, Rev. Lapsley Yantis and many others."

6. Andrew L Cowan

"The wilds of the Pacific coast had a charm for him and in 1852, in company with Gilmore Hays, Dr. Yantis, Dr. Ostrander, Thomas Prather, his own family and many others, commenced again that long and tedious and hazardous trip across the plains."

7. James L Cowan

"...Andrew and Nancy (Hayes) Cowan, were natives of Kentucky, from which state they emigrated in 1828 to Missouri, which latter place was then a new country and but little developed. Here he engaged in farming and the stock business, in which he continued very successfully until the spring of 1852, when he converted his property into money, and turned his face westward, toward the Star of Empire. He and his brother-in-law,

Gilmore Hayes (sic-Hays), formed a co-partnership, leaving Missouri with eight wagons, some drawn by horses and some by oxen, and with their families started on their long journey overland."

8. Hillory Butler

"On April 23, 1852, Mr. Butler started across the plains for Oregon, in the train with Judge Hayes (sic-Hays) and Andrew Cowan, paying $175 for food and transportation.

9. Thomas R Prather

"He [Thomas R Prather] was born in Boone county, Missouri, in 1832 and as a boy made the overland trip to California. He returned to Missouri and in 1852 came west again, as one of 99 people in a company of 14 wagons. In that party were quite a number who came on to Thurston county, including the four Hays brothers, the four Yantis brothers and Dr. N. Ostrander."

10. George F Freye

"He [George Frederich Freye] came to America at the age of 16 and after living three years with a sister in Missouri he joined a party bound for Portland, Or. The trip across the plains was made with ox teams."

The Journey

1. Benjamin F Yantis

"The trip, undertaken in company with a number of kinsmen and friends, had been an unusually trying experience. Besides that of Mrs. Yantis, there were many other deaths occurring in the train, owing to the appearance of black measles, a sister, Mrs. Eliza Ostrander, with her children being among the sufferers. Judge Yantis' oldest daughter, Mrs. W. H. Pullen, with her three-year-old baby in her arms was obliged, as were all the women and children, to walk across the five miles of portage below The Dalles. This child was ill when the weary march through the hot sum begun and grew rapidly worse as the mother plodded along. Before the little boat was reached in which the party was to be brought on down the Columbia, the baby was dead in the distracted mother's arms. That evening a tiny grave was made by the banks of the majestic river and the party were obliged to proceed on their journey.

2. James M Yantis

"The family bible from which I am getting the birth and death dates was brought by Grandfather Yantis on the trip across the plains. Often in crossing streams it became soaked and wet when the wagon was flooded. You can see how wrinkled the pages are from those wettings. Our mother [Amelia Ann Yantis] was ten years of age at the time and when the supplies were soaked, it was part of her task to spread them out and dry them beside the campfire. When the bible was wet, she would sit in her little chair beside the fire and turn the pages one by one until they were dry. We still have her little chair in which she sat and performed that task.

The youngest member of the emigrant train was William W. Yantis, our uncle. He was a little red-headed baby, only about one year old. The Indians were especially attracted to that redhead and paid a great deal of attention to him, and all of the women and children of the train were in a constant worry for fear the Indians would steal him. They did make offers to buy him and showed in many ways they were anxious to have him.

There was some dissention on the trip to Oregon among the various members of the train. My grandfather was a very devout Presbyterian and did not wish to travel on Sunday. Other members of the train and of the family were less strict and wished to push on every day at top speed. This finally resulted in active disagreement, those who wished to travel on Sunday accused those who preferred to rest of not being sincere, saying 'you only want to stop to do your washing and cooking at leisure'. The result, at last, was that the train split into to parts, one part, including grandfather and his family, lingering behind and the other part pushing on. The first section pushed on to Olympia. The split took place at Fort Hall.

The cholera was a plague, clinging to the flanks of the emigrant train that year. One of our aunts died of cholera in grandfather's train. Of the party who pushed on ahead after they split there was one death from cholera, that of Ann Hayes [sic-Hall], wife of Franklin Yantis.

I might say at this time that all of grandfather's children were not with him on the trip to Oregon. John H. Yantis had gone on ahead to the California gold mines in 1849. The children with the train ranged in age from under two years to sixteen years.

3. John L Yantis

Portland, Oregon Territory, Nov. 30, 1852.

