

Crossroads Chronicle

Journal of the Crossroads Chapter / Oregon-California Trails Association



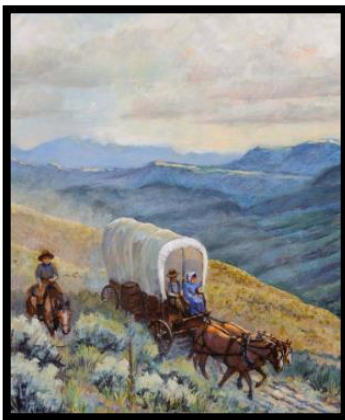
In this Issue

Emigrant Story Introduction	1
Ormus Ephraim Bates	2-3
Friends and Enemies	3-4
Albert Mueller Family	5-6
Utah State History Day	7

Utah Crossroads OCTA Chapter Officers

Steve Allison	President
Connie Bauer	Vice President
Finances	Drew Wanosik
Secretary	Joyce Marsing
Past President	Terry Welch
Chronicle Editor	Steve Allison

WANTED YOUR ANCESTOR'S EMIGRANT STORY

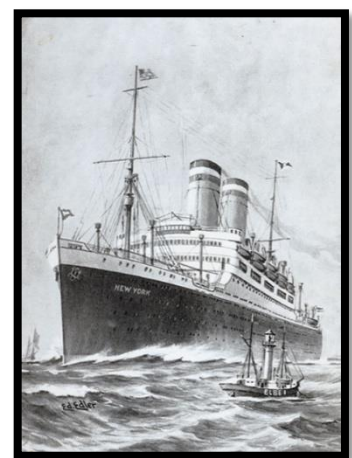


JoAnne Corpany. Morgan County Pioneers; Stewart Library, Weber State University

Emigrant Stories

This year the Crossroads Chronicle is focusing on our member's immigrant family stories.

Many of us have pioneer ancestors who crossed the plains in wagon or handcart companies. Some of us had ancestors who came much later via ship and railroad. All of them braved the elements, wars, and hardships by going west or by coming to America. We want to celebrate those brave souls by telling their stories. Of course, we're still working on our #1 goal of studying, preserving, and enjoying trails.



Ad poster of SS New York; Holland-America Line 1927

We Want to Share Your Ancestor Stories

In this issue of the **Crossroads Chronicle**, we're featuring three Emigrant Stories that serve as examples of how to share a story. We're suggesting that you limit your story to about 1,000 words. It does not have to be perfect. We can do any needed editing in-house. We hope to hear from you soon!

You can call me and tell me your emigrant story over the phone. I'll type it up and send it back to you for any corrections and such. Steve Allison, 801-870-1319

Sharing your Stories Rules:

1. Please limit your story to about 1,000 words.
2. Use Microsoft Word or other word processor.
3. Tell us how you are related to this ancestor.
4. Share your feelings about this person's emigrant journey.
5. Your ancestor does NOT need to be a pioneer who traveled west before the railroad.
6. Please let us know if you have any photos that we could use.
7. Email your story to Steven Allison: sallison9999@gmail.com
8. Please call me with any questions or concerns: **801-870-1319**

Emigrant Story // Ormus Ephraim Bates: Winter Quarters to the Salt Lake Valley

By Connie Kirkman Bauer

It was the first day of summer, June 21, 1851, when Ormus Ephraim Bates (hereafter referred to as Ormus E.) left Winter Quarters, Nebraska, with his large family in the Williams Cummings Company. He brought the large herds of cattle, sheep, and horses that belonged to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which he was charged with bringing safely from Nauvoo to their final destination. In addition to these herds, he also brought along his stock and those of his brother-in-law, Orson Pratt. It was time to head West and join his friends and family in the Salt Lake Valley.



Ormus Ephraim Bates

Before they even reached Winter Quarters, Ormus E.'s sons, Orson Parley (11), and Erin Lafayette (9), "had learned much about horses, sheep, and cattle from their father as well as learning about firearms. Ormus E. had almost an arsenal of weapons and taught the boys how to handle them. The two boys became accurate riflemen" (Memoirs of Ormus A. Bates, unpublished manuscript).

