

John Fremont Expedition, Part 2

Information supplied by MRS. FERN HILL HENRY

Page 27 – HIGBEE, LAURA HARRIS

1865

Higbee Harris herded sheep for a living as he traveled west in 1866. Harris was only 12 years at the time, having been born in Waupum, Wisconsin, March 26, 1854. He arrived here with only a dollar in his pocket.

Higbee met Joe West in the mountains near LaGrande in 1866. The two men then both bachelors, went into a partnership to homestead land about 3 miles up the Walla Walla River, and later bought adjoining lands.

The partnership was dissolved upon the marriage of Joe West and Sarah Mizer on March 26, 1865. Higbee then moved to the adjoining farm that was bought from John Martin, and sent for his mother, Mrs. Francis Harris and only sister Jennie, to come from Waupum, Wisconsin to keep house for him.

During the summers, Harris would hire 5 girls from this area to sun dry fruit from his orchard. He would ship the dried fruit in flour sacks back to Wisconsin markets in the fall.

Laura Church was one of the girls he hired. She was born near Salem on August 12, 1868 and spent her entire life in the state of Oregon, except for one year that she worked in Yakima, Washington. Her father and mother homesteaded on Government Mountain east of Milton-Freewater, where they raised their family of nine. William Church ran a freight wagon from Portland to Spokane, often crossing the Columbia and Snake Rivers on the ice in the winter. He also helped to saw and haul ice from these rivers for summer use.

In the years 1891, 1892, Harris hired Laura to continue on after the fruit drying was over to help his mother cook for the threshing crews and the men with the fall seeding. At the end of the fall work in 1892, Higbee and Laura were married in Milton-Freewater by the Justice of Peace, John Miller, one of the owners of the first flour mill in Milton.

The couple lived their entire married lives in the same house that John Martin had built. Higbee rented the dry land part of his farm in about 1913.

There were four children, David S. Harris, who has made his home in Portland since 1929, Ernest Harris, a farmer and carpenter residing in Umapine, Martha Harris Pfeiffer, deceased, former resident of Umapine and Mable Harris, who still lives on the home place and manages the farming operation.

Information supplied by MISS MABLE HARRIS

**Page 28 – PHILIP, BRIDGET MURPHY
1865**

Philip Murphy, Sr., an Indian War veteran, homesteaded in the Umapine area, after serving in the United States Army at Fort Walla Walla.

Murphy was one of the two recipients of the Congressional Medal of Honor ever to serve at the fort. He won the medal for valor in a cavalry engagement against Indians at Seneca Mountain, Arizona in 1869. Murphy served in the army from April 20, 1867 to April 20, 1872 and from 1874 to 1879.

It was during his second enlistment that he served at Ft. Walla Walla. While there, he fought against the Nez Perce.

For fifty years, Murphy lived near Umapine on his homestead, serving for years as a school director and taking an active interest in community advancement.

He was born in Kilkeany County, Ireland in 1844 moving to America in the 1860's with his bride, Bridget Malone Murphy.

He passed away at the age of 78.

He had six children and many grandchildren. His children were Philip Jr., William, Mrs. Margaret Beauchamp, Mrs. Anna Marcy, Mrs. Katherine Krumbah, all of Umapine and Mrs. Mamie Wilson, Seattle, WA.

Information supplied by MRS. ANN McDANIEL and ALBERTA MURPHY

**Page 28 – MICHAEL G., AMANDA SAMS
1865**

**Page 28 – JOE, SARAH WEST
1865**

Joe West was born in Illinois in 1840. During the Civil War he served with the Union Army and later worked with the crews building the Union Pacific across the plains. West met both Buffalo Bill Cody and Wild Bill Hickok and experienced many interesting and tense situations during buffalo hunts on the prairie.

Joe West and Higbee Harris met at LaGrande. They came to Milton, homesteading on land about 3 miles up the Walla-Walla River in 1866. During the early years of

their partnership West split rails to fence their land and Harris herded sheep during the summer months to earn some needed cash.

Sarah Mizer crossed the plains with her mother and a brother and his family in a covered wagon in 1883. They spent the first winter up the Walla Walla River at the place then known as the R. M. Dorothy farm. In the spring the brother and his family moved on to Latah, Washington, while Sarah and her mother stayed and cooked for the two bachelors. Joe and Sarah were married March 26, 1885 in Latah.

Higbee remained a friend but moved to an adjoining farm they had bought, formerly the John Martin place where Mable Harris now lives. They divided their horses by alternate selections after drawing for first choice.

The list of pranks and episodes of their bachelor days was ended but both men retained a close friendship and true loyalty throughout their remaining years.

West rented his land to Colin McEwen in 1898. McEwen, a recent arrival from Scotland with his bride, lived on the farm for almost 69 years with only an oral lease.

Ownership of the land has remained in the same family since the original date of 1866. It is now being farmed by Edwin F. Lawrence, son of Edna Fulton Lawrence, and is owned equally by him and Mrs. Frank Nease (Kathy Fulton) of Waitsburg.

