

Pioneer Migration:  
The Diary of Mary Alice Shutes  
Part I

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edited by **Glenda Riley**

*In 1862 the Shutes family left their relatives and friends in Wyandott County, Ohio to set out for a new home in Carroll County, Iowa. Their small caravan included a covered wagon, a surrey, and several "horse-backers." Eight people were in the party: G. Hiram, his second wife Ann, his brother Chuck, and the Shutes' children—Charles, Mary Alice, Howard, Archie, and "the baby."*

*Thirteen-year-old Mary Alice was assigned the task of keeping a diary of the month-long journey. Many years later she noted that, "as many of my hours were in the saddle Mother Ann kept the diary in the surrey and made notes as we traveled and she and myself wrote it up evenings so much credit belongs to Ann as she wrote down the things as they happened."*

*Mary Alice was born on August 11, 1849 in Marion County, Ohio. She and her brother Charles were the children of G. Hiram and Nancy J. McElvy Shutes. After Nancy's death, Hiram married Ann P. Drown in 1855, a union which produced several more children. Some years after the migration to Iowa Mary Alice married Enos Mallory (exact date unknown). The Mallorys in turn migrated several more times until they finally settled in Grants Pass, Oregon.*

*It was in Oregon that the old travel diary was eventually brought out and recopied by Mary Alice's daughter, Julia Mallory Curtis. During the late 1920s and early 1930s the two women worked together to produce as accurate a copy as possible. According to Mary Alice, "it is as close to the original as is possible to get. The writing is badly faded and the paper brittle but being the writer, aged thirteen at the time, and a*

*member of the party much of the happenings are totally engraved on my memory. Where reading was difficult or small parts missing they were easily filled in."*

*Mary Alice Shutes Mallory died on March 3, 1939 at age 89 and is buried in Grants Pass. Her diary is the only surviving family record. Unfortunately, an account written by her father in the 1860s or 1870s was lost or unaccountably destroyed, and the family Bible was destroyed after it accidentally got water-soaked.*

*The diary is presented here through the generous cooperation of LeRoy L. Shutes, son of Archie and nephew of Mary Alice. He and his wife Mabel covered various parts of the original wagon route by automobile several times, and in 1953 followed Mary Alice's trail all the way to Grants Pass, Oregon. With his permission the diary has been altered slightly in terms of punctuation, grammar, and spelling to facilitate reading, but for the most part the manuscript is Mary Alice's story as she wrote it.*

Illustrations accompanying the diary text are by Scherrie Goetsch of the Iowa State Historical Department, Division of Historical Museum and Archives.

Editor's note: The Mary Alice Shutes diary is the first in a series of diaries written by Iowa pioneer women, and edited by Glenda Riley, that will be published in upcoming issues of the *Annals of Iowa*. Part II of the Shutes diary will appear in the spring 1977 issue; the diary of Kitturah Penton Belknap (describing her trip to Iowa from Ohio in 1839, her years in Iowa, and preparations and departure for Oregon in 1848) will appear in the summer 1977 issue; and the diary of Mary St. John (describing daily life in Iowa, 1858) will appear in the fall 1977 issue.

Sunday, May 4,—Mother Ann and Pa asked me to make a daily Diary of our migration from Marsailles, Wyandott County, Ohio to Jasper Township, Carroll County, Ioway for our family so I am starting today. This is our last Sunday at Morrell's Tavern where we live and also the last Sunday in Ohio as well. This is close to Marsailles in Wyandott County



where Pa had his shoe-maker's business. He had his cobbler's business and a small store in town itself, but after knowing we were moving to Ioway for keeps he sold out his store goods and moved his shoe-maker's equipment to the Tavern building which had been our home for several years.

Now the covered wagon is partly loaded for the trip—for a migration to Carroll County, Ioway, Pa estimated it to be a good eight hundred miles and forty days away when our wheels do start bending the grass towards the west. Gerathmil or G. Hiram as he is called is our Pa. Pa had been out to Iowa last fall and bought some land which had all log buildings; there are quite a few settlers not so far away. Mother Ann told us, "we will start early Wednesday morning at the time set by your Pa. And you know your Pa—early means before daylight and plenty early at that."

Pa took Archie, Howard and me in the surrey last night down to say goodbye to grandmother Elsie Shutes at La Rue. Charles rode his horse but Pa would not let me ride mine. He said, "you will get plenty of being straddle of a horse before we get to the end of the journey just ahead of us."

Grandmother Elsie smiled and hugged us, kissed us too, but she did not seem like herself. She did not seem very happy we were going so far away, but we told her we would be back to see her in a year or so. Two of grandmother's daughter's were there, Aunt Louisa and Aunt Lydia. Another daughter, Nancy Ann, and a son, William, did not show up. Uncle William is enlisting in the Union Army and just got himself married.

Finally we are on our way home and back to the Tavern to get the job done of finishing loading the covered wagon. There is lots to do. Now here we are—done all we can. Going to bed to try to sleep. See you in the morning.

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Monday, May 5,—This will be a day of hustle and bustle. We are up with the sun or maybe a bit earlier. Uncle Charley Hatch was here real early for breakfast with the family. He is helping Pa get things fastened to the covered wagon; had to fix it inside so Mother Ann and the baby can sleep inside nights as the baby is only a few months old. Ann and the baby will spend most of their traveling time in the new surrey brought for that particular purpose and sometimes Ann can rest by a nap in the covered wagon.