Shortly before leaving Winter Quarters, Ormus E. and his sons were busy gathering up the herds in preparation for heading West. Years later, his grandson, Ormus Aariah Bates, wrote, "In his absence from his herder's cabin, some Indians came and stole everything they could carry off, among which were some clothes. A while later, as they were crossing the plains, a band of warriors appeared one morning after the wagon train had started, probably to beg and size up the company. Their leader, evidently a chief, rode forward to pow-wow. Some of the leaders of the William Cummings Company, including Ormus, stood out a short distance from the camp to size up the braves and find out what they wanted. Ormus now discovered this young chief had on one of his shirts. Without further parley, he stepped up to the Indian with the command: 'Give me my shirt!' Then he seized his leg, jerked him from his pony, tore the shirt from him, cuffed him several times, then, throwing him back on his horse, gave the pony a slap on the hip with, 'Now git, pike way and stay way.' The other braves sat on their ponies and laughed and jeered as their leader was being manhandled, deeming it great sport that their young leader got what was coming to him" (ibid).

Ormus Aariah Bates wrote further, "[Grandfather] was physically well set up, six feet tall, weighed 240 pounds. His complexion was light, eyes grey and piercing, his strength almost prodigious. It was said of him that no man in the county could handle him. Yet he was always affable and pleasantly agreeable when not aroused, but like a lion when attacked."

When the company left Winter Quarters, Orson Parley was then over 15 years old and Erin Lafayette 13. Orson Parley was given an old yaeger, a large bore muzzle-loading rifle. The lock was tied on with a buckskin string and the stock and barrel were tied together with buckskin strings. He was permitted to go out after a buffalo by himself.

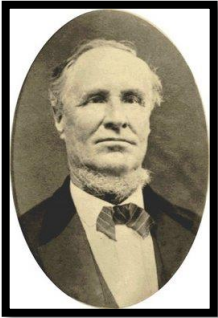
"On this occasion, he sighted a herd about 100 yards from a wash in a ravine. Being out of sight from the herd, he maneuvered around to leeward of the herd, found this small wash and then carefully crawled on all fours until he reached a point something like a hundred yards from the buffalo. He had loaded his gun for buffalo and felt pretty sure of himself now, but with a nervous tingling all through his body.

Carefully lifting his head over the bank, he singled out a large bull. Resting his gun on the bank, he drew a bead low behind the shoulder and fired. The herd stampeded and left the bull struggling on the ground. Orson now, was trembling with excitement, but reloaded the gun, then hastened toward the bull, which now lay still; but to be safe, he cocked the gun and cautiously approached the beast with the gun pointed at its head.



"Here was the younger brother's cause for ridicule. Regardless of the exploit of bringing down the bull,

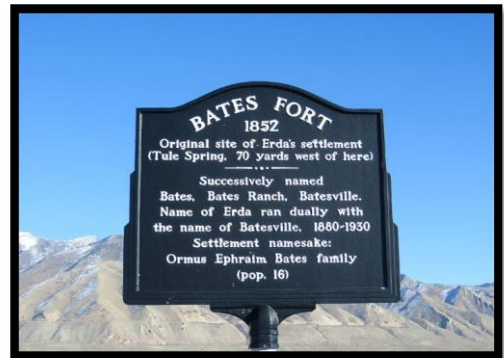
Erin never failed to laugh at Orson's pointing the gun at the head of a buffalo bull which no ordinary rifle bullet could penetrate, owing to the thick matted wool mixed with sand on a buffalo's forehead. But the game was dead, having been shot through the heart and one of but few critters to be bagged during the trip" (ibid).



Ormus Ephraim Bates

"During the trek to the Salt Lake Valley, Ormus was driving in an open carriage ahead of the wagon train one day accompanied by his youngest wife, Matilda. They had gotten perhaps a half mile ahead of the train over a hill, when suddenly two Indians rode down from an ambush upon the couple. Ormus was surprised but not unprepared. As the Indians dropped from their ponies, one on each side of the team, with their hunting knives in hand ready to cut the horses loose from the wagon, Ormus drew two six-shooters he called 'pepper boxes'. Holding them forward, one pointing to the left and the other to the right, and using what little knowledge he had of the Indian tongue, loudly threatened them. As they remounted their ponies to hot-hoof it away, Ormus turned back to the company, saying, 'forearmed is forewarned,' and the train passed unmolested" (FamilySearch Memories from the Ormus E. Bates site).

Ormus E. and his family and herds arrived in the Salt Lake Valley with the William Cummings Company on October 5, 1851. Ormus E. remained in the Salt Lake Valley during the winter of 1851. In the spring of 1852 he took his family and herds westward, around the point of the Oquirrh range of mountains to the group of tule springs and located a tract of land five and one-half miles north of Tooele and two and one-half miles south of the Ezra T. Benson sawmill. Here he built a house and began the construction of a fort near a large spring of pure, clear water. His home was for many years known as "Bates Ranch" and the area was known as Batesville. In 1887 the area name was changed to Erda. Ormus Ephraim Bates is my third great-grandfather on my Mother's side.