Information supplied by MISS MABLE HARRIS

**Page 29 – WM. B., LOUISA WINN
1865**

A pioneering spirit must have pervaded the William Bannister Winn family as it left Illinois, knowing full well that Mrs. Louisa Winn would give birth to a child along the two thousand mile journey to Oregon. The blessed event occurred in Soda Springs, Idaho, as Charles was born on August 15, 1865. As soon as Louisa was able to travel once more, the Winn's continued their trek west with their four children to the Beaver State.

When they arrived, the Winn's homesteaded up Couse Creek, where they planted berries and a fruit orchard. In 1922, the two-story house, in which they resided, burned and was rebuilt the following year.

A son Andrew died at the age of three in 1875. The following is a brief summary of the Winn children's history. Frank lived, until his death, on Couse Creek; Douglas spent his life here and in Canyonville, Oregon; Ambrose remained in the area; Charles also lived his entire life in the Walla Walla River Valley; Alice (Quinn) raised her family on the Divide in the Walowa's; and Ella (Rose) moved to Idaho.

Information supplied by MRS. OTTO BLUMHAGEN

**Page 29 – JESS, FLORA MELTON
1866**

Jesse and Flora Melton and their three children lived through quite an experience during the year 1878. The Melton's and surrounding families huddled together at the Fort, in what is now south Milton-Freewater, during an Indian uprising. At this time, Ad, a son, contracted diphtheria and everyone returned to their homes, fearing the spread of the much dreaded disease. Ad succumbed a few days later at the age of six. Although the Melton's and their fellow settlers remained quite uneasy, the Indians calmed down without having raided the Milton-Freewater area.

The Melton's and their children left Knox County, Illinois in 1865 and spent the winter in Montana. They eventually arrived in Weston in 1866, where they lived out the winter in a dug-out. While there, the Melton's operated the Stage Depot and then in 1867, they purchased the Knowlton Place on Couse Creek. The home remained in the family until 1962 when it was sold to Herb March.

Their daughter Juliette Reed moved to Ritzville, Washington and settled down, while her sister Viola Winn raised her family on the home on Couse Creek. A son Frank moved to Nevada.

Information supplied by MRS. W. R. WILLIAMS

**Page 29 – LEWIS A., SARAH RAMBO
1866**

**Page 29 – W.A. COWL FAMILY
1867**

In Milton-Freewater Area History Section

**Page 30 – MARTIN, MARTHA ELAM
1867**

Andrew Martin Elam was born in McNary County, Tennessee on June 4, 1840. He received his early education in Tennessee and later went to Fort Worth, Texas where he went into the livestock business. With the advent of the Civil War, he enlisted in the Confederate Army in 1861 and for three years and three months, he participated in important battles in Texas, Arkansas and Louisiana. When the Civil War was over, he returned to Granbury, Texas and once again became interested in raising livestock.

Martha L. Frazier was born August 11, 1848, in Hardin County, Tennessee where she spent part of her childhood. As a young girl, she migrated with her parents, William and Paulina (Williams) Frazier, to Texas. It was in Texas on November 8, 1865 that Andrew Martin Elam and Martha L. Frazier were married. On August 28, 1866 they became parents of a daughter, Rachel Laverna.

In April of 1867, three covered wagons began a long and difficult journey from Fort Worth, Texas to Oregon. Two wagons were drawn by mules and the third wagon by horses. Those who made up the train were Andrew Martin Elam, his wife Martha and their one-year old daughter Verna, and Mrs. Elam's parents, the William S. Frazier's and their family.

Both Mr. And Mrs. Elam were dedicated leaders in civic affairs. He had the proud distinction of being the first Mayor of Milton and served on the City Council for many years. He was also one of the organizers of the First National Bank and served as a director of the institution until he died. He was one of two pioneers who built the Peacock Milling Company. He managed its operations for 14 years and also traveled for the company. In 1895 he became the operator and co-owner of the Allen-Elam Hardware store, and in the early 1900's he built what was called the "Elam Brick Block". Martin Elam saw this country grow from a vast prairie to a highly cultivated land.

Mr. And Mrs. Andrew Martin Elam had two daughters. Rachel Laverna (Verna) married J.H. Piper and settled in Milton to raise their family of six children. Roberta Ellen (Bertie) Elam spent most of her life in Milton and lived her later years in Walla Walla.

The lives of Martin and Martha Elam had been beautifully twined together for 61 years, when Mr. Elam died on December 25, 1926. Mrs. Elam passed away on July 27, 1928. Both daughters are now deceased.

Information supplied by ELWOOD PIPER

**Page 30 – HENRY, LUCY FRAZIER
1867**

**Page 30 – W. H., FRANCES FRAZIER
1867**

William Hardee Frazier, affectionately known as "Uncle Willie" to his friends and relatives, came to Eastern Umatilla County when he was 5 years old.

He was born in Texas on December 29, 1862 and was one of the eight children of William S. and Paulina Frazier.