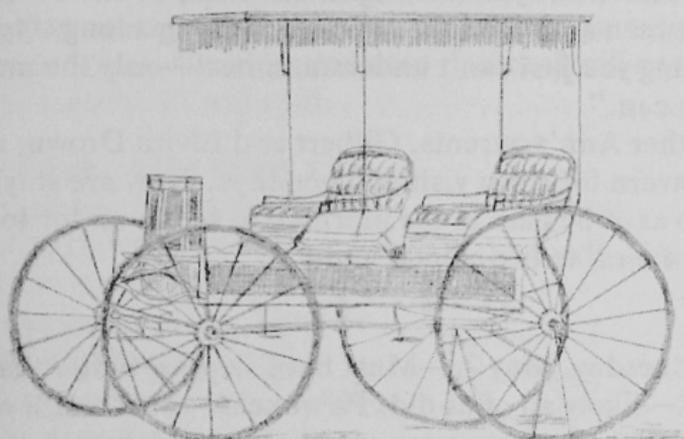
Uncle Charley is going all the way to Ioway with us. He said "so we would have another good man along and besides I want to see the new country across the Mississippi where the game is free for the shooting, trapping or just catching it."

We are finding it a little rough to have to give away a lot of things we have owned since we can remember; things valuable to ourselves only, mostly sentimental value. The younger kids were having the same trouble. They shed tears over some things they hate to part with but no one pays much attention to them for after all they are just babies yet. These kids always seem to be in the way of the older folks but we know they are trying to be helpfull.

The day has ended so to bed to try to sleep.

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Tuesday, May 6,—Up before the sun on our last day here before the big trip and the last day in this County. It seems there is so much to do and it not easy to tell what to do first. Can't see why we can't start today but Pa said "before daylight in the morning." All the neighborhood kids are here it seems. They promised to be here in the morning to see us off on our trip to Ioway.



We said goodbye so many times to so many people. Some we must have said goodbye several times. Finally supper is over. Mother Ann chased us to bed early but we can't get to sleep.

I slipped around where I could watch the older folks. They seemed to be trying to make the best of something they wished would not happen. A last word with a longtime friend talking how "we will come out to Ioway to see you and the new country." The ones about to leave for Ioway talked about when they would be back for a visit to Ohio. Charles said "most of them know this will never happen."

After everyone was gone we heard Pa say, "some we won't see again." They seemed to sort of feel a bit sad that this was the way it would be but knew there was nothing they could do about it. Us younger ones just feel a bit different with a good lark ahead of us but it is a bit disappointing for those left behind. They said that they wanted to go to the Indian Country too. Of course we have built up a lot of make-believe about a country we have never seen but we know we have a lot to learn. Just cannot admit it to those folks left behind—not just now anyway.

Pa had slipped away for a last visit with his mother at La Rue. I slipped out and asked Mother Ann why he went when

he had been there just last night. She said, "well, a last minute visit between a mother and son who is going a long way off is something you just can't understand now—only the mother and son can."

Mother Ann's parents, Gilbert and Elvira Drown, are here at the tavern for a last visit and goodbye. They are staying all night so as to be here in the morning to see us off for Ioway. So now we are off to bed. Good night.

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Wednesday, May 7,—Must have slept better than I thought—likely all of us did. Pa woke us up. It is still very dark. There's not even a ray of light in the eastern sky and the stars are still out. Uncle Charley, who likes to be called Chuck or Unkey, had a good campfire going to furnish more light than the lanterns. Their light seems so puny. It seems like all the neighborhood kids are here but it is so dark away from the fire you just can't tell who is who. The fire makes shadows that look funny, some short, some long or fat, but without the fire we could not see very much of the goings-on.

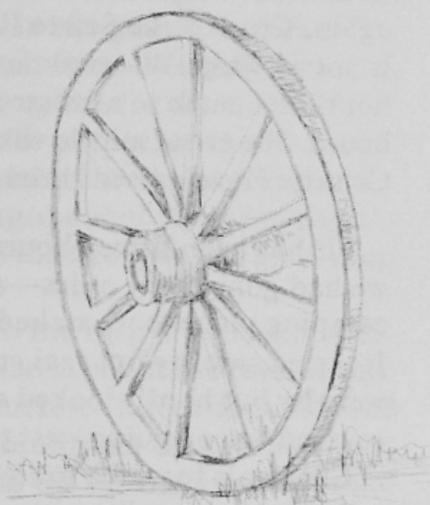
Breakfast has been cooked and passed out by the neighbors with the help of the older kids. It is a final display and effort of friendship and also to save us women who are leaving for Ioway a last cooking chore.

The younger kids know something unusual is going on but don't understand it like the older folks do. The older folks seem to understand some things we younger ones don't grasp. Some of the older ones seem to welcome the solitude away from the fire. They have said their goodbyes and are just waiting.

We are all loaded. Uncle Charley is on the covered wagon seat with Archie. Howard was put in the quilts in the back of the wagon. The excitement so far has not gotten him wide awake. Charles seems restless getting on and off his horse. I am dressed like Charles and sit straddled on my horse. I am to ride straddle like Cow Girls are supposed to out west in the Indian Country. Besides it is the only safe way as no one wants to fall off their horse and be hurt.

Pa decided to take the cows along but said "don't know how long they can take it." They are tied one on each side of the end gate. Uncle Charley predicted that they will never make it as their hoofs will split.

Pa is finally in the surrey with Ann but seems he does not like to give the final order to start although he is more anxious than anyone else to get going. Then he gives a wave of his hand and a shout, "let's get moveing." Uncle Chuck slapped the lines on the horses' backs, the team starts to move, and the wheels began their turning that we know will go on for many days and miles. Pa estimated eight hundred miles and forty days from where we are to our new home in Ioway. Rainey weather and bad roads were to be expected.