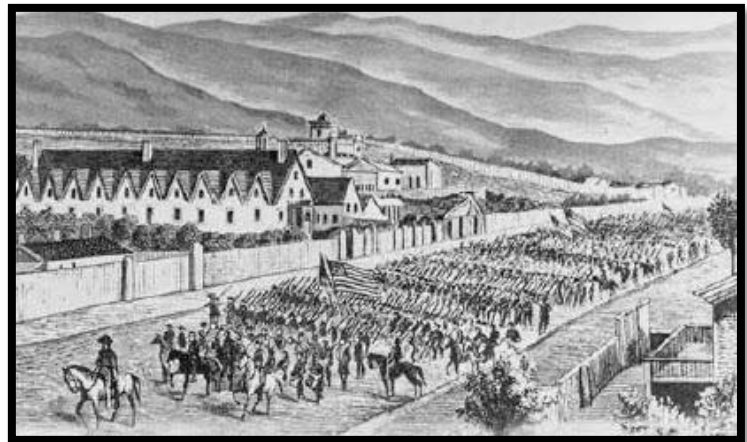
Site of Bates Fort monument, Erda, Utah

Emigrant Story // Friends and Enemies Along the Pioneer Trail

By Terry Welch

The year was 1857. It wasn't like other years of western migration. It began the same—wagons, provisions, resources, and company organizations gathering on the banks of the Missouri River. The event that seemed to trigger the wagons to move seemed to be when someone decided that the soil had warmed sufficiently that there would be enough grass sprouting to sustain the livestock.

It was the Platte River that was the convenient lifeblood of the trail for some five hundred miles until the travelers were forced to leave its banks a few miles upstream from Ft. Caspar. For 300 plus of those miles along the Platte River, there was a northside trail and a southside trail. After leaving the Platte River, the Wyoming topography dictated a single trail for all travelers, regardless of purpose and destination.



Johnston's Army passed through Salt Lake City on June 26, 1858

The first company to head west on the north side of the river left about the 22nd of May. Six weeks later, the last of the eight Mormon companies took their turn at looking west, taking a deep breath and heading out. The Mormons thereby accounted for trail traffic amounting to 156 wagons, 96 handcarts, and about 1,211 people. The second company to leave was the Danish handcart group. The fourth group was a handcart group led by Jesse Martin. The former included ancestors on my mother's side—the latter included paternal ancestors. (During the handcart weight check for the Martin Company, my grandmother was told she could not take a box of china dishes she brought from England. After some "discussion" the matter was resolved when she was given an ultimatum, either the china or her one-year old child could be in the handcart, but not both. She carried the child—the dishes are still in the family today.)



CCA Christensen painting of Handcart Pioneers

Most travelers on the south side of the Platte River began their journey in Independence, St. Joseph, or Ft. Leavenworth. Those going to California or Oregon were seeking their fortune in gold or good land. Then there were rumors all along the river of an approaching United States Army—2,500 strong.

Those travelers in proximity to the Army would have experienced inconvenience in the competition for trail resources. It was reported that the Army on the move could stretch out for as much as seven miles.

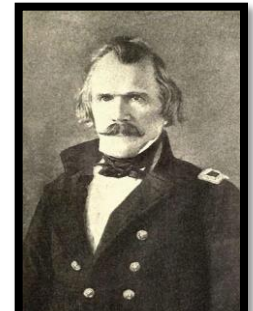
For the Mormons, the very existence of the Army across the river would cause apprehension. After all, they had a common destination. And what about their safety on the trail? When groups paralleled each other, they could see the glint of armament from the south side. One can only imagine the campfire conversations.

Some distance up the Sweetwater from Devil's Gate, long after there was only one trail to be shared by all, there was a great act of kindness provided by the "enemy." An Army ox was injured and left by the roadside. Realizing the destitute condition of the Scandinavians, some enlisted soldiers offered the animal to the Danish handcarters. If they would dress it out, they could keep half. The soldiers left to chase down some lost cattle and never returned to pick up their half of the animal. The handcart people ate it all.

The story of this humanitarian kindness spread widely. A diary indicates that these people had not eaten meat for weeks. The ordinary folks from Denmark had few firearms because the Danish government had imposed restrictions on gun ownership. Those who had firearms did not know how to hunt with them.

I don't know that my ancestors partook of the meat from this animal, but they were witnesses to the act of kindness from those who had no outward reason to be kind.