My dear Brother: I fear you are beginning to grow impatient with my tardiness in writing to you; but you will fully excuse me when I tell you that, until within the last ten days, I have not been able to write or even read a line for nearly two months. One of the families of our train brought us an epidemic sore eye of the most malignant type, with which I was attacked not long after passing Fort Hall, and from which I am only now recovering.

I could give you a long chapter of incidents of travel, but I wish to fill my sheet with matter which may be more profitable. We reached this place, the largest town in the Territory, during the first week of October, after a travel of five months and a few days. At least one month of this time was consumed by harassing delays. We have reason to be profoundly thankful, that our family came safely through, having had no disaster and no case of alarming illness – others of our friends fared much worse. – We were greatly favored in the preservation of our stock; it is a remarkable fact that I did not loose a single ox from the three teams I set out with, or one which I bought on the road. This is owning partly to the excellence of my teamsters; (all of whom I selected from good families and were first rate young men) and partly to the constant supervision of my own eye; but mainly to the fact that I had the very best teams on the road. It would have gratified you to have seen the performance of my Osage cattle and to have heard the remarks made about them. I expect to get from $150 to $250 a yoke for the cattle I sell. I am satisfied now that cattle, such as you bought for me, can always be got through in good condition.

The storms gave us no trouble, and I have no doubt the wonderful tales we here on that subject, are pretty much gass. We suffered considerable from dust during the last month, because we started too late – our cattle never suffered

materially for want either of grass or water – those terrible tales of waterless deserts, are all stuff – mere stuff. The fact is we did not happen to come by the places where you had to let your cattle down perpendicular precipices of many hundred feet by the tail! – or where your tongue would swell with thirst till you had to find room for it out of doors. We saw no great marvels, made no hair breadth escapes, and we do not feel that we deserve a high place on the roll of fame, as heroes or heroines. The fact is, that coming to Oregon, is a very plain, matter of fact sort of business, in which the adventures are few, and from which the wonders all vanish, just before you get to see them. As to the road, you may have some idea of it, when I tell you that my most unruly team was driven every alternate day by a 15 year old black boy, who regularly took a nap of two or three hours every day, and yet, in all our train there was not a single upsetting all the way. It is amusing to think of some of the terrible anticipations which almost deterred me from making the trip. One of these it is laughable to remember, viz: The crossing of South Platte, a stream full half a mile wide, and muddy and tumultuous as the Missouri – this stream had to be forded and the bottom was one wide spread quicksand, on which, if wagon or horse should stop, it 'were wo worth the chase [?]' to it. Well the fact is, the South Platte is full half a mile wide, muddy and mad, but there is about as much to alarm in crossing it as in crossing Cole Camp, or little Tebo, in July. I remember that about the middle of the stream I dropped the whip from the stock and had the temerity to risk every thing and jump out to save it, when the waters of the hissing, rushing stream came all the way up to my ankles! So of many of the awful passages you have to make.

There is generally, more or less disease, almost always a very manageable diarrhea, some slight fevers, &c., &c.

It may be of service to give some directions as to the preparations, &c., necessary to be made. If I were yet to come, I would be careful as to the wagons I would bring. I found by experience that there is often at least the difference of a good yoke of steers, in wagons of the same burden. The Chicago wagons are the best. I would have at least five yoke of steers, and two of cows to each wagon, using four yoke at a time, and I would not start with a steer about which I felt any fears. I would have my wagon cloths so fixed at the ends and sides as that rain could not beat in and so that they could be easily drawn up to admit the air; I would have my yokes lines with lead or zink to keep from galling; I would get some 300 ox shoe nails, (half the size of horse shoe nails) and a few iron shoes; I would use stout harness leather for shoeing the lighter cattle; I would have one wagon body made very tight to ferry in, (the simplest thing in the world) otherwise there is great imposition; I would get Walker's guide to Oregon; I would put up with my provisions several hams of bacon, and several of venison to serve in case of sickness; I would get my family physician to put up my medicine, and if I had a son-in-law who was a physician, I would bring him along if I could; I would lay in a good stock of patience and perseverance; I would commit myself and family to God with prayer and fasting; set out by the 15th of April if possible, not later than the 20th; travel regularly, consulting the capabilities of my cattle; and then, resting every Sabbath; I would make the journey; I would endeavor to be as near ahead, as possible, so as to get the best grass, to avoid dust and epidemic diseases, and I would try to get to the Cascade Mountains by the 10th of September, and would cross the mountain instead of coming by [T]he Dalles. There is more expense, more trouble, more danger to persons and stock, more delay and more vexation from [T]he Dalles to this place, than in the rest of the journey. *Mark that well.*

* * * *

I would bring at least two pounds of Gum Arabic [pulverized.] with which to clear coffee; it is an excellent preventative used in this way, against bowel complaint.