We horse-backers had to punch the cows to get them started. Cow Boy Charles was the last on his horse. The surrey is the end one. Our trip to the west and the Indian Country has begun. We are on our way to Ioway and the folks left behind go back to their homes. We pass the Church and roll out into the country. There is enough light now to see the outlines of trees and buildings and the fields can be made out.

The cows are not convinced they can't stop any time but the jerk of their chains on the end gate reminds them to keep moveing. They will try it again. They never learn.

Here we are stopping for our first "cow rest" as we called it. In half an hour we are on our way. Passed through Kenton several hours later. No one paid any attention to us. Covered wagons are too common to attract attention any more. One lone dog barked at the cows but when Charles cracked his whip at them they ran away. Charles had his whip to keep the

cows moveing. He plans on carrying it all the way to Ioway.

We are out of town and stopped for annother "cow rest." Uncle Charley built a small fire "to warm the coffee" he said. Had a bite to eat. Then crossed the Scioto River and noticed it flowed south. Moveing again through just plain country. Is the middle of the afternoon. Annother "cow rest" then on our way again. Crossed the Scioto River again. It is flowing north and is not very big. Watered the stock and rested a little. Half an hour later came to a crossroad. Kept moveing a couple of hours. We are at a little village, Holden. Are in Auglazie County. Have passed through Hardin County.

It has been fifteen hours since we started and Pa figured we had gone thirty miles—a good first day. Found a good camping place so we staked out the stock and cooked supper. It tasted smokey but real good anyway. A team and wagon went by but hardly looked our way as we are just annother covered wagon going west to the Indian Country.

Charles is to watch tonight until midnight. The rest of us rolled into our quilts with me under the covered wagon. Charles woke Unkie Charley after midnight. When he crawled in his quilts I did not wake up—more tired than I thought. So our first camp night.

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Thursday, May 8,—Just started to get daylight. Everyone but Charles and me are ready to go. Horses are even saddled and the cows fastened to the tailgate. Charles and me ate alone and rather fast as we felt guilty for not wakeing up. So here we go getting on our nags. Uncle Charley hollered, "get on your Charger Charles." He liked to joke. Pa said, "the lake shore for tonight but we cannot rush the cows as they might go lame." We passed through Waynsfield. Crossed several cricks and watered the stock at one. Here we are crossing a railroad track. Now annother town, Uniopolis, and on into a bigger town, Wapakonota. At the railroad tracks the cows balked. They had paid no attention to the first tracks—asleep maybe. We are on the regular Stage Coach route from Lake

Erie to the big Reservoir. Pa called it St. Mary's Lake. Folks hardly looked our way.

Here we are in Molton. "Cow rest." Pa said, "we are doing all right." Next town is St. Mary's. At a crick the stock had their blow as Uncle Chet calls it. We moved on north of the lake to a rather rutted road. The lake looks big to Charles and me as we never saw so much water in one puddle before. We came to a camping place not far from the lakeshore. Grass very scarce so Pa got some hay someplace for the stock. He staked them out. We cooked and ate supper and had a nice campfire. We walked down to the lakeshore, all except Ann and the kids. The men folks arranged about turns for night watch to watch the stock and keep the fire going as a warning for intruders to keep away.

Forgot to mention that Pa, with the help of a clockmaker in Marion, had put together a device to count the revolutions of one of the rear wheels of the surrey. It goes to 9,999 and starts over again so with a correct multiplier that Pa had figured out this was good enough to tell the distance we traveled each day.

Uncle Charley tried to tease Pa about his contraption. He said, "why not put one on each horse?" He knew it was a good idea. Pa just grinned and said nothing. With this Pa can tell how many miles covered and estimate how much we have to go yet. The instrument's real name is an odometer. Mother Ann said, "it will reduce the monotony of the day's travel and Pa will watch it a lot. It might go wrong sometimes but Pa will soon find out and get it working again."

Pa talked to a man about the cows balking at the railroad tracks. He advised tying a cover over their eyes when we come to a railroad so they can't see the rails and won't cause any trouble.

So we are haveing our second night camping on our way to Ioway.

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Friday, May 9,—Real early breakfast and we are on our

way. Daylight is just haveing its way in the east. Soon we are in the town, Celina, at the northwest corner of the lake. At Pa's orders we all stopped in front of a store which already had their lamps lit ready for earley customers. No one else seemed to have shown up yet. Pa and Uncle Chet talked a few minutes. Hiram went into the store. Chet is crawling back on the wagon seat. "I want to get through town before it gets crowded. Besides the cows might get scared," he said. So away we go, all but the surrey with Pa, Ann and the baby. Their horse is tethered to a hitching post in front of the store. No one let us younger folks in on what the secret was from the store for us or as to what Pa was doing in the store.

Uncle Charley said, "we will soon be out of Mercer County then to the State line into Indiana so we will soon be out of Ohio." Soon we are out of town. The road along the river bank looks like a canal. The river has been dredged and straightened. It is the Wabash River we are told. Traveled a couple of hours. Wondered what had happened to the surrey and Pa.

Then here they come and went by us like they did not know us. But we soon found out the secret reason for the burst of speed of the horse and surrey. We came to a small crick and on the other side was the surrey. A campfire was going and Ann had dinner ready to eat. It was "cow rest" time anyway. Pa had bought some nice fresh ham at the store for a treat for all of us. It was realy a fine treat and real good eating besides.