In the spring of 1867 they crossed the plains from Texas as part of a caravan. There were three horse drawn covered wagons. Two of the wagons were used for the Frazier family and the third wagon was occupied by his oldest sister Martha Frazier Elam, her husband Martin Elam and their one year old daughter Rachel Laverna Elam.

After being on the trail six months, they arrived in the Walla Walla valley near the State Line in October of 1867.

“Uncle Willie’s” father settled on a homestead in 1868 and in 1872 he laid out the town-site of Milton. The senior Frazier then built a large colonial home on a portion of the town-site in South Milton.

William Hardee Frazier was married to Frances Susan Beardsley from New York on September 24, 1884.

After the death of his father, W. H. and his family moved into the large white family home where he continued to live until his death on August 1, 1954. His wife Frances Susan (Frankie) Frazier died on August 6, 1953.

In “Uncle Willie’s” active years, he and his family were wheat and cattle ranchers. He and his family spent their summers in the Blue Mountains in a cabin near Target Meadows where he rode horseback and looked after their cattle.

Three children were born to the Frazier’s; Miss Lela Frazier and Earl Frazier still live at the old home place on Chestnut Street. Mrs. O. E. (Mae Frazier) Smith resides at South 9th Street.

Information supplied by MISS LELA FRAZIER

**Page 31 - W. S., RACHAEL FRAZIER
1867**

In Milton-Freewater Area History Section

**Page 31 – SAMUEL, MILISSA BABCOCK
1868**

**Page 31 – BILLIE, TILLIE McQUEEN
1868**

**Page 31 – WILLIAM M., NARVESTA M. STEEN
1868**

In Milton-Freewater Area History Section

**Page 31 – SAMUEL, SUSAN COE
1869**

**Page 31 – WILLIAM, ADDIE TALBERT
1869**

**Page 31 – GEORGE, EDITH IRELAND
1870**

In Milton-Freewater Area History Section

**Page 31 – ROBERT, RENA VANCIL
1870**

Born September 9, 1870, Robert Franklin Vancil came into the world a pioneer in Milton-Freewater, as his parents Samuel and Malinda Vancil, had come to the local area several years earlier. He was raised on Couse Creek and his early schooling was taken up at the little one-room school about 2 miles up from the home. The family lived adjacent to the Winn and Shumway families, who were also long-time friends.

Robert was converted to the Methodist faith on February 10, 1902 and was a faithful member during his lifetime and also acted as the church's superintendent for several years.

In 1904, he married Reba Troyer and settled in Freewater, near where the present Brinker Brothers Hardware Store now stands. He acted as the Marshall of Freewater and soon became the manager of the first Tum-A-Lum Lumber Company in Freewater.

During the period between 1908 and 1912 he constructed 6 houses in Milton, 2 of which stood where the Safeway Store (old) now stands. The specified area was known as part of Vancil's Addition. Robert also went into partnership with William Wagner, father of Paul Wagner, and established a real estate office where the present Freewater Drug Store now stands.

The old city of Milton owes much to the civic pride of Vancil as he was a member of the city's city council for 16 years and assisted in the planning of Milton's independent water and lighting system. While he was a member of the council, the city purchased the Columbia College administration building for use as the city hall. For approximately 10 years, Robert also served as the deputy for the east end of Umatilla County.

The long history of Boy Scouting in the Milton-Freewater area can be attributed to Vancil, as he initiated scouting here in 1914.

Information supplied by MRS. HELEN HARRIS

**Page 32 – ANDREW J., MARY CRIGLER
1871**

**Page 32 – LOWELL, MINNIE ROGERS
1871**

Lowell Lester Rogers, the founder of the Rogers Canning Company was born in Silverton, Oregon in 1869.

Rogers attended school in Weston. His father owned a farm near Weston and at one time had worked as a miner. Because of the death of his father when he was only ten years old, Lowell was educated by his mother, along with the rest of the children.

In 1893 Rogers married Minnie M. Dupuis. The young couple moved to a farm near Adams, which his mother had purchased from the government. His mother had paid \$3,000 for 160 acres of land.

The canning company was started in 1935. Rogers was president of the company until his death in July 4, 1954.

Minnie Dupuis Rogers was born in 1873 in Vancouver, WA to Catherine and John Dupuis. Her father was a saddle maker and owned a harness and stagecoach shop at Weston. Stagecoaches were used between Pendleton and Walla Walla before railroads were built in the area.

Her father's shop was destroyed by a fire in Weston. Added to the bad luck, her father suffered a stroke.

To support the family, her mother ran a furniture and undertaking parlor.

Minnie, the oldest child of eight, attended schools in Weston, later passing a teacher's test of the Oregon State Board of Education. She was the youngest person at the time to teach school in Oregon at the age of 16. She died in 1950.