4. Dr. Nathaniel Ostrander

"He [Dr. Ostrander] practiced medicine in Saline county for two years, and in 1850 joined the tide of Western immigration and crossed the plains with an ox team to California. He passed a year at mining and in the practice of his profession at the Rough and Ready and Onion valley camps, and in the fall of 1851 returned to his family in St. Louis. He then converted his farm property into cash and purchased a prairie outfit of wagons and oxen and started for the Pacific coast, bringing his family and father. They arrived at their destination in the fall of 1852 and located on the Cowlitz river, being among the first settler in the valley."

5. Gilmore Hays

"The first stages of the trip were full of pleasure and delight, expecially to us younger members of the train. Although the greater part of the wagons were drawn by yokes of oxen and perforce the travel was slow, we younger ones had each our own pony and would far in advance of the train, pick out a good camping place where there was wood, water and grass for the animals. Here we would dismount and the young men proceed to collect piles of wood for the camp fires in the evening while we girls would skylark around, pick flowers and rest beneath the trees by the side of the beautiful streams which we frequently were fortunate enough to find for our camping place. When the wagons would pull in towards evening it was a hurry-up to get supper, turn out the stock and then all hands gathered around the enormous campfires where merry jest, songs and cheerful companionship banished every though of homesickness or foreboding. We had several violins, a banjo and many fine voices in the party, so the music was enjoyed almost every evening.

I must tell you about my pony. She was the fastest animal in the train, a perfect beauty and a great pet, and an animal of more than ordinary intelligence. So speedy was she that the hunters always borrowed her when

they wanted to run down a buffalo to replenish our supply of fresh meat. One day I was in a pet towards the other girls in the train, Sarah Yantis and her sister, Mrs. Pullen (these girls were afterwards Mrs. G. C. Blankenship and Mrs. Dick Wood). So I told them to ride on and I would wait for the wagons, letting my pony eat by the roadside. As soon as they had disappeared along the trail I dismounted and sat down in the grass. That pony would scarcely eat a mouthful so intently did she watch, looking all around for possible danger. When the wagons came on up and father saw me there alone, he scolded me good and hard and said the horse showed a good deal more sense than I did. But some way I was never in the least afraid of the Indians and thought the tales I heard of their cruelty and treachery were mostly imaginary. I was to learn better a few years afterwards during the Indian war in Washington.

Well, all went merry as a marriage bell until we reached Fort Laramie [Fort Hall]. Here was the parting of the ways. Uncle Lapsley Yantis was a Presbyterian minister and as good a man as ever trod the earth, and he was strong for whatever he considered to be the right, and to travel on the Sabbath day was not right according to his views. Father was also a good man but he was more practical and had different ideas from Uncle Lapsley. He reasoned that even if the train did lay over and not travel on Sundays that the emigrants would probably not observe the day any better than those who pushed on toward their journey's end. The women would bake, wash, etc, and the young folks get into various kinds of mischief, but most weighty argument of all, the cattle would become so scattered in a whole day and two nights' layoff that in his judgement, it was better to keep going. The leaders couldn't agree, so the train was divided, some going on with father and the remainder staying with the Sabbath keepers. Was it a judgment from God that as soon as the decision was made and we began to fail the Sabbath observance dire calamity befell us? It certainly looked so. Soon after the separation we overtook an emigrant wagon in which was a sick boy. Mother offered her services to the parents of the lad and did what she could for them in the way of nursing and simple remedies to relieve the lad's fever. Little did she suspect the nature of the disease she came in contact with. About ten days after encountering the sick boy she was taken down with a raging fever which soon developed into a severe case of black measles. Soon nearly all the young people of the trains were inflicted with the dread disease. Of my six brothers one after another died till three graves were made along the roadside. But before Brother Henry died mother, too, was taken. Henry seemed to be getting over the measles and we hoped for a time he might be spared us. One night, after convalescence had set in, we were sitting around the campfire, no longer gleeful and singing, but oppressed with our dreadful sorrow. Henry was well enough then to eat some ham which I had cooked for supper. After eating he complained of a terrible thirst and kept drinking water. Soon cramps set in and he was dead before morning. I thought father would go crazy at this terrible last blow.

