

Kittitas

Palmer, Clarence

In 1877 when he was 20 years old, Palmer left Illinois with a pal and came by train by boat up the Missouri river and then by wagon freight to the Black Hills, Dakota. Not liking it there he went to Colorado Springs.

Mule Team

From Colorado Springs he freighted supplies to Leadville/ county and brought back the ore. As the driver he rode the near wheel mule handling the brake with his left hand and driving with the jerk line fastened to the line mule.

The other mules were connected from bridle bit to hames and held in line. There were eight mules to a wagon and eight wagons to a train. Each lead wagon had a trail wagon. The lead wagons were made in Chicago and cost \$300 and the trailers cost \$175.

Mud holes in summer and snow drifts in winter made the hardships for both men and mules.

Railroads

The railroads put the mule trains out of business. Mr. Palmer then decided to go with the railroads. He worked in their construction to California and up to Oregon.

Northern Pacific completed to Pasco

Nelson Bennett had the contract for a big stretch of construction from Ansoworth 00000 now Pasco. Mr. Palmer had a small contract at Union Gap. While working there he bought a small livery stable known as Palmer and McGrath.

In 1886 Mr. Palmer moved to Ellensburg; 0000 the NP came through. There was not much of a celebration. The first unit to be run as a train was the engine, three freight cars and a passenger caboose.

Mr. Palmer started and opened a livery stable, stalling 100 horses in Ellensburg which was another venture to add to the mixed stores of J.B. Fogarty and John A. Shoudy. Sam Cregor had a clothing store and

Charles Read a drug store. Ellensburg was a real town when it turned on the night of July 4, 1889. The stable and horses were saved. During the Boer War Mr. Palmer sold 1,000 horses to England.

At the time of the first railroad strike Mr. Palmer took the passengers by stage over the Shushuskin Canyon from Ellensburg to Yakima. He went around by the Wenas, a trip of 50 miles, taking 11 hours with time off to feed at the Stage Station run by George Pressey whose women folks were good cooks. Again progress in the form of motor cars blocked Mr. Palmer's business...1936.

Pearne, Thomas.

Cattle and wild horses by the thousands grazed on the Yakima reservation 75 years ago. One of the leading stockmen was Thomas Pearne, an Indian living in Medicine valley. His cattle were among the finest in the country and he had horses imported from the Blue Grass regions of Kentucky.

As early as 1855 when the Indians of the northwest were intent on exterminating the whites, Thomas Pearne's ambition was to become a stockman. Like Kamiakin he began the irrigation of his farm by diverting the water of a creek into a deep furrow which he plowed through the valley. He was ridiculed for thinking he could irrigate his farm, but the fertile acres still farmed by his won, prove his judgment was good.

Thomas Pearne attended the Great Council at Walla Walla in 1855 and never lifted a hand against the whites. He always said that Governor Stevens was a great man. When the Yakima reservation was laid out, he was chosen to assist Governor Stevens in placing the boundary. He was educated at Ft Vancouver in the Hudson's Bay school and married the daughter of a white man named McKay, probably an officer who had taken an Indian wife. The McKays were in California during the gold rush and for a long time led a nomadic life. Mrs. McKay came to the Simcoe reservation where she, her children and her grandchildren received instruction at the school established by Rev. Wilbur and his wife. Her son was butthier at the fort. "Abe Lincoln," Indian interpreter at Ft Simcoe, grew up in the McKay home.

One historian says: (Note in margin, not true)-Father Wilbur tamed the oxen and tamed the Indian boys to drive them. The whipping post at the fort was not a symbol of brutality, it was simply a necessary part of the training of the savage. Several trades were taught and the erected a sawmill and gristmill.

Pearne, Thomas-2-

Several dearly settlers often came to grind wheat.

Logs brought from the foot-hills were sawed into lumber, piled dried, then taken to the Indian farms where good buildings were put up by Indian carpenters. One of these carpenters was Charles Olney, oldest son of Philip Olney, a whiteman who was Indian agent at Warm Springs in the 50s. He homesteaded in the Stanton and died there a year later. Among his descendants are worthy and progressive members of the communities where they reside.