It was 72 years before my Nielson ancestors and my Welch ancestors closed the relationship circle when my father and mother were married in 1929. I am grateful for all of their trail experiences.



Colonel Albert Sidney Johnston led the Utah Expedition. In the Civil War, he became a high ranking general in the Confederate Army and was killed at the Battle of Shiloh on April 6, 1862.

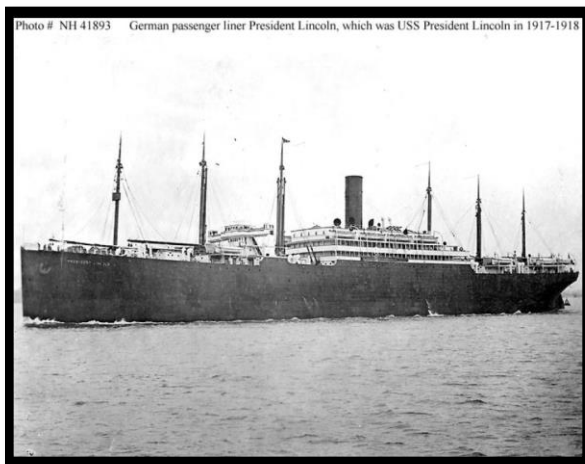
Emigrant Story // The Journey of the Albert Mueller Family

By Steven Allison

Albert Franz Mueller was born in Chemnitz, Germany, two days after Christmas in 1876. On February 1, 1900, he married Anna Minna Leichsenring, and by 1910 they had Kurt, Erich, and Herbert. Albert, Minna, and Kurt joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1911 and soon wanted to emigrate to Utah. Two months later, their little boy Herbert died of pneumonia. (Erich was baptized in 1912). Having little money, they decided that 17-year-old Kurt, who spoke English, would emigrate to the United States first and then work and save money for the rest of them to follow. (He learned English by reading Mark Twain's books in German and English). Traveling by himself, he arrived in New York on February 27, 1914, on the ship President Lincoln¹.



Minna and Albert Mueller about 1900



SS President Lincoln

He moved to Salt Lake City, Utah, where he worked as a clerk and shoe salesman. He saved every penny. Five months later, in 1914, war broke out in Europe. Albert joined the German Army and was attached to a cannon battery. On April 6, 1917, the United States entered The

Great War. Two months later, Kurt enlisted in the U.S. Army and was stationed at Camp Stanley, Texas. Kurt was not sent overseas. The war ended at 11 am, on 11/11/1918.

Herbert came home to find his family starving. Germany suffered greatly from the war reparations they had to pay. Food was scarce because most of it was sent to France and England. The economy was in shambles, and German money was worthless. The Mueller's diet consisted of mostly rutabagas.



Albert Mueller far right. WW1 photo. German Army

¹ USS President Lincoln service history

German steamer President Lincoln of the Hamburg-American Line was built in 1907. It was seized in New York harbor in 1917 for the Navy to use as a troop transport. The German crew sabotaged her and it underwent extensive repairs in Brooklyn, New York before being re-commissioned as the USS President Lincoln. It made 5 successful trips from New York to France transporting 23,000 American troops. On its sixth voyage, it was sunk by U-90 off the coast of France on May 31, 1918. 26 of the 715 people aboard were lost with the ship. Survivors were rescued from lifeboats by destroyers *Warrington* and *Smith*. Captain's history of the USS President Lincoln sinking:

<https://www.navalhistory.org/2018/06/12/the-sinking-of-the-uss-president-lincoln-31-may-1918>

By spring 1921, Albert, Minna, and Erich had enough money (thanks to Kurt) to begin their voyage to America. They made their way to Rotterdam, Netherlands, where they boarded the SS Nordham², of the Holland-America Line. The crew spoke Dutch and English, and according to my Grandmother Minna, most of the emigrants in third class were from war-torn Germany and were sickly and gaunt. Afraid and suspicious, they hunkered down in their cabins where they expected to stay for the entire journey.

On the first day at sea, the ship's bell rang, and a steward knocked on their door, and using sign language, indicated it was time to eat. They followed him upstairs to a large dining room. They were amazed by what they saw. There was a buffet table filled with more food than they had ever seen! All the emigrants just stood there, staring at it. The steward got a plate, put some food on it, and handed it to one of them. He gestured for them to all get some. They rushed forward and filled their pockets and bags with anything they could grab. My Uncle Erich told me he stuffed sausages and butter into his mouth and coat pockets. Then the emigrants ran to their cabins and barricaded themselves to keep anyone from stealing their edible treasures. They stayed locked in their cabins for several days, refusing to open their doors to anyone because they assumed this food was for the entire journey.

