

Letter handwritten in pencil by J. W. Osborn

Independence Org. June 10 – 1917

Dear Neices I must write both of you as I owe each of you a letter. Your letters and money order were received with to each of you. We were both sick last winter with LaGrippe and were quite sick too but we both are well now. We have had such a cold and backward spring that we are behind with everything. Fully one month late and as I worked down and tired, too. Ora has been stopping with us some time but gone where her husband is. He is book keeper at a large cannery on the Columbia River. Their post office is Dahlia, Wash. They are there during the Salmon season. Now as far as our journey across the plains in "49" it seems like you are putting a hard job up to me you certainly keep stirring me up on history and biography. I have not looked into my father's old journal of that trip for so long that I had almost lost interest in it but you, Sue, cannot let me rest. Writing is hard work for me, I am shaky and can write but little.

We got out some three or four hundred miles before he commenced his journal.

Some Buffalo coming close to camp one morning my brother Tom and another man went after them but did not get any of them but this moved my father to commence his journal and he kept it up until we got through. Our family wagon came to a dead lock in Laramie river your grand father on "Old Fox" rode back to the shore got rope fastened to yoke of lead cattle took the rope to other shore hitched a yoke of oxen and several taking hold of the rope all pulling together the wagon moved but it was awfully hard in that rough and rocky stream. Our family wagon also [broke] up in one of the crossing of the Sweetwater but no one was hurt in either one of these incidents. We went on through the old South Pass and to Green River where many were waiting to cross. The river high with melting snow made it dangerous crossing but we got over without injury. While lying at Green River a U. S. Officer and some came along and the Captain told the people they must keep order and stop killing each other as some had done. That officer was Captain Hancock afterwards a noted general. He looked very severe to me, I was afraid of him.

After crossing the Green River we traveled many days without incident passing the Soda Springs and Old Fort Hall the only place where white people lived since we left Fort Laramie. We came to a little river called Raft River. My father took an axe and a hatchet and buried them under a little willow tree. I have not of them since then. We traveled on to Humbolt River and down it to the Sisak and across the desert to Truckee River and crossing it twenty seven times. We were in sight of Donough [Donner] Lake passed the Donagh [Donner] cabins where the company perished in the winter of 1846 and reach that night Sept 7 sister Electa's birthday. Going down the mountain was steep came to one place where we had to yoke the oxen and drive them down through a crevice in the rocks and let the wagons down with ropes. Other places so steep men would fasten a rope to the back end of the wagon and plough through the dust and rocks and hear them calling out hold to the rope, hold to the rope.

The road was rough, the hills steep, the dust was deep, the cattle were giving out, and people discouraged and longing for the end of the journey which was reached Sept. 30 and finally made stopping place at Sacramento corner of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> street although no street there at that time.

You girls will have to wait the rest of it. If I am too tardy you must stir me up again.

Sue and Laura

Farewell J. W. Osborn