Charles Olney helped build the Methodist church at White Swan for the Indians and many of the farm buildings on the reservation. A monument to his skill is the barn which has stood for nearly three quarters of a century on the Pearne ranch in Medicine valley. The timbers are of heavy pine, mortised and tenoned, fastened with wooden pins. In the strongest wind these timbers never creak.

Like the white settlers Indians built their homes on the reservation along streams or beside springs where the more progressive among them raised gardens and crops. White Swan Indians brought ditches from Toppenish Creek. Thomas Pearne had so much influence over the Indians he was looked upon as a counselor. "They don't always take my advice" he declared, "but I always tell them just what they should do." Forty or fifty would go to his home at a time to tell their troubles. When there was a controversy over the Indian fishing grounds at Celilo he went to Washington, D.C. at his own expense to confer with the "great white chief." who at that time was President McKinley. He accepted an invitation to dine with the President and attend church.

Indians were permitted to sell their land if they had a deed. The town of Toppenish on the reservation was founded on land owned by Mrs. Sweazy. A land company bought it and platted a townsite which was enlarged when Mrs. Lillie platted 80 acres and sold the lots.

Bearne, Thomas-3-

In the western part of the reservation lies the beautiful Medicine valley, dotted with well kept ranches. Down its center flows Medicine creek, its banks lined with willows.

Into this valley in the early seventies Thomas Bearne an Indian preacher brought his dusky bride.

Beside the fireplace where a pleasant woodfire crackles an aged Indian woman sits and dreams of her yesterdays on the reservation.

Though years have dimmed her eyesight, she beholds with an inner vision pictures on memory's wall.

Warming her hands besides the cheering blaze, Mrs. Bearne smiled reminiscently. "Our first little cabin of two rooms had a big fireplace and I've had one ever since." She lives with her son on the site of her first home, in a modern house set in a frame of shrubbery and flowers on a well kept lawn.

Alfalfa fields slope away from corrals where cattle are being fattened, while several hundred head feed in the valley pastures.

Thomas Bearne was a full-blooded Klickitat Indian. His parents died when he was a child and the Hudson's Bay company people looked after him. He was sent to Ft Simcoe where, under the influence of Father Wilbur, as the Indians and early settlers called him, he was converted and joined the Methodist church. He was one of the only two Indians who were graduated into the full order of the ministry on this coast. For over 41 years he was active in Christian work among the Yakima tribes and Lapwai Mission and the Indians on the Klamath reservation.

Five generations of Bearnes have lived in the valley and it is still said of them that they are the best people on the reservation.

Mrs. Bearne was placed on the reservation after the treaty. He was one of the honor scholars at Ft Simcoe and was placed in charge of the younger girls.

"She taught us how to cook and sew. Mrs. Wilbur was kind to us but when we dropped stitches in our knitting and she made us pull it all out, we sometimes cried. She taught us to knit quilts and braid straw for our hats. Senews fro the backs of horses and cows were used for thread." The wormen learned to card wool and spin it. They made dies of sumac and oregon grape and made the shawls and blankets bright and pretty. They taught us to cook and keep house."

With a far away look in her eyes, Mrs. Pearne described the preparation of food and the storing of it for winter. Hobbling to another room she returned with four small cloth bags. The contents revealed staple articles of food which she grew in the valley in great abundance, recalling the great rendezvous in the "beautiful E-yak-i-ma valley so entertainingly described by Alexander Ross in 1810. Half a century later A.J. Splawn visited the same spot and found the scene being enacted.

Mrs. Pearne's little herd contained bitter root, housh, sauwicht and huckleberries. All dried and ready for use. She displayed the pestle which was used for pounding the dried camps and other roots into flour. A bowl was made for this purpose from the roots of a big oak, chiseled and smoothed.

Salmon ran up the Ahtanum and Simcoe and the men made traps of willows, damming the streams so that spearing was easy. Up the canyons young braves stalked deer and elk, proud of their skill with bows and arrows.

White hunters are no less vain and glorious today, coming down through the canyons bearing one of the anteloped tribe.

Thomas Pearne's cattle roamed the length of Medicine valley where his descendants now pasture their herds. Like Father Wilbur he could do several things and do them well.

He sleeps in the little cemetery not far from the church on the hill. Soon his aged wife will follow him on the sunset trail. Now she dreams beside the fire of the long ago when she came to Medicine valley, a bride. March 27, 1936.