Then Pa told us, "this will be the last stop in Ohio. Indiana is just ahead but Ioway is still a long way ahead." Our wheels are soon turning toward the west again. The Wabash River is on our left. Not very long untill a marker which said Ohio on one side and on the other side the Indiana State Line.

We passed the sign. Charley remarked, "one state behind us." The cows had made it into Indiana with us. We are in Jay county. Looks the same as Ohio to us. Soon at New Corydon then crossed the river into Jay City. The state stage route turns

south to Portland but Pa had his plans to go to Marion over in Grant County, Indiana.

We are going on west. The roads are not so good. After a while we reached Limberlost Crick which was a good place for a "cow rest." Pa decided to make this our first camping night in Indiana. The sun is setting red. Uncle Charley predicted "no rain for annother day." Pa and Charles greased the wagon wheels.

Seems the cows have been contrary all day. Unckie had to have his joke. "The cows have not become pioneer-minded yet but will later on" said the man of Joking Wisdom. I am watching camp tonight with Charles "to shorten the night" he said.

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Saturday, May 10,—We are up early. Breakfast and on our way. The next ten miles we are covering dirt roads. There is a prediction of no rain. Rain would be bad for us and we would be in a mess.

After a couple of hours we crossed a north-south road and came to a crick at West Liberty where we watered the stock and had something to eat. Watered the stock extra as it is warm. Our rest was short and we are on our way again. Crossed several small cricks by fording them. Had annother "cow rest" at a crossroad then kept moveing to Metamora. What a relief. We have come to much better roades. We made twenty miles in nine hours from Pa's counter. Its after dinner time so we are stopping at Solomon river for a real "cow rest" and cooked dinner. Pa seems in better spirits. Here we go again. In two hours or so we forded annother stream. Pa was determined to go within about ten miles of Marion. Uncle Chuck finally pulled the team off to the side of the road and talked to Pa. It was decided not to push the cows further. We had made more miles than the first day. A sign by the road said "MARION 7 MILES."

Now Pa tells us, "after he started accross on the not-so-good roads he wished he had gone by way of Portland and good roads even if it was a day's more travel. But we won't rush again unless it is almost to the end of our journey to Ioway."

Uncle Chuck told Charles that he did not see how the cows took it. One of them has about quit giving milk and it is only the forth day so there is some discussion if walking the cows out of milk is happening. Tomorrow is Sunday so we are going on into Marion in the morning then camp untill the next day.

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Sunday, May 11,—Had breakfast and are takeing it easy for the first morning since we started for Ioway. We are told we will drive right through Marion but the Misissinwa River came first. We turned off into a camping ground and prepared for a day of rest with no traveling. Mother Ann and me rested up by washing up things that needed it. Then Charles and me drove the surrey into town to see what annother Marion that was not in Ohio looks like. Not so much we thought so we drove back to camp to take it easy. Nice day and warm.

Pa had an oppotunity to sell one of the cows, the pokeist one, who was hardly giving any milk anyway. It was swapped for cash as Pa put it. After dinner Pa and Ann went some place in the surrey and the baby is left with me. The boys are really haveing a big time by themselves. My worry is to be sure they don't go over by the river but they took orders fine so not so bad a day after all.

Pa mailed some letters to his mother Elsie and in some way he found out who the postmaster was to see if there was any



letter for him from his mother. There was a letter that he was looking for. It had come by train. Now we know the real reason that he wanted to come this way and was so determined to come through Marion. Charles and me wondered if Hiram had other Post Offices he would be interested in for the same reason but we did not enquire.

From Pa's counter he figured we had gone a bit over one hundred and forty miles since we left Marsailles. Uncle Charley guessed at one hundred and twenty-five miles behind us. So ends our first Sunday on the trip to Ioway.

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Monday, May 12,—We are up early and had breakfast. Weather very nice. Just warm enough. So here we go. Off early and only with one cow to graze at the end of a rope. We are trying something different to see if it will work. We let the cow graze on the way with either Charles or me on one end of the rope and the cow on the other end. We don't like the idea.

Last night at the campfire we found out that Hiram and Charley had been over this route last fall from Marsailles to Marion, Indiana. That made it easier and faster as we knew where to camp and so on. Us young folks were not in on this but just as well as now we are all new to it and on our own so the country is new to us.

Drove quite a while. A road sign to the left said "Kokoma-west, Tipton-straight ahead." We kept going straight. We stopped at a little crick for a "cow rest" then moved on to another crick and through a little town called Simms. We went on into Howard County then a little further to a crick where we stopped for a rest and noon meal. On the way again and stopped at a T-road Chuck called it. Tracks to the west did not look as if they were well-travelled. On quite aways we came to a good-sized stream where there was a house or two and a small store. We crossed the river to the south bank and had a "cow rest" which was due any way.

Uncle Chuck took my horse and he and Charles went over to the closest house and talked to a man. The crick is Wild Cat Crick. We found out that the road to Kokomo accross the



country was not too good if it rained as it is not graded very well so we are going on south to Tipton. We are now along a stream and a good place to camp. Our sixth camp. Hiram had planned on going through Kokomo so after things quieted down and Charles and me were watching the campfire, Pa and Charley were discussing how much they were off the planned route through Kokomo.

They took the saddle horses and went some place to get fixed up for morning. When they returned Pa stated, "we will go on west to Frankfort and there pick up the planned route." So we are to get up early as if we had not been doing that. So now for the quilts.

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Tuesday, May 13,—We are up early as planned and as usual it is rather dark. Tied the cow back on the end gate. The idea of having a cow on one end of a rope and Charles or me on the other end did not work. When Bossy did not want to move a jerk on the rope was not enough to prove to Bossy who was boss. It took the team on the wagon to prove to Bossy who was boss.