Information supplied by MRS. GWENDOLYN ROGERS

**Page 32 – CHARLES, JENNIE BARRETT
1872**

**Page 33 – AARON, SAMARIA MILLER
1872**

In Milton-Freewater Area History Section

**Page 33 – WILLIAM, GERTIE MILLER
1872**

**Page 33 – NELSON G. BLALOCK, M.D.
1873**

“The reader has but to learn what his generation in the country has been to cheerfully accord him the mead of approval. He has not derived as much personal benefit from his labors as the people of the country have and his business efforts are all of a nature calculated to insure to the public advantage more than to his private advancement.” Such was said of Dr. Nelson G. Blalock, Milton-Freewater area pioneer, by the historian F. T. Gilbert, of the famed doctor in 1882.

Dr. Blalock arrived in the Walla Walla Valley on October 11, 1873 after leading a wagon train from Mt. Zion, Illinois on May 29th of that same year. The entire party left the Illinois area because of the severe climate and traveled by way of Long’s Peak, Colorado on the Oregon Trail.

The physician was married to the former Panthea A. Durham on August 1, 1858. She left two sons upon her death on May 18, 1864. The younger son, Plato, died before the family left North Carolina for Illinois. On December 10, 1865, Blalock married the former Mary E. Greenfield and three daughters sprang from the union.

When Dr. Blalock arrived in the local area, he hauled freight and practiced medicine as he was short on funds.

He was born in Mitchell County on February 17, 1836 in the state of North Carolina. He was schooled in the common schools of his native state and attended college for one year in Tennessee. In 1859, he enrolled in Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia and was graduated from the medical school in 1861.

After graduation, he practiced medicine for one year in Mt. Zion and then became the Regimental Surgeon of the 115th Illinois Infantry Volunteers. In 1863, he was forced to give up his medical commission because of ill health.

Nelson G. Blalock died March 14, 1913 in Walla Walla.

Information supplied by MISS PHOEBE I. BLALOCK.

1874

Determined to reach the virgin wilds of Oregon, the McDonald and Kinnear families left Singhampton, Ontario, Canada in April of 1874 and took an 8-day train trip to Ogden, Utah. On the way, the families were exposed to measles and braved the Indians, which the "Iron Horse" attracted.

The McDonald's and the Kinnear's camped for a week in the Ogden area and then bought horses and wagons and made their trek west along the Oregon Trail. They arrived and settled in June in Weston. During the summer, the McDonald family produced 10 children. Their 3rd child, Jessie, married another pioneer Eugene A. Dudley, in November of 1885. To this union, were born 6 children, of which the 2nd child, Donald Dean Dudley, married Jane Gates in June of 1910.

In 1878, Jessie McDonald came home from working in the fields during the harvest season feeling quite ill. She had contracted the dreaded disease of diphtheria. Six of the nine McDonald children were afflicted with the sickness and the three youngest died. Later, another daughter, Eva, was born.

Information supplied by MRS. J. L. GEYER

Page 34 – ROBERT, EVALINA CHAPMAN

1875

Robert R. Chapman settled on the south fork of the Walla Walla River with his parents in 1875, after traveling from Sidney, Iowa.

The Chapman farm was located 7 miles from Milton-Freewater on property now owned by Dr. Jack Woodhall. Chapman's father raised horses.

The family lived there until 1888 when Chapman's father was struck in the chest by a horse's hoof, while he was putting out salt. His father died from the injury and the family moved to Milton.

In 1893, Chapman married Eva Gordon. The couple lived in Milton, where they gave birth to two sons, Lloyd and Earl.

The couple moved up the Walla Walla River, buying some land near the south fork of the river. The house they built is still standing and is now owned by Burris Elliott. This was the birthplace of their daughter, Iola.

They purchased property further up the south fork, where the couple spent the rest of their life. Chapman saw a great many changes in the river in his lifetime. In his days, he could catch several trout in the river. And in the spring, the river would be alive with salmon.

Chapman helped build the first power plant on the river owned by the PP&L Company. He also helped build the city power pipeline from Milton to the power plant where Dorion Park is planned.

The Chapman's children are still living on the river.

Information supplied by EARL CHAPMAN

**Page 34 – FRIEDRICK M., MARY VONDERAHE
1875**

**Page 34 – JESSE Z., ANNE G. WINN
1875**

In Milton-Freewater Area History Section

**Page 34 – STEPHEN H., MELINDA HOPKINS
1876**

**Page 34 – JOHN J., HANNAH HUGHES
1876**

**Page 34 – ROBERT, MARGRETA STILL
1876**

Robert George Still came to the Dry Creek area with his family in the 1880's, where two of his older brothers had homesteaded in 1881.

His family had lived at Orangeville, Canada on land purchased for a Scottish settlement.

In 1883, Still purchased land on Dry Creek. During the same year, he married Margreta Harder. Still later served as president of the Valley National Bank between 1932-1944. He died in 1948.

His wife, Margreta, had ridden beside her father's wagon trail in 1878 when she was 12 years old. She was the daughter of Charles W. Harder another early pioneer of the area.

The couple raised 3 children; Claude, who died in the 1st World War, Edith Gray, who resides at her home at 1221 South Mill, and Lloyd Wilbur, living in Oroville, CA.