We reached Salmon Falls in Idaho before mother died, and although I did not know of it till a year afterwards when I again met my cousin, Sarah Yantis, in Olympia. I must tell of her resting place. We had to roll the body in a blanket—there was, of course no way to make even the rudest coffin, and after the mortal remains of our dear mother had been covered the best we could, father took off a piece of the end board of the wagon and wrote her name, Naomi Hays on it. Then we had to go on and leave her there.

Well, when Uncle Lapsley's train came along several days after we were on our way, they espied a newly made grave beside the road and on going to it read mother's name. Mrs. Yantis, who was very delicate and suffering from the hardships of the trip, had become very ill on the way. When she knew that her old friend was buried there, she lost all hope, and although the train made a couple of stages further on their way, the poor lady was unable to stand the shock and sank to rest. Her last words were 'Take me back to sleep beside Naomi.' Her broken-hearted husband and children respected these last words and retracing their way to where mother was laid, buried her there and beneath mother's name wrote "Ann Yantis". And there they sleep side by side. Ah, it was a hard and bitter time.

After the death of my third brother father decided that the time had come to do something, so he had one of

the lighter wagons emptied of all but our actual necessities for light camping and hitching the freshest of the mules to the wagon, started my brothers, myself and some other women and children of the train on as fast as the animals could travel. He hoped we could reach The Dalles and go on to Portland before winter set in.

7. James L Cowan biography

"Mrs. [Andrew] Hays and two children died upon the plains, stricken with cholera, which was epidemic that season. The train then separated, and Mr. Cowan and his family made all speed with the horse teams, traveling night and day, thus escaping this dread disease."

8. Hillory Butler

"The train was attached by cholera and a number of deaths ensued."

Arrival

1. Benjamin F Yantis

"When the Big Sandy was reached the march was again resumed to the Cowlitz River, where Indian canoes and bateaus were employed to bring the weary emigrants to Cowlitz Landing. Judge Yantis' oxen were so exhausted by the trip across the plains that he left them to be wintered at The Dalles. In the Spring he found that all had perished but one ox. But nothing dismayed, and with the pluck and endurance which was characteristic of the sturdy pioneers, Judge Yantis at once proceeded to take advantage of the opportunity he saw on every hand, for bettering his financial affairs. A homestead was pre-empted out on Bush Prairie, a few miles from where Plum Station now is, and a comfortable house was soon established."

5. Gilmore Hays

"When we reached The Dalles we women and children were put on flat boats and floated down to the Cascades. Here we were obliged to walk across the portage to the landing and then take a little steamboat on down to Portland.

At this place I was met by an uncle, Andrew Cowan, who took me home with him and I spent the winter very comfortably with my uncle and aunt.

Portland was then a mere village with a two plank sidewalk extending along the few blocks which were built up, and mud, mud everywhere. It was certainly the muddiest dirtiest place I had ever seen at that time.

When father finally reached The Dalles with the ox teams he bought a good many of the emigrants' cattle and turned them out on the ranges in the vicinity. But the hard luck with which he had been followed throughout the latter part of the journey still pursued the poor man.

One of the coldest winters on record for that region set in and the cattle were caught by the heavy snows. The beasts were weakened anyway with their thousands of miles travel and in no condition to withstand the rigors of the climate. There was no hay or feed to be bought for any price so almost the entire drove perished. This almost bankrupted father and was a severe blow to the high hopes of wealth and prosperity he had entertained when he started from Missouri. Four of his family left back on the plains, his money spent for cattle and four helpless children on his hands. For I was little more than a child in years and having always lived on a plantation with servants to do everything about the house and mother to depend on, you may be sure I was incapable and inexperienced.

Came the spring of 1852 (sic-1853) and father was restless and wanting to go on to the promised land—Puget Sound—so chartering a flat boat to take us up the Cowlitz river after we left the steamboat at Monticello landing, we were again on our way.

The memory of that trip will be with me as long as memory lasts. The flat boat loaded with our very few household effects, was poled up the Cowlitz, but there was no room on the boat for the women and children, so there was nothing to do but walk along the trail. This trail was through, in many places, brush so dense, that we crawled on our hands and knees to get along at all. In other places we were in mud well up to our knees.