After a few hours we crossed a crick. Kept moving a couple of hours then stopped for an "eat rest." Sky was almost clear. No rain today. What a relief.

Crossed another crick. Rested and watered the stock. On we go and came to a river which was not so big. Pa decided to camp for the night. Frankfort was a short way ahead. Hiram wanted to go through town real early in the morning. Chuck's idea too. So we are rolling in our quilts. See you in the morning.

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Wednesday, May 14,—A week ago today we started from Marsailles for Ioway. So now we are starting our second week of camping on the way to the Indian Country out in Ioway. We have sort of gotten on to the hang of a camper's life.

Pa said, "we are sure lucky so far. No rain and no trouble worth worrying about." So off we go through the town of Frankfort which is quite a town. Were a number of roads that crossed the one we were on towards the west. Soon a "cow rest" then on our way again. We came to another north-south road. The north one was marked "Lafayette."

There is another immigrant in a covered wagon stopped over by the side of the road. Is talking to a man on horseback. Charley went over to talk to him. The man on horseback said, "the country up north is very hilly so it will be much easier to cross the Wabash River and Wabash-Erie Canal by going to the ferry at Attica or Williamsport. There is a railroad bridge at Attica but I'm not sure if the wagon bridge started a couple of years ago is completed enough so it can be used at all."

But he knew there was a good wagon bridge at Covington further south over the Wabash River and Wabash-Erie Canal. Also he knew the roads towards Covington were real good and used a lot. So we will go west. Don't know what the other man in the covered wagon did. We did not see him go.

Went through Linden. There was a railroad track and Bossy just ignored it or decided it was harmless. Came to a stream and decided it would be the place for our eighth camp. Tomorrow we will have to decide where to cross the Wabash River. So into the quilts for tonight. Pa will have to decide.

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Thursday, May 15,—We are off early. Everything working fine. After some hours we drove through New Richmond. We took a short rest then went on again to a junction at Pleasant Hill. We are swinging to the northwest. After some time we are taking a “rest stop” as well as an “eat stop.” We are at Newton and it was decided to go the road to the south-west toward Covington and the Wabash River bridge. Of course you had to pay toll on the ferries.

It is mid-afternoon. We have crossed the Wabash River which was quite a stream or looked so to Charles and me. The Canal was not as big as we thought it would be. So on we go. One more “cow rest” and the Illinois State line is in front of us. Is a good watering place and a fair-looking camp spot so it was decided that our last camp in Indiana would be here so we could look over into Illinois. Illinois will be the last state we will go all the way across. It has taken us seven days to cross Indiana and no wet weather so far but we thought we would get it several times.

Pa was sure from his counter that we have covered some two hundred and seventy five miles. Might be a little less but anyway an average of close to thirty miles a day. Does not seem possible with cows to slow you down but here we are. So far the roads have been dry and only a few bad ones and not so bad at that. However the men think the roads will get not-so-good especially in another hundred miles or so. Can't see why worrying so far ahead.

But good news anyway. Pa decided to sell our last cow. She is getting pokier all the time and the continual walking does not seem to be good for her. She is almost dry so it was decided tomorrow as we passed Danville over in Illinois that the first reasonable offer will be good enough. Uncle Charley said, “we sure have been pushing our luck and something will go bust if we don't watch out.” So in the quilts for us. Early in the morning we will be in Illinois. Night Charles—have a good till-midnight watch.

Friday, May 16,—Here we are at breakfast. Its over and we are ready to be on our way. We are used to getting up early. It is warming up.

Here we go into Illinois in a couple of hours or so. Stopped at a farm house not so far out on the north side of Danville. Pa talked to a man after we stopped at a farm house about selling the cow. The farmer thought he knew someone who might be interested to buy and was close. He had talked about buying another cow. He and Pa went over to see this man. They took Charles and my horse. So to pass the time away we fixed up something to eat. It was not very long untill Pa and two men came rideing up. They left with the cow not ours anymore and Pa said, "he had the cash and me the cow so we just traded or wapped."

Charles and me felt so so good we could have hollered Amen but we knew better. Now there would be no cow torturing us like it was the past three hundred miles. Uncle Chet had to have his joke and fun so he said, "when we get out in the Indian Country out in Ioway we will have Buffalo milk."

Pa decided it was time to eat before we had gone very far but we talked him into waiting untill we came to the Vermillion River not so far ahead. The mile indicator says we are seven miles into Illinois. It might be a contraption as Uncle Chuck calls it but it helps to give a good idea on miles traveled and a guess as to how far to go which is important too. We crossed the Vermillion River and camped for a little late dinner. Rested longer than usual and now we are off again.

The wagon don't look right with no cows on the tailgate. No one feels bad though as they were a hinderance in place of help and gave no milk. Crossed a good-sized crick and met a man going into town. Charles asked him "what branch or river that was." He said, "Vermillion." Must be another branch. We moved on for some time. Had a rest then for quite a spell. Can't keep from looking at the end gate. No cows.

Crossed a crick. Sign at the corner with an arrow pointing

south and said "CONKEYS STORE." So we go that way. Pa had been told about this place close to Salt Fork River. Here we are. Quite a few houses, a general store with C. H. CONKEY on it, a blacksmith shop, and a shelter with a fireplace. It is a good place to camp. It was built for covered wagons and their families like us going west. Our tenth camp. First one in Illinois and best one yet.