The name 'Still' comes from a gaelic name in Scotland – Stewart Claw.

Information supplied by MRS. EDITH GRAY

**Page 35 – ADAM, BARBARA TROYER
1876**

**Page 35 – THE McEWEN FAMILY
1877**

**Page 35 – ORLANDO R., ELIZABETH BALLOU
1878**

**Page 35 – WM. H., BARBARA BEATHE
1878**

**Page 35 = J. M., MARY FERGUSON
1878**

Taking charge of 20 wagons, J. M. Ferguson arrived in July of 1878 in Pendleton. He and his wife then took up homesteading near Adams, raising primarily a wheat crop. In 1893, Ferguson retired and sold his holdings.

Five children were born to the Ferguson's. Two grandchildren are currently living in the area. They are E. L. Ferguson of Milton-Freewater and Otis Lieuallen of Adams.

Information supplied by E. L. FERGUSON

**Page 35 – PETER, ANNIE GEISS
1878**

Peter Geiss was born in Germany in 1855. He came to America at the age of 18.

While in Illinois, he married Anna Elizabeth Guenther. The newlyweds decided to head west to acquire farmland. They arrived in Eastern Oregon by train at Blue Mountain Station in 1878.

Eventually, they secured a homestead at Pine Creek, 7 miles north of Weston, where they lived for 25 years. Six children were born to this union; two boys, Lewis and Albert and four girls, Carrie, Edna, Anne and Areta.

The children attended the Dry Hollow country school located 3 miles from home.

In 1902, Peter and Anna and the three younger children left the ranch and moved to a 10 acre tract two miles south of Milton, so the girls could attend school in town. The Geiss family developed this new acreage for fruit and alfalfa.

One of the hazards of their new home was the flooding of the Walla Walla River. The flood of 1905 was almost a disaster for them.

In 1932, the Geiss's moved to Milton where they spent their remaining years.

Of the six children, three survived; Mrs. R. B. (Anne) Taylor, Tucson, AZ, Mrs. Frank (Edna) McDonald and Areta Geiss, both of Milton-Freewater.

Information supplied by MISS ARETA GEISS

**Page 36 – EUGENE A., JESSIE DUDLEY
1879**

An act of brotherly love brought Eugene A. Dudley into the Walla Walla River Valley in 1879 from Beaverton, Oregon, as his sister Melissa Dudley Rogers was left with seven children, the youngest at age one, when her husband died.

Six years later, Dudley married the former Jessie McDonald on November 25, 1885 and proceeded to homestead a ranch, 2-1/2 miles west of Athena. Six children were born to the Dudley family; Eugene Earl, Donald Dean, Irene Isabel, Glenn Gerald, Max Marion and Victor Verne. When Mrs. Dudley died on July 27, 1955, she had 16 grandchildren and 58 great grandchildren. Eugene passed away on March 13, 1945.

The Dudley family was a neighbor to the famous Umatilla County Sheriff, Til Taylor.

Their 3-story house still stands as a memory to the pioneer family. The story goes that Dudley planned the new home, but it was completed before Jessie ever set eyes on it, as it was too difficult for her to get to town with her five small children. The sixth child was born to the Dudley's in the new house.

Information supplied by MRS. J. L. GEYER

**Page 36 – THE HOPSON FAMILY
1879**

**Page 36 – JOHN, VERNA PIPER
1879**

John Henry Piper was a pioneer of this district and arrived in Milton in 1879. Mr. Piper was a native of Holstein, Germany and was born on July 11, 1853. Early in

1871, at the age of 17, he sailed from Liverpool, England for New York. He worked in New York State for one year and then crossed the continent to California where he lived for six years.

In 1878, he took passage on a ship called “The Great Republic” and sailed for Portland, Oregon. From Portland, he moved on to The Dalles, Oregon where he spent another year and then in 1879 he journeyed to Milton.

John Henry Piper married Rachel Laverna Elam on September 17, 1883. Rachel Laverna had crossed the plains in a covered wagon train with her parents the A. M. Elam’s when she was one year old.

Piper took an active interest in community affairs. He served on the school board for 15 years and was president of the old First National Bank for 10 years. He was a director of the bank for 20 years and a charter member of the IOOF Lodge, which was organized in 1889. He was a loyal member of the Christian Church.

Mr. And Mrs. Piper celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary on September 17, 1933. Their six children attended this happy occasion. Their children are as follows: George H. Piper (now deceased) Milton-Freewater; Anna Piper Lutton, Lloyd M. Piper, Mattie Piper, Maxine Piper Toner all of Walla Walla; Elwood E. Piper, Milton-Freewater.

Information supplied by ELWOOD PIPER

Page 37 – JOHN, EMILY LEWIS 1880

The John Henry Lewis Family came to the local area in a round about way after leaving Topeka, Kansas in 1876.

They first rode the train across the country to Sacramento and then took a 13 day boat trip down the California coastline to Downey, where they settled for 4 years.