Pitt, "Addie

I came to Washington territory in 1881 from Ness county, Kansas. I came with forty covered wagons that took the trail bound for Eastern Washington.

"We wanted a change. Things were eaten up by grasshoppers in Kansas and droughts. People took to the trail the same as today, and for the same reasons.

A relative had previously come out west, so we followed.

My father was a Methodist minister, not a "settler." In those days a Methodist minister might as well have ~~been~~ been termed a nomad. He was the second Methodist minister in the Yakima valley. He came to Yakima city in 1882, then two years later he went to Prineville, Ore., then to "Aldron, Ore. I went to Spokane college, returning in 1887.

My husband and I homesteaded in Priest Rapids valley in 1892. I left Whitman and came to Yakima in 1891, went to Priest Rapids valley the next year. My mother and her second husband, Mr. Brice, homesteaded at White Bluffs. They made their house of drift wood. It is standing yet.

We tried hard to develop Priest Rapids valley but gave it up. They are still trying.

Being a minister's daughter I learned early in life that the minister, his wife and the church represent that part of the country's civilization which founds schools, churches and cultural influences in a new country.

I was born in Pocahontas county, Iowa of Irish and Penn. Dutch descent and was married July 4, 1888. Children: Mrs. Edith Matthews, 4 children, Prineville, Ore.; Walter Pitt, Los Angeles, 1 child; Ralph Pitt, Los Angeles. I don't vote.

The railroad had just reached Cheney when we came along in our covered wagons. We forded the Yakima at first. A bridge was

Pitt, Addie--2-

built at Union Gap in 1884, the year the railroad came.

The school I attended stands there at Old Town today.

I remember the floods of 1894, severe winter of 1888-89 when cattle froze and starved.

(Interviewer's comments: She has retained a remarkable disposition and sense of humor and tolerance for the shortcomings of others. She has been a widow 15 years, dependant on her own efforts but seems resourceful---July 18, 1936.

Supplementary report:

The Priest rapids valley had about everything in its favor and people came from as far away as Texas and filed on land. There was a vast stretch of sagebrush, the Columbia river and little besides except promises and climate.

Around 1861, or before that, about the time of the Colville gold strike, there was a trail through the valley.

The store which some people call Hudson's Bay Trading Post I always heard spoken of as the government store. It is on the east side of the river. There was a government fort at Colville and goods had to be freighted there from The Dalles. When we moved to the valley, George Williams was living in the store and ran the hand ferry at that point. There is a ferry there yet.

(Note: The White's Pass and White Bluffs road will cross at this point which will call for a bridge after these 150 years or so.)

Everything had to be freighted from Yakima. A few years later boats came up the river as far as Priest Rapids during high water.

In the early days the valley steam pumping plants were used. The fuel was driftwood. A number of desert claims were proved by the use of these plants. Now the electric pumps furnish 400 gallons of water a minute.

Pitt, Addie-- 3

The Black Rock company owned the first ditch and charged \$10.80 per acre for the first allotment. If another was necessary, \$6.40 was added to the acre. Note. Try to farm under these conditions and its very little different now.

We located up the river quite a distance, built a little shack of lumber hauled 80 miles from a sawmill at the head of the "enas" We moved there in December and I never saw a white woman until the following May.

In 1894 is remembered all up and down the Columbia as the year of the big flood. We saw our trees, alfalfa and everygrowing thing swept away, even the earth was taken along. We saved the shack by anchoring it to the foundation.

The government allowed us to select another location and we choose what is now Barrett island.

In 1894 the Great Northern finished construction work up the river and all the false trestles etc. came down the river with the flood. We salvaged 13,500 feet of lumber. We built a raft and floated our homestead shack down to the island.

A number of settlers put up buildings from these timbers. My mother and stepfather and Mr. and Mrs. Bryce built their house and it still stands at Oldtown. The schoolhouse on their land was built of these timbers. Nails and windows represent the actual cash spent for that building.

My sister and husband, Mr. and Mrs. Griffith, built their house of logs of driftwood. The house stands on the river road north from White Bluffs. A man named Piper homesteaded the place.

