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Crossing the plains in '49

G. W. Thissell



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G. W. Thissell was born April 25, 1829, in Morgan county, Ohio, where he was a carriage-maker, until he eventually left for California in 1849 at the age of 20. He writes: "March 16, 1849, in company with Jerry Sheppard, Henry Seamon, William and Ambrose Palmer, I went on board the steamer Zanesville, at McConnelsville, Ohio, bound for California. The steamer's destination was St. Louis, Missouri. The hand-shaking, the parting words, "Write often," God bless you," and we were off for California. The steamer was crowded with men wild with excitement. The gold fever ran high."

"It is no light undertaking to prepare a story adequately describing the trip across the plains with an ox team, from the Missouri River to the gold fields of California, in '49-'50.

"No pen can describe the trials, the hardships, and privations. One must make the trip to realize the difficulties and dangers encountered. If there are errors, they are such as necessarily occur in writing a story that covers so vast an extent of territory, after so long a period of time.

"This story includes the experiences of many pioneers beside that of the writer, who himself crossed the plains twice with an ox team. It is filled with thrilling adventures and hairbreadth escapes from death, as well as many amusing incidents."

Contents A Chapter from My Diary The Last Hen How Felix Killed His Deer The Only Coffin The Man that Ate the Horse The Cat That Crossed the Plains in 1850 The Duel The Buffalo Chase An Indian Hunt The Snow-storm The Inhuman Wretches Up the Platte A Sabbath on the Plains Lost in the Sand-hills Only One Storm Fort Laramie Independence Rock Summit of the Rocky Mountains Echo Canyon The Man That Sold His Wife Brown and the Buffalo The Mammoth Train A Supper on the Plains The Robbers

A Fight with the Indians Rattlesnake Canyon The Stolen Boy Salt Lake City The Wedding The Good Indians The Man That Ate the Bacon Rind Gravelly Ford The Hopper Train The Long Swim The First Gold Dust The Big Indian The Lone Grave The Desert How Hobson Rode the Buffalo Carson River or Ragtown The Pioneer Train of '49 Summit of the Sierras A Pathetic Story The Lone Wagon The Boys Who Had the Gold Fever The Burnt Wagon The Camp-fire Only Three Meals

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