Lewis traded 40 acres of land for a horse and muzzle-loading shotgun because he was worried about his ownership rights. A land dispute was raging at the time over the legality of Spanish Land Grants.

In April 1880, the family packed up its bags along with the Chastain clan and Dave Bowman. They headed north to Milton-Freewater in a wagon train.

According to one of their daughter’s accounts, the trip proved to be quite hazardous and many hardships were incurred along the way. Nevertheless, on July 4th, the pioneering families camped on Dry Creek and the next day they went to Walla Walla – the wagon train’s destination. While in the city, they purchased some much-needed

groceries and drove back to Garrison Creek and camped. The following morning they drove up the South Fork of the Walla Walla River and hiked to the top of Blalock Mountain to try and find work at the mill. Failing in their quest for work, the Lewis' settled on a 40-acre plot half a mile from Stateline, on the Oregon side.

John and his wife Emily had five children: Maggie, Nancy, Winifred, Edwin and Thomas. Edwin was the father of M. O. Lewis, who currently resides just across the road from the original homestead on Winesap Road, and has lived here since 1900, the year of his birth.

Information supplied by M. O. LEWIS

**Page 37 – HERBERT, ELIZABETH MARCH
1880**

Herbert March Sr., a Canadian, settled on Basket Mountain in 1880 after coming to Oregon by wagon from a Paradise sawmill.

March was born in 1860 in New Brunswick, Canada. He and his brother Clarence came by train to Paradise, California to join another brother Edwin. March had left Canada when he was eight.

He raised cattle and farmed for many years on Basket Mountain.

March married Elizabeth Lessor on October 5, 1890. Two sons were born; Edwin at Umapine and Leroy at Milton-Freewater. On December 24, 1893, his wife died.

His sister Jennie Shelton came from Worcester, Mass. in 1912 and lived with him until his death.

In 1918 he purchased the Comb's Estate below Umapine. After he returned they moved to Umapine, later to Milton-Freewater, where he died June 9, 1857.

Information supplied by HERBERT L. MARCH

**Page 37 – ALEXANDER, MARGARET KINNEAR
1881**

**Page 37 – HERMAN, MARY SCHWANDT
1881**

**Page 38 – CLYDE, MAY STAGGS
1882**

Clyde Staggs was born in 1862 near Weston, and spent most of his life in Umatilla County.

He married May Ashworth at Pendleton in 1912. Their one child, Beulah, Mrs. George Rose, now lives in Salem.

After moving to Milton, Clyde worked for the city as an electrician and machinist. His co-workers at the old city plant in South Milton were Albert McKinley, Charlie Heater and Rude Edwards.

He passed away in 1964 and his widow, May survives, living in Milton.

Information supplied by MRS. BEULAH STAGGS ROSE

**Page 38 – CHARLES, MARGRETA HARDER
1883**

Two German immigrants were married in Peoria, Ill., and little did they know that their lives were to be pervaded by the pioneer spirit and the dangers of the frontier west and Midwest. Charles William Harder, born in Mechlenberg, Germany and his wife Margreta of Alsace Lorraine-Wegenheim, homesteaded land where the Yates Center now stands in southeast Kansas, and while there, Margreta bore ten children.

The family, fearing the much-dreaded disease of malaria and the extreme lawlessness existing during Reconstruction after the Civil War, left for the west by wagon train in 1877. It was an exciting journey for the Harder family, as the wagon train, comprised of more that 60 vehicles, picked up Chief Yellow Hawk of the UmatillaTribe and took him into hiding. It was during the period of the Bannock-Umatilla Indian Wars and travel for the wagon train was quite hazardous. When the party arrived in the Walla Walla Valley, it was found that black diphtheria had set in among the residents and the pioneers had to turn around and make a circular route to the north through Waitsburg, Washington and settle in Idaho near where the Potlach Lumber Company now stands. An eleventh child, Benjamin, was born to the Harder family, while in Idaho.

Due to extreme winter weather conditions, the group settled in Huntsville, Washington, where they were instrumental in building the town's first flour mill in 1880.

Feeling restless once more and partial to the Milton-Freewater area, the Harder family traveled to Dry Creek in 1883. Charles farmed land in the area until his death. A grandson, Harold Harder, now resides in the original Harder home.

Information supplied by HAROLD HARDER

**Page 38 – CHRISTIAN, WILHELMINA HELLBERG
1883**

Christian John Hellberg, a native of Schleswig Holstein, Germany, settled with his brother on the South Fork of the Walla Walla River.

Hellberg worked as a farm hand in Germany until he was 21 years old. He then served in the German Army for 3 years, enlisting in the cavalry. At the end of his military service, he received an honorable discharge and medal for excellent marksmanship.

Arriving in the United States in 1883 from Hamburg, Germany, Hellberg traveled across the United States, working on different farms. He and his brother, Hans, later bought a farm on the Walla Walla River in an area populated by Germans from Schleswig Holstein.

Hellberg married Wilhelmina Eggers, also a native of Schleswig Holstein, July 25, 1889. Wilhelmina worked with Christian to establish their home.