In order to have a school, Mrs. Craig taught her children in her house three months. The first schoolhouse was on the Kemp place in the homestead shack, a very weak structure on the very brink of the Columbia

Pitt, Addie--4-

Mary Young was the teacher and when the room got unbearably hot she moved school down the bank where it was cool. Beuna Haves taught the second school and Anna Jungst was the third teacher.

The first Postoffice was in the Craig home and was called Julia for their youngest daughter. Helson's started a store.

A bachelor named Ferrill had a homestead at Juniper Springs, now the Knaub ranch. He took this land around 1880 and planted fruit when he planted the peach pits, some one remarked, "You don't ever expect to see any fruit from those, do you?" Later he hauled wagonloads to Yakima over the old road, a little more than a trail through the sage.

We did all our buying at Yakima and got our mail there at first. We took a week for the round trip, throwing our blankets down on the sand for a bed. There were only a few families in the 50-mile stretch up and down the river. Twice a year, Fourth of July and Christmas we met for social functions. On those occasions we brought out the best of everything we had, linen, silver, China our best cooking and tried to forget for awhile the hardships of pioneering.

Note: Unlike most of the state of Washington the settlement of this remarkable valley has been hampered and still is, although there are greater possibilities here than anywhere in the state.

Plaude, John:

I came to Washington state in 1894 from Latvia. I was a baker and a man who worked for me came over to this country and he wrote for me to come over as I could do better. My wife and I came over on a freight and passenger steamer. We were four weeks on the way and came straight to Yakima from Graybeck, Canada.

North Yakima was a village then. On the west side there were only three residences. The depot was just one room. I bought 11 acres and I bought my house.

I was a baker from 1894 to 1898. I opened the City Cafeteria and ran it two years, then was chef for Li by McNeil and Co. 12 years.

I was born May 19, 1864 in Latvia. When I came to this country one of the first things I did was to take out papers. In 1900 I became a citizen. I was married twice, 1893 and 1903.

Children: Walter Plaude, Yakima.

(Interviewer's note: Failing health but mentally bright. He and his wife own their home. They have worked hard, had lots of trouble owing to loss of two children whose illness was very expensive. They gave the other son a very fine education and he cannot find employment)

April 8, 1936.

Porter, Martha;

I came to the territory of Washington early, was born in the Wenas valley. My grandfather was James Longmire, leader of the emigrant train of the fall 1853 which crossed Yakima valley bound for Puget Sound. Eighteen years later my parents, who were married at Yelm Prairie, Thurston co., came to the Yakima valley.

I was born September 5, 1876. Nationality: German and English. Eight children, 1 lives at Seattle, the rest in the Yakima valley.

Supplementary to Porter history:

A monument erected by the Yakima Pioneer association marks the spot where the emigrant train halted in the Wenas valley in 1853.

This train was led by James Longmire and the monument is on land subsequently acquired by David Longmire, his son and is still in possession of the Longmire family, five generations having lived in Washington, four of them in the Yakima valley.

David was a boy of 9 when the family crossed the plains. His daughter, Mrs. E.C. Porter recalls many incidents related by her father and grandparents.

James Longmire settled at Yelm Prairie, Thurston Co. where his family grew up. David Longmire and Lizzie Pollard were married there in 1869 and moved to Yakima valley in 1869, where they and their descendants have taken a prominent part in the development of the valley.

Martha Longmire was born in the little log house on the ranch in the Wenas, grew up in pioneer surroundings, happy and contented.

Like nearly all of the early settlers, the Longmires were stock raisers and their cattle roamed from the Columbia river to the foothills of the Cascades. Martha remembers that she rode horseback up the Nile with her father to salt the cattle and

2-Martha Porter
look after them.

Following the round-up there was a cattle drive over the Snoqualmie pass to Seattle where shipment was made.

The Longmire children rode horseback four miles to school.

One day she and her sister rode as far as the Moxee with their parents who were off to the Dalles to purchase supplies. The girls stopped with friends. Martha remembers that the time seemed long ago but she will never forget the "surprise" their parents brought on their return. Trailing the wagon was an aristocratic vehicle known as the spring wagon, but was always referred to as the "Hack."

"But you should have seen us a few years later," she chuckled. "When father bought us a rubber tired buggy." Once a year the family rode horseback over the pass to Yelm Prairie to visit the Longmire and Pollard grandparents.