There are two other covered wagon families ahead of us. One which has two wagons and four children are going all the way to the Mississippi River. They have a brother there and a place to move right into. This family is in no hurry and expect to take ten days. We hope to make the Mississippi, cross at either Muscatine or Davenport, and make it in close to half that time. The other wagon had one child besides the parents. The boy is about nine years old.

After supper was over and we thought we were ready for the night it began to thunder and lightning flashed across the sky. Was noisy. The Store Keep came out and told us we better move in under the shelter of the big shed roof as it might get real wet. So we are doing that but one man is staying in each wagon to watch the teams.

There was more noise than rain but it acted like one of those all night rains or drizzles so we are trying to go to sleep but it is rather noisy.

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Saturday, May 17,—Daylight. Everything outdoors is wet and a light drizzle is falling. Store Keep came out and advised us to stay another day and night for the roads would not be very good to travel on and a bit rough on the horses. We all decided to stay except the man with one boy. He decided to pull out on his own about noon. The drizzle had stopped and he had good huskey horses too. The weather is clearing and the sun is shineing some but not doing much as far as drying the roads goes. There is a warm south wind. Charley said, "let the wind blow and the sun have a chance. Ioway will be waiting for us."

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The Store Keep, guess it was Mr. McConkey, is giving the men directions and a bit of advice about the roads toward St. Joseph and on to Urbana City where he says the town has built a shelter for emigrants like us. There is shelter for covered wagons or whatever you have and also for the horses. Pa told the Store Keep, "guess our cows would not have been welcome here."

The Store Keep said, "they went one better for folks—not only a shelter but a fireplace for cooking arrangements." The shelter has removable sides except the south side which is open. He admitted that this was where he got the idea that "a good shelter would be good business."

The family of three are pulling out on their own. It is just after noon. As to where they were going they did not say. Then Dr. Wilkins found out, likely from the Store Keep, that we were from Marion County, Ohio and he made himself known to Pa. He said, "I was born in Marion County and practiced there before coming out to the frontier" as he called it. Pa was as pleased as if he had found a long-lost brother.

The next day was Sunday which was our usual day of rest but we had all ready had a day of rest so it was decided to pull out early in the morning if the weather was fit. Our joking Uncle Chuck had to say, "our rabbit foot must still be working for us for this was our only rain in ten days." The two-wagon family decided to go early same as we did and take it easy. Pa and Ann stocked up at the store. Conkey is well-paid for the use of his shelter but it is worth it to us.

Conkey, guess it was, said, "being Sunday I will be over early and we will have a short Christian service here in the shelter." Forgot to mention there is a Post Office here as well as a blacksmith shop. Pa had the team's shoes looked after and everything greased. Here we go into our quilts.

\* \* \*

Sunday, May 18,—We are up early. Nothing new. Just finished breakfast. The Store Keep, true to his word, showed up and asked for a few minutes. He read a few Bible verses,

said a short prayer, and wished us all a safe journey and that all would be well with us in our new home. Nice idea. Made you feel real good.

The family with the two wagons and four children were ready to leave the same time we were. Really enjoyed visiting with them as it was someone to talk to besides yourselves at the campfire. The older boy said, "we are from New Jersey." So they came from a long way off. Our trip is not so big. Uncle Chuck remarked, "Conkey knows what he is doing. He is planting the seed for future customers." Maybe the Store Keep knows folks better than we so.

Nothing happened all the way to St. Joseph. Short rest but not a cow rest. Had our noon meal. It was a hot one which beat cold ones. Stopped at a stream at St. Joseph and watered the horses. Pa decided to go on for a couple of hours and then camp for the night. Roads a bit soft. Must have had more rain here then at Conkey Town.

When we stopped the man with the two wagons and bigger horses said, "we will see you tomorrow." Pa figured we were in for the night. The man said, "we are going into the shelter in town at Urbana City." Pa figured we were a couple of hours from Urbana City so here we are camped. Is cloudy with a chilly wind.

\* \* \*

Monday, May 19,—Pa woke up early. It was only starting to get daylight. A cold wind made it chilly and the sky looked like it could rain any time so it was decided we better get started and get to the shelter if we can before it rains and have breakfast there. So we are on our way. The clouds seem to be getting blacker with some thunder and lightning.

Uncle Charley told Pa to get the kids in the surrey and he and Ann to get going fast to try and get into the dry at the shelter. So away they go on the trot. Uncle Chet changed things as he was sure we were in for plenty of wet. He tied Nancy to the end gate and told me to get into the wagon with him. He wrapped a canvas arround most of Charles and his nag to keep them partially dry. Charles would have to trail

behind on his "Charger" to see that everything was coming all right. It was steady and wet. Did not mind it but really enjoyed it. Guess because I am in the dry. Now Charles can be a real cowboy with no play. He seems to be getting a kick out of it. He waves his hand after a fashion.

Must have been over an hour before we arrived where the surrey was in the dry. Uncle Chet drove the team right into the horse shed but it was not deep enough for the wagon. Charles came in beside the team then untied my nag Nancy (named after my mother) and put her under cover. He unhitched the team and backed the wagon out of the way. It is still raining quite hard so with the canvas for a cover Charles and me made for the big shelter.

So here we are in the dry. Let it rain. A warm fire in the cookplace. The two wagon folks ribbed Pa for not coming on in last night. He told them he thought the horses needed a rest. Now we remember we had no breakfast so next in order.

Sure plenty of floor space for blankets and quilts. May not be so soft but is dry. After our eats the men talked it over and decided to stay here a couple of days if there was no complaint. They never expected any complaint. This would give the roads time to dry a bit and some rest for the team. Oh yes, no cows is good. Mother Ann and me will do some washing. The rain barrels are full. It is good to stop traveling for a change and just to be in the dry.