Conditions were abundant for the Hellberg's. They could catch beautiful rainbow trout any time, had cold spring water piped into the house, could find all the firewood they needed and gathered fruit for their health.

The couple donated land for the first school to be built in the valley. And the teachers often received their room and board from the Hellberg's.

In 1908, Christian sold his home on the Walla Walla River and tried wheat farming, moving to the Hudson Bay area. The first 3 years were difficult, with the farm producing no crops because of drought.

Construction of the Burlingame irrigation ditch gave Hellberg the opportunity to irrigate part of his land. He paid \$75 per acre for water rights, or double what he had paid for the land. The irrigation improved the crops and Hellberg was able to pay off his last debts 2 years before his death in 1938. His wife died in 1940.

The Hellberg's are survived by their children; Otto J. Hellberg in Lowden, Ada F. Hellberg, in Stateline, Mrs. Emma K. McKee in Longview, WA, and Mrs. Cristine W. Mau of Portland.

One girl, Margaret, and two boys, William and Christian, died in infancy and are buried in the Bowlus Cemetery.

Alvina W. Hellberg died in 1949.

**Page 39 – JOHN, ELIZABETH McEWEN
1885**

**Page 39 – HENRY B., AND IDA L. PERKINS
1885**

**Page 39 – THE JESSE YORK FAMILY
1885**

**Page 39 – JAMES, BERTHA HARRIS
1886**

**Page 39 – CHARLES F., MARGARET SCHWALD
1886**

Charles and Margaret Schwald emigrated from Germany in 1883 but did not meet each other until they had arrived in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, which was a sort of information and dispersal area for many of the German immigrants.

Mr. Schwald went to North Dakota to homestead and worked on a horse-breaking ranch but did not stay long as he said the country was too flat and too cold. He then went to the Willamette Valley and it was too rainy. He arrived in Walla Walla in 1886 and worked on the wall around the Penitentiary. After much correspondence he coaxed Margaret Kronenberg (she was afraid of Indians!) to come from Wisconsin and they were married in Walla Walla in 1887.

From 1892 to 1910 Mr. Schwald peddled fruit and produce in Pendleton with team and wagon. It was an all-day trip – he sold his load the following day, and would start home in the evening, sleeping in the wagon-bed, as the team knew the way home from making two trips a week.

Except for one child, Helen, who died in infancy, all the children finished eight grades at Ferndale School.

William died in 1904 in Spokane, the victim of a typhoid epidemic. Frances, a student nurse at St. Mary's, died during the flu epidemic in 1920. Charley died in 1963 in Walla Walla, shortly after returning to the Valley to retire. Both Pat and Charley served in World War I; Minnie was a clerk in Schmidt's Dept. Store (now the Pastime Club); Anna was bookkeeper for the Walla Walla Creamery and Elsie played the pipe organ in the old Strand Theatre (later the Roxy) in Walla Walla. Mrs. Schwald died in 1926. Mr. Schwald remarried and continued to live on the old home

place (51 years total) until his death in 1942, shortly after he had sold the 100 acres to the Jake Kessler family.

Information provided by MRS. GRADY (ELISE) PHILLIPS

Page 40 - JASPER, LYDIA OLINGER

1888

The name of Olinger is synonymous with lumber in the Milton-Freewater area and much of the credit can be given to Jasper E. Olinger, who came to the Walla Walla River Valley with his father Mr. J. J. Olinger in 1888. The family lived on the old road to Dixie, a short distance out of Walla Walla.

In 1892, the family moved to a ranch about 12 miles out of Milton-Freewater on Linton Mountain Road. Jasper finished his education at Central School and was also a student at the old Columbia College, then a Methodist institution.

On Christmas Day, 1905, J. E. Olinger married the former Lydia Mangold in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.

He went into partnership with his father and brother, Frank, in 1900 and started the J. J. Olinger and Sons lumber concern. Later, the father turned the business over to his sons, and in 1911, Jasper bought out Frank's interest and formed a partnership with T. A. Williams, a one-time Iowa lumberman who came to the local area to organize the old Farmer's Security Bank.

The two businessmen built lumber yards in College Place, Dixie and Umapine and a hardware store in Freewater. The partnership was dissolved in 1932, when Williams took over the Washington outlets of the chain the two had set up, and Olinger took over control of the Oregon lumber establishments.

Olinger's son Gib (Gilbert) and son-in-law Bob Herndon, currently operate the J. E. Olinger Co. in Milton-Freewater.

Civic minded, Olinger was active both locally and in Umatilla County. A long list of achievements is attributed to his efforts while he acted as County Commissioner, from 1949 to 1957.

Lydia died on March 25, 1966 and Jasper passed away on February 26, 1970.

Information supplied by GILBERT OLINGER

Page 40 - LAWRENCE, CORA HEIDENRICH

1889

Page 40 – OZIAS DANIEL

Ozias Daniel and Charity Ann Owen Daniel traveled by ox-team from Missouri to Oregon Territory in 1859. Ozias was sick most of the time, so his wife Charity drove the oxen frequently.