Once they drove "the hack," On one of these trips Martha remembers seeing her grandfather thresh his wheat by driving his team round and round over it on the barn floor.

Mr. Longmire went with the posse organized to bring back the Perkins murderers and Martha remembers the hanging. Many a time the children and their mother were hidden in bushes along the creek while the men stood guard.

"We always had good times in the early days" Mrs. Porter said. "There's a little vase I once got on the Christmas tree. We always had a Christmas tree. We had box socials to raise money for the church and entertainment with singing, recitations and dialogues.

"Indians didn't bother us much, we children were rather afraid of them though. One day when my sister and I were alone an Indian stopped at the house. He went outside and sat on a fence, feeling safer than in the house. We didn't understand

3- Martha Porter

him very well. My father had built a new house and the Indian kept pointing to the house and saying "hhick-a-mun" (copy) (how much money?) When we knew he meant to rob us and we were badly frightened.

Finally he went away and when father came and we ran and told him, he laughed and said "He was only trying to find out how much the house cost."

My father took wheat over to the Tjossen mill in Ellensburg to be ϕ ground.

Interviewed , Augusta Eastland, March 26, 1936

Purdin, James H.-

James H. Purdin and his wife, who were married in Linn county, Mo., in 1864, spent their honeymoon crossing the plains in an emigrant train.

With little of worldly goods but rich in the qualities necessary to success in a new country, this courageous couple turned their faces toward the land of opportunity. Listening to fireside tales of the Willamete valley, one picture had become indelibly printed on Purdin's mind, that of the red apples grown there in abundance.

When Lincoln called for volunteers, he enlisted. In 1864 he was discharged because of ill health. He then made his plans to follow the western trail to the land of the red apple.

"A terrific thunderstorm was breaking just as we reached the Platte river. Heavy rains had already swollen the river so the crossing was delayed while the men removed the wagon beds and caulked them. They lashed them together, end to end and floated them across carrying families and goods, the oxen swimming.

By this time the Purdins found that our provisions would not hold out so a trade was struck with a man returning east. He was driving a team of horses and was willing to pay "boot" for the Purdin ox team. With this money enough food was purchased to enable us to reach Boise."

"This incident is an example of the daring spirit of those pioneer days. Instead of waiting for opportunity, they made their own."

Reaching Boise in November with less than a dollar in my pocket, I turned my horses out to seek their living on the range. Boise was a mining town. Bacon was \$1 a pound, flour \$4 a sack, coffee \$1 a pound and everything else in proportion. I needed work and found it in hauling rails from bull-pine at \$0.75 cents a day. The small wage could not keep pace with mounting expenses. My employer, a kind

James H. Purdin-2

Hearted man, befriended us, providing for us through the winter and in the spring our son, Hugh, was born.

In order to pay the debt incurred it was agreed that I rent 15 acres of land from my employer and raise vegetables to supply the miners.

Fortune favored us from the beginning of our venture. During the winter our thoughts turned to the faithful team turned out to wander in the hills. One day in May a band of wild horses passing through the village attracted Mrs. Purdin's attention. She recognized the two horses that had been driven all the way from the Platte. Following each was a lively colt. She called me and we separated the team from the band.

Our garden grew and thrived. Miners' fare that summer included luxuries from the Purdin garden. By the first of October enough gold dust had been weighed out in exchange for vegetables to enable us to settle up with our landlord and leave Boise with \$1,500 of dust in a little buckskin pouches. In October, 1865 we set out for the land of our dreams.

We reached the Willamette and homesteaded but our plans for an orchard never materialized as the rainy weather affected my health, undermined as it was by the hardships of war.

Relinquishing our homestead we drove back up the Columbia, crossed over and settled at Dixie, 12 miles from Walla Walla. We resided there seven years, raising horses and cattle. Yakima valley was the cattleman's paradise in those days and in 1874 we again crossed the Columbia with our four sons, Hugh, Owen, Lloyd and Lee., our own herds and other possessions. We entered the beautiful Wenatchee valley, pre-empting 160 acres released by a man named Perkins, some of the land being under cultivation. Here Wallace

James H. Purdin-3

and Walter were born, February 24, 1879, the first twins born in what is now the Yakima valley. Later came Charles and "alph, making eight sons to grow to manhood and settle and develop the sagebrush wilderness and transform it into the productive and fruitful valley that it is today.