In addition to this I had to carry my little brother, Robert. The poor little fellow was only three years old and had never become very strong from his attack of the measles the summer before. I, to, was weak and sick and in my mind thought I was not long for this world, and I must say, I didn't care much, life seemed full of trouble and hardship. When we reached the Cowlitz landing, we were met by mule teams which had been sent down from Olympia to haul our freight. The wagons were so filled and the roads such a condition that I still had to walk across the country past where Chehalis now is and on to Mound prairie. My companion on this dreary jaunt was Mrs. Hillory Butler, who with her husband, was also coming to the Sound with us. She was very kind and good to the motherless girl and helped me carry my little brother. Turn and turn about we plodded all those

weary miles through knee-deep mud, hot, tired and discouraged.

Coming out on Mound prairie we spied a cabin in a clearing. The eternal feminine asserted itself even under those distressing conditions, so before going to the house, Mrs. Butler and myself stopped beside a stream of water flowing by and wading up to our knees washed the bottoms of our skirts off the best we could, they being literally caked with mud, straightened our hair and then proceeded to the house where we proposed to ask shelter for the night.

In the door of the cabin stood the fairest sight I have ever seen. It was my own dear cousin and chum, Sarah Yantis. Imagine the greetings received. Although over fifty years have passed over my head since then and I have changed from a pretty, young girl to a great-grandmother, I still recall the thrill of rapture with which I rushed into Sarah's arms and listened to her dear voice once again. When the train was divided Uncle Frank Yantis with family had remained behind and on reaching Portland had proceeded straight on to this section of the country. He had taken up a donation claim out on the prairie and was comfortably settled.

We rested there visiting with Uncle Frank's family for a while and then came on to Olympia.

Our first place of refuge on reaching this place was with a bachelor who had a comfortable log cabin a couple of miles from Newmarket—now Tumwater. The man's name was Benjamin Gordon, or Old Ben, as he was commonly called, and he was very good to us all. Aunt and Uncle Andrew Cowan had come to this section of the country with us and for quite a while we all lived in Mr. Gordon's cabin—the Cowans, all the Hays children and father, when he was at home. There was a garden around the place, and we had all the milk butter we wanted from Mr. Gordon's cows."

6. Andrew L Cowan

"[Andrew Cowan family] reached The Dalles that fall and purchased some cattle at that place and intended to winter them in that vicinity, while his family went on to Portland to winter. His investment in cattle did not prove a success as a hard winter came on and nearly all of them died. About August 1853, he settled on the Albany Prairie and took up a donation land claim, six miles southeast of Albany. Later on moved his family and divided his time between the farm and his city residence."

7. James L Cowan biography

"Arriving at the Dalles, he [Andrew Cowan] engaged in the purchase of emigrant cattle, which was continued by Mr. Hayes [sic-Hays] after his arrival, when Mr. Cowan and family proceeded to Portland, traveling upon a bateau to the Cascades, and after making the portage proceeding upon a small river steamer. The winter of 1852-53 was so severe in the vicinity east of the mountains that the stock enterprise of Cowan & Hayes [sic-Hays] proved a failure, losing in the venture 400 head of cattle. Mr. Cowan passed the first winter in Portland, removing in the spring of 1853 to Olympia, and in the following August removed to Linn county, locating upon 320 acres, situated seven miles southeast of Albany. Here he engaged in farming, subsequently becoming a dealer in stock, driving cattle from the Willamette valley to the mines in Idaho. This business he followed until about 1866, when he settled on his farm until the death of his wife, in 1880, since when he has resided with his son, James."

8. Hillory Butler

"Mr. Butler and his wife, however, arrived at The Dalles, Or., without serious inconvenience, although they suffered somewhat from sickness. They proceeded by small boats down the river to Portland, and their first night there was passed in a small room of a wharf boat. The next day Mr. Butler rented a house at $33.50 a month and secured the services of Dr. Wilson, Mrs. Butler still being unwell. Butler had only $2.50 cash capital, but he assured the physician that he had plenty of money, having heard that physicians did not care to

treat emigrants who were ‘broke’. After making his wife as comfortable as circumstances would permit, Butler went out looking for something to do in order to earn a few dollars to make good.

10. George F Freye

“He [George F. Freye] spent one winter in Portland and then, with Hillory Butler, for whom the Hotel Butler was names, in 1853 came to Seattle, then a small settlement on the Sound.”