The couple operated a stage relay station on the Touchet River, a couple of miles up the river from where the town of Touchet is located. The couple gave birth to the first white child born in the Touchet Valley.

Daniel worked at various jobs in and around Walla Walla, moving later to Basket Mountain where he and his son engaged in farming and woodcutting and charcoal burning, hauling it to Walla Walla and selling it to homes and various businesses. One house where Daniel brought the wood still stands between Walla Walla and College Place.

Daniel's son would stop and envy the cavalry drilling north of the Veteran's Hospital, Walla Walla, on the road from Milton.

Cold Springs, a place on the Weston-Elgin Highway, was named by Ozias.

Ozias engaged in several occupations; blacksmithing, woodcutting and carpentry. He tried farming with his sister, Jane Blanchard, but was forced to give it up due to scarcity of water.

Four boys and three girls were born to the Daniel's.

Page 41 – JOHN C. FREMONT EXPEDITION

One of the more famous expeditions, which came through the Milton-Freewater area, was the second westward exploration of John C. Fremont. In 1843, this scientific expedition was approved and financed by the United States Congress for the purpose of providing profile maps of the area lying south of the Columbia River between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific Ocean. Since this area was claimed by both the United States and England, that country which could provide prospective western settlers with detailed information would have a definite advantage.

The expedition consisting of 40 men left St. Louis, Missouri, in May 1843. Second in command was a German immigrant, Charles Preuss, whose profession was that of cartographer (mapmaker). It was an interesting and diversified group made up of Creole (Louisiana), Canadian French, and American mountain men. The guide for the group was the famous mountain man, Christopher "Kit" Carson, who had traveled from his home in Taos, (New) Mexico, to join the expedition. The average age of the group was 30.

The major equipment consisted of 12 mule-drawn cars, a light covered wagon, and a 12-pound brass howitzer(very short form of cannon).

By the third week in October, the party was crossing that section of the Blue Mountains from the Grand Ronde Valley to the Walla Walla. The trail they followed is today called Summerville, Elgin, Tollgate and Lincton Mountain Roads. Although there was a previous established trail, the expedition account mentions getting off it with the results of having to cut their way through heavy timber.

By the 20th of October, the party camped at the headwaters of the Umatilla about where Woodland Forest Camp is now located. In 3 days (October 23) the trail led along one of the long spurs of the mountain, descending gradually toward the plain (old Lincton Mountain Road).

Of interest is Fremont's description of the area. Quoting from his memoirs: "The road along the ridge was excellent and the grass very green and good; the old grass having been burnt off early in the autumn. About 4 o'clock in the afternoon we reached a little bottom on the Walah Walah (Walla Walla River), where we found Mr. Preuss, who yesterday had reached this place and found himself too far in advance of the camp to return. The stream here has just issued from the narrow ravines, which are walled with precipices, in which the rock has a brown and more burnt appearance than above. Our position was in longitude 118 deg. 00 min. 39" and in latitude 45 deg. 53 min. 35". "

Note: Fremont's calculations of the latitude were exact, however, the longitude was incorrect (as were most other earlier explorers) because of the inaccuracies of the chronometers of that time.

The above camp-site was about where the Joe West Bridge is today, furthermore, the memoirs mention crossing the river the next morning, going up the hill and over hilly country covered with good bunch grass. This would have been the road that now leads to the Cockburn Ranch.

From the high point on the hill, the expedition proceeded to the river below, (location of the Milton Nursery), crossed at the Tum-A-Lum area, and taking a more or less direct route to the Whitman Mission, where they traded a lame mule for some potatoes. After an hour rest, they continued on to Fort Walla Walla, located at the mouth of the Walla Walla River, where it joins the Columbia.

There are numerous written accounts of Fremont's passage through what is now the Milton-Freewater area, but a tangible memento of that historic passage can be viewed at the Whitman Museum. The National Park Service has on display a hollow cannon ball that is believed to be one of the three, which were ammunition for the howitzer.

Another reminder of that historic crossing occurred on February 6, 1971, when Scout Troop 324, sponsored by the Milton-Freewater Christian Church, in commemoration of Fremont's expedition, held a dedication ceremony in which they erected a sign which marks Fremont's camp-site on the Walla Walla River. This dedication ceremony was the final step in a series of projects that resulted in members of the troop receiving the highly coveted Historic Trails Award.

When the Fremont Report was published early in 1845, it was so well received that Congress and the President ordered 10,000 extra copies of the first printing. Its wide distribution resulted in expediting the settlement of the entire Pacific Slope.

Bill and Betty Harstad

The last page of this 1971 section of the book has descriptions of wild flowers and plants of the Marie Dorion Park Area, written by FRED ETLING. As they are no longer there the transcriber has not included these pages 43-44. If you are interested in this information, this book is at the Frazier Farmstead Museum.

The last section of the book is a repeat of Early History of the Milton-Freewater Area, which can be read under its own title.