Pa went to the store nearby and got some eggs so we could have bacon and eggs. Everyone has their own bacon but eggs are not very good travelers in a covered wagon despite careful packing. Covered wagons have no springs and our surrey has hardly enough room for the riders so no eggs are wanted or welcome.

In the middle of the afternoon when the clouds were breaking into a sprinkle now and then, a covered wagon pulled up at the shelter. There were two children, both good-sized but looked rather bedraggled. They were dry but cold so we hustled them all into the shelter. Our men took care of their team and told them to get up by the fire and help themselves to the hot bacon and eggs and coffee for those

who wanted it. They did not hesitate very long. They knew we meant it and we enjoyed seeing them enjoy it.

Pa said the man's name was Jensen. Its getting dark so the lanterns are lit and between the lanterns and the cookfire it is real cozy. Travelers in covered wagons do not often get such nice treatment. It really helps to forget the rough ones that you expect and generally get.

The rain has stopped and the sky is clear. We are tired of watching it rain and the warm fire makes you sleepy. The man with the two wagons predicted, "going to be a spell of nice weather." He did not say why he thought so. You can notice the days are getting longer and it does not stay chilly in the morning. Anyway everyone is rolling in their bedding. No one cares to sleep in their covered wagon tonight.



\* \* \*

Tuesday, May 20,—When we awoke it was daylight. The sun was shining. We all ate breakfast together. The mother of the two children said, "you just don't know how we felt to see a warm fire and hot things to eat right from you folks." Mother Ann commented, "this could happen to any of us on a trip like this and someone could do the same thing for us."

The rain barrels are full so we are washing things that need it then hanging them out to dry in the sun and wind. Won't be many places like this to help the weary traveler who is the pioneer. The men bought food for the horses. No grass anymore as there are too many imigrants on the main routes going west.

After dinner the Jensen family pulled out for the west leaving such a nice dry place and a warm shelter. Mr. Jensen told Pa his reason. He said, "I can't get to north-central Illinois by staying here. The relatives are expecting us up along the big river." We wished them luck. And they are on their way.

Someone in authority from Urbana City came to see us all. Wanted to know how we all were doing, if everyone was well, and said that a Doctor was handy if anyone wanted one. No one seemed to need any pills or castor oil as everyone has some of their own remedies but its nice to be asked. It might be they were covered wagon folks not long ago or as Charley said, "They may be really checking for sanitary reasons as well as just for our health." Nice idea anyway.

Charles and me just fooled around walking. There is lots of rideing straddle still ahead of us. Pa done some tinkering with his counter. Also had a blacksmith look over the horses' feet. Uncle Chet had to have his joke. He likes to rib Pa about his contraption so suggested haveing a bell sound every-so-often on miles. Pa just did not hear him. Charles and me are with Pa and his counter. In fact, Uncle Chet's jokes sometime are getting stale and rusty.

We watched the fire later than usual. Hiram said, "we'll start early in the morning but not too early. Let the sun do more drying."

\* \* \*

Wednesday, May 21,—Starting our third week on the way to Ioway. Had breakfast. Sun out good. It will be a bright day and warm. No cows so can camp most anywhere now. Pa is converted but don't say so.

The man with the two wagons wants the roads to dry more so will stay annother day. We did not see them just before we left for the west. Sure glad to get going again. Here we go. Rested once then came to the Sangamon River. Crossed into a little hamlet, Mahomet, and went on through town. Stopped for dinner. Gone fourteen miles and here we go again. Crossed

a crick and then another crick into Santa Anna. Good camping place. Gone almost thirty miles. Our fifteenth camp for us. Fixed things for a daylight breakfast.

\* \* \*

Thursday, May 22,—On our way at daylight after our breakfast. Why the rush? The sky is lighting up and on we go further west.

Stopped for a short rest then came to a crick by a grove and watered the horses. A man came along on horseback. He said something about Buckley's Grove at the crick. I expect this is it. Did not spend much time here but got going. The man said, "nice town, LeRoy, not over an hour ahead." We came to the town with a sign of Boots and Shoes that was so faded that I could not read the name.

Went right through town. Rested west of town and had something to eat. Watered the horses at a crick. On we go for an hour then came to a big crick with a bridge. There is a store close by. A man said, "it is Kickapoo crick, named after the Indians that had lived here." Is a Post Office in the store, a blacksmith shop and several houses, and a building on the crick that looks like a mill. Pa got some fresh eggs at the store and some sugar. He thought the price was high but I don't think so. Man at the store told us there had been a survey just on south for a railroad from Danville to the Illinois River. Charles said there was a sign, Delta, but Pa's map has Priceville on it. I give up.

Store man gave some advice how to go and get to Bloomington so we won't have to go through so much town. Bloomington is big—over ten thousand. He said that at a crick a mile south of town close to a man's barn lot you tell him I sent you and he will let you camp in his barn lot off the State Road for the night. Uncle Charley may know his name for he talked to him quite a spell. Here we are and it is working as the man said. Pa got feed from him so we could get an early start in the morning.

Some boys came by on their bareback horses and came over to our wagon. We told them we were on our way to Ioway.

Both said, "never heard of the place." Makeing fun of us of course or maybe they have not been anyplace either.

Must be up before daylight to get through town before people are up. We wish we did not have to go through big towns.