There was a small log-house of two rooms on the farm. Being handy with tools, I made furniture of the black birch growing along the creek. The chair seats were made of strips of rawhide. As long as I lived I kept one of the chairs for myself. The legs were worn down considerably in later years but I always said it was the most comfortable chair in the house. I made a rocker for my wife. Wallace remembers that later he brought her a rocker from The Dalles, 90 miles away.

These freighting trips were made only once a year. If the coffee gave out in the meantime, parched wheat made a fair substitute. This was ground in a mill attached to the wall. The hopper held around two quarts. The mill was also used for grinding flour, ~~corn~~ corn, a variety of white corn with dentless kernels. The cornbread and mash made from this meal are still remembered as the most delicious ever tasted anywhere, before or since. "

Mr. Purdin grew his own tobacco. He burned willow switches over a small tract, worked the ashes into the soil, mixed his seed with sand and sowed it, later thinning out the plants. When it came time to harvest, it was pulled and hung upside down from poles in the shed. After it was cured he made it into "hands. There was a good supply for the oldmeerscham.

Before the railroad came, cattle raising was the most profitable industry. Cattle were driven over the Naches Pass to Seattle and shipped down the coast.

James H. Purdin--4

The Purdin ranch was a stopping place for the stage operating between The Dalles and Ellensburg. Mail was distributed here for the settlers. Later a justice's court~~s~~ was held there when Mr. Purdin was elected justice of the peace.

One of the three commercial orchards grown in the Wenas during those days was on their ranch. When it ~~be~~ came into production they marketed it in Ellensburg and Cle Elum, driving over the old state road and up the Shushuskin canyon.

The Purdin boys and their neighbors played games in the crumbling old stockade on the L.C. Rice adjoining. There was a circular embankment enclosing the space where the sod forts were built, one for each family. The enclosure held the stock.

In 1875 a log schoolhouse was built near the creek between the Longmire and Albert Lots farms. Logs were split for the recitation benches, the logs being wooden pegs. The furniture was manufactured in the same crude way. Among the names in the old school register may be found those of Hugh, Owen and Lloyd Purdin.

The schoolhouse was used for the debating society where many important questions were settled.

Elections were held in the schoolhouse. The most exciting, according to Wallace Purdin's recollection, was the year of the "Cross of Gold" presidential election ushered in by torchlight parades, noisy rallies and much oratory.

Mr. Purdin recalls with amusement the Fourth of July celebrations with their marvelous parades, the display of flags, lemonade stands, patriotic speeches and last, the "plug uglies" clowning through the streets.

Christmas was observed with religious entertainments in the schoolhouse. Thanksgiving, he says, was more revered than it is today.

James H. Purdin 5

"All the lumber used in the State Fair buildings was sawed from logs brought down to the John Cleman's mill. Lloyd Purdin hauled all the lumber.

The road taken by the early Wenas settlers, crossed the ridge to Lower Naches, down past the old Nelson place, over the Nelson bridge; from there the trail crossed the rocky land and sagebrush now covered by Fruitvale orchards. Traveling this road one day with my father, Wallace remembers that one day to see an unusual sight. Yakima City was being moved through the sagebrush from Old Town to the place known as North Yakima until 1917. Business was transacted as usual while the buildings were en route; merchants sold goods over the counter, boarders ate their meals in the hotel, church services were held.

Of the eight Purdin sons who grew up in the valley, the three eldest have gone to join the long train of pioneers who have crossed the last river. Lee is in California, the others still reside on the land they helped reclaim, Walter in the Naches, Charles at Tieton, Ralph at Selah while Wallace resides near Sawyer on the old Purdy Flint place. He married Edith Watson, March 10, 1901. Their youngest daughter, Dorothea, resides with them.

Irene married Grover Wilson and lives in Spokane. James Harold, named for his grandfather, married Lenore Bice. Their son, James Harold, belongs to the fourth generation of Purdins to live in the Yakima valley.

Augusta Eastland

March 14, 1936.

(informant evidently Wallace Purdin)