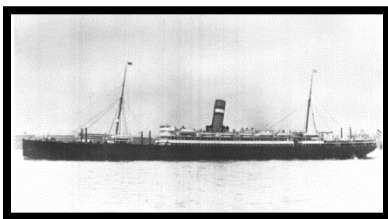
The crew was astounded by this behavior. They feared it would attract rats and lead to disease. All their attempts to communicate with the German emigrants failed until they found a passenger who spoke English and German to help them. He had to convince them, cabin by cabin, that every time the ship's bell rang seven times, which happened four times a day, the dining room would be open for them, and it would be filled with more fresh food. (They would never go hungry again. Even the 1930's depression was nothing like post-WW1 Germany.)

They arrived at New York on September 7, 1921, and settled in Salt Lake City. In October 1930, they adopted my mother when her mother died giving birth to her. In about 1932, they moved to San Diego, California, to start a chicken farm. Grandfather Albert died in 1941. (So did the chickens.) My mom, Frieda Helena Wunderlich Mueller, married Judge William Allison in 1948, and they eventually had five boys. I was the second. At family dinners, my Uncles Erich and Kurt always overate. Erich especially liked greasy foods like butter and sausages. He was a professional wrestler. He died in 1967 of arterial sclerosis. Kurt became a chef and died in 1976 of diabetes.



Erich, Minna, and Kurt at Grand Canyon circa 1964

Seeing the occasional empty food shelves at the store during the recent pandemic reminded me of them. It is good to be prepared for what else may come and be very grateful for what we have.



SS Nordham

² SS Noordam service history

A passenger liner built in 1902 and operated by Holland America Line. In April 1912 the SS Noordam alerted the RMS Titanic to ice early into its ill-fated voyage. She operated during WW1 and hit two mines. It was laid up until the end of the war. After the war it was repaired and sailed the Atlantic until 1927 when it was scrapped.

Utah State History Day 2020

Each year the Utah Division of State History sponsors State History Day. Middle and High School students compete for awards by creating various presentations about history based on a theme. This year’s theme was “Breaking the Barriers in History.” Students produced research papers, exhibit displays, videos, and original one act plays. Crossroads awards cash prizes to those presenters whose creations fit our mission of rails, trails, and Indian tribes. This event was held online because of the Covid-19 crisis. Our Crossroads judges this year were Gar Elison (head judge), Connie Bauer, Penny Allison, and Steve Allison. We gave awards to the follow students. Click the link to see their projects.

Research Paper	Eric Greeding	Breaking the Barriers of Racial Distrust: Navajo Code Talkers were Heroes in World War II	https://ut.nhd.org/..Files/Client10257\ParticipantFiles\154ef0c3-a915-451d-b77f-6439acb25e61\3737337f-e31c-448d-9241-2d4dc3f986b3\ce9547dd-7786-4478-96cd-efe77e4dcee7\editedhistoryfairpaper.pdf
Group Documentary	Jared West, Zev Liang	"The Navajo Code Talkers: The Battle of Iwo Jima"	https://youtu.be/XPS8qUL5Vlo
Individual Exhibit	Isaac Lanham	Navajo Code Talkers: Breaking Communication Barriers	https://ut.nhd.org/..Files/Client10055\ParticipantFiles\a6e6c222-3bc9-4129-9f3e-c1a6e8c6632d\7ea274fb-637e-4a75-bdad-d3b6d710f1ad\d3758ccc-803a-4187-a832-4549ed8015f2\isaacalanham.pdf
One project we gave honorable mention to is this one:			
Individual Performance	Kirsten Shirley	Sacagawea; The woman who broke barriers that changed the world.	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJ_6a4OmmTcfeature=youtu.be

Zev Liang wrote this letter to Gar:

Dear Gar Elison,

I wanted to thank you for awarding my partner and I the Trails Prize for junior group documentaries. The award on its own was exciting, but it was made even better with the fact that a portion of the award included a money prize. (It was \$100 so we each received \$50.) I think that it is a great thing that an award is being given for acknowledging Native Americans. It is very important that their side of the story isn't forgotten, but fewer people than I would hope understand this. The Trails Prize helps encourage people to understand. It puts projects that highlight the Native American side of the story in the spotlight, and encourages projects about Native Americans.

I hope projects highlighting the Native American's side of the story go far this National History Day contest and all future contests.

Thanks again,
Zev Liang

Former Clayton Middle School MELP student, to-be West High School IB student.

For comments, suggests, or to get your family emigrant story in the Chronicle contact Steve Allison sallison9999@gmail.com