\* \* \*

Friday, May 23,—Up real early to get through town before the teams and folks can bother us small town folks. On the way quite a spell. Now going west. Soon railroad tracks. Some cars had Illinois Central on them. Seems a lot of town but we hurried fast. Did not see too much. Not so many on the street yet. Some looked at the covered wagon, the surrey, and us horse-backers. Likely we were imagining things. We just don't like big towns and neither does Uncle Chet.

Not long untill we came to more railroad tracks and some engines makeing a lot of noise and puffing out black smoke. The team did not seem to mind but our saddle horses did not like their noise and smoke. Uncle Charley hollered, "watch out for the main line." Don't know which one that is but we are across anyway and on west. What a relief to be across the tracks and through the big town. Asked a man for directions to be sure we were on the State River towards Peoria.

Not so far came to a crick so we watered the horses and took a breather as Charles called it. Must have been an hour to another crick which a boy told us was Sugar Crick. Was a blacksmith shop, a building that looked like a mill, and some signs that said "Twin Grove Mills" and "Kings Mills." Looked like there might been a town here. Sign said "Willesboro Post Office." Stopped to eat. Folks are scarce here. An old sign said "Concord" but we were told the town is now Danvers. Anyway we went through it. Not much town. Came to a crick. Was annother Sugar crick so must be sweet water arround here. Came to a marker "Tazwell County" and a building called Way Side Inn.

Good roads. We watered the horses. Is hilley. Stopped for a bite to eat. On we go. Same old landscape for quite a spell then Mackinaw City. Quite a village. Kept going to the

Mackinaw River or a big crick anyway. Crossed at a ford, went north aways, and crossed the same crick twice close together as it is real crooked.

We are camping. This our seventeenth night. Hope to be in Peoria tomorrow night.

\* \* \*

Saturday, May 24,—Up early as usual. Seems we have gotten off our route some way, the one we were supposed to follow. Going east and north to a settlement, New Castle, then turned west to a crick. I believe it was Deer crick. At a north-south road we stopped for a bite to eat and a short rest for the horses. On we go to a town, Groveland, which is an Amish or Mennonite settlement. Seems all the men have whiskers and some have full beards. A man asked if we had any horses to sell. Pa said no but told him we started with two cows and sold them as they were too pokey. Told them we were on our way to Carroll County, Ioway.

We were told about a big Mennonite settlement out in Ioway on the Ioway River in Ioway County. They have thousands of acres and a railroad has just been built through their land to Homestead. The State Road route goes through there and we think we will too. Maybe a lot of whiskers there as here. A lot of nice folks behind the whiskers. We are going through Ioway City for business reasons.



At the store Pa was told it was only two hours or so to the Illinois River. There is a village, Foun du Lac, not far from the south end where the river widens into Lake Peoria. Also

there is a wooden bridge across the river. He said, "better camp for the night on this side of the river." Pa and Ann had planned it that way anyway but did not tell the whiskered folks that.

Pa wants to get a good night's rest before going through the big town. Had special business here. Mother Ann's father had a brother named De Witt Drown who had lived in Peoria many years after he went there in 1839 as Government surveyor. His widow Sarah Drown still lives there and Ann had promised we would see her if we came that way. She lives on third street in the eleven hundred block with her daughter. She knows we are on our way to Iowa.

Arrived at a nice place to camp where arrangements to camp are made and we had to pay. Pa enquired about Aunt Sarah's address and located a man who knew just where it was. He offered to come over to our camp early in the morning and guide them to this address. He would ride with them in the surrey.

I would have charge of the baby and the kids and ride in the covered wagon. Uncle Chuck was to be given instructions how to go after we crossed the bridge and this route would bring us to a place to camp until Pa, Ann, and this man caught up with us. You could tell Uncle Charley was a bit worried but he did not say so. He does not like big towns. Tomorrow will be Sunday which is our day of rest. There is not so much travel anyway on Sunday so should not be many teams out on the streets.

Pa figured by his pedometer that we had made over four hundred miles and a little more. So we hoped we were halfway to Carroll County, Iowa. Had our supper and talked some. Rolling in for the night now. See you in the morning. Our eighteenth camp.

\* \* \*

Sunday, May 25,—Up early with the sun. Had breakfast and were ready to roll when the man who was to serve as guide arrived. He had his directions all on paper with a sketch for Uncle Charley. Besides he explained it and gave him some

advise. Here we go. Over the wooden bridge which has a draw to let boats through on the river. We are across. The surrency went on west and we turned north. Did not seem right to go another way but that was the way it had to be.

Things worked slicker than we expected. Uncle Charley read his directions and it was not long until we went through some of the downtown. Then out into the residence section again and then into the country. Came to a small stream with shade trees. It was a place we were supposed to wait for the surrency. Seems odd without the surrency. There are five of us besides the baby and I am to be the cook for all of us and have it ready to eat close to noon because the man said, "I will be there with them and it will be close to being that time so expect to be on time."

Sure enough I had things about ready for our meal when here they come in the surrency along with another man leading another horse for the good samaritan to ride back home on. Pa wanted to pay them for their good deed but they both said, "we would be ashamed of ourselves if we accepted pay." But they did agree to try my cooking which was a feather in my bonnet I thought. Our good samaritans are soon on their way. We hope we can help someone else in a similar way sometime.

Ann said that Aunt Sarah Drown was enjoying good health and going on seventy years old this fall. Uncle De Witt had been dead five years. Aunt Sarah was real pleased that she had a chance to visit them. She was so worried they would not come this way as they were the first blood relative she had seen on her side for many years. She did not remember how many years.

Well, taking the man's advice we moved on several hours and came to Kickapoo crick. A good camping place so here we are. The Mississippi River will soon be our problem.

END OF PART ONE

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