

SHE SAW MASSACRE

Survivor of Whitman Butchery Dies in Eastern Oregon.

MARY E. CASON, OF SPRAY

In Her Own Words She Has Given
an Account of the Awful Deeds
of the Indians in Month
of November, 1847.

IONE, Or., April 8.—(Special.)—Mrs. Mary E. Cason died at Spray, Wheeler County, Or., April 6, 1907, aged 70 years 6 months and 28 days, after an illness of several months. The Casons were among the first settlers in Eastern Oregon and lived for many years in Morrow County, in Cason Canyon, which derived its name from them. Mr. Cason, husband of the deceased, died about 20 years ago. Mrs. Cason made her home of late years with



The Late Mrs. James P. Cason, One
of the Survivors of the Whitman
Massacre.

her daughter, Mrs. A. V. Templeton, at Spray, who, with the former's two sons, Frank Cason, of Iona, and John Cason, of Spray, was present when their mother passed away. Deceased was a lady of rare and sterling qualities, who is sincerely mourned by a very large circle of friends.

Recollections of Massacre.

The following sketch of Mrs. Cason's life is gathered from the historical records of the Wheeler County, Oregon, Pioneers, compiled by their secretary, J. D. McFarland, of Fossil:

Mary Ellen Marsh was born in Springfield, Ill., October 8, 1836. Here she lived until April 10, 1847, at which time her father fitted out two ox-teams and started with his family, consisting of wife, son and daughter, for Oregon. Starting with high hopes, they met only the usual obstacles encountered by emigrants at that early period, until they reached the Soda Springs, on Bear River, where Mrs. Marsh fell a victim to the grim destroyer and was buried on the sterile, lonely plains of that locality. Discouraging, in-

deed, was the remainder of the journey to the widowed father and the orphaned children, until in October, with teams jaded and worn, they arrived at Whitman Station. Here Mr. Marsh obtained employment and decided to remain over Winter to recruit his stock and in the Spring pursue his journey to its destination.

All had begun to accustom themselves to the daily routine at their new abode. Mr. Marsh working in the flour mill and the others helping at other tasks, when at 2 o'clock in the afternoon of November 20, the Indians arose at a preconcerted signal and massacred Dr. Whitman, Mrs. Whitman, Mr. Marsh and 10 others, taking as prisoners all the women and children. Mrs. Cason describes the massacre in her own language as follows:

Cut Down by Savages.

"At the commencement Messrs. Huffman and Kimball were butchering a beef. Mr. Saunders was teaching school, the tailor was on his table sewing, my father at the mill grinding. These are the only men that I can locate in my mind at that particular time.

"I was in a room upstairs when I heard the report of a gun below; it was the shot that killed my father. I ran downstairs and saw that the butchery was fairly commenced. I retraced my steps upstairs, followed by others, all seeking a place of safety, and from an upper window could see a part of the horrible massacre that was taking place in the space between the adobe building and the doctor's house. It was here that Huffman and Kimball fought a horde of Indians with their axes, but the contest was too unequal and they were soon overpowered and cut down. I saw an Indian on horseback pursuing Mr. Hall with uplifted tomahawk toward the creek, where he succeeded in making his escape, finally reaching the fort, but, for some inexplicable reason, it is said he was denied admission and was never heard of afterwards.

"Meantime, Joe Lewis, a halfbreed, one of the principal instigators and leaders in the massacre, and the Indians were breaking into the doctor's house, he having previously secured the doors and windows as best he could. The murderous devils soon succeeded in forcing the barriers, and then the hellish work began within. By nightfall it was over—nine men and one woman being done to death, and horribly mutilated. Sales and Hawley were spared one week and then killed on the bed. I saw Mr. Bowley lying by the door, his head nearly severed from his body. I do not know that these two men were ever buried.

She Was Promised Protection.

"I was so frightened when they were killed that I ran to an Indian who had expressed friendship and implored protection, and he told me I would not be hurt. James Young was killed the next day on the road from the sawmill to Dr. Whitman's; Elam Young and his two sons, Daniel and John were taken prisoners with the women and children and required to milk and get wood. When they milked the cows they would divide the milk among the families. The women were made to cook for the Indians, who took three of the young white women for their wives.

"We were held in captivity about a month, when blessed deliverance came. We were rescued by Governor Peter Skene Ogden, of the Hudson Bay Company, who took us down the river in batteaux to Oregon City. At The Dalles we met the volunteer soldiers, my brother among the number,—a joyful meeting, mingled with sadness. It was well into the Winter when we arrived at Oregon City, where we were well received by the inhabitants, and the many little acts of kindness of the people still linger in my memory. One good lady gave me a piece of bread with black molasses on it, which I thought the best piece of bread I had ever eaten. People had to live hard in those days; the common bill-of-fare was bread and salmon, salmon and bread, varied sometimes with salmon and no bread.

"I found a home with Mrs. George L. Durham, Mr. Van Dorn, Mrs. Wilcox and Mrs. Young, alternately, for two years, and in 1849 went to live with Mrs. A. L. Lovejoy, with whom I made my home until my marriage with James P. Cason, of Clackamas."

Other Survivors of Massacre.

The three daughters of Mr. Sager, Mrs. Elizabeth Helm, of Portland; Mrs. Matilda J. Delaney and Mrs. Catherine Pringle, of Spokane, are numbered among the 12 or 15 survivors of the Whitman massacre.

Among others who escaped with their lives from that massacre and are still living, are Mrs. O. N. Denny of this city; Mrs. Rebecca Hopkins, of Butteville; Mrs. Eliza Spalding Warren, of Lake Chelan, Wash., and Mrs. Nancy A. Jacobs, of Walla Walla, Wash.