

## MY FATHER'S TRIP WEST

By Nina Harbour Champion

Sometime in the late summer of 1874 my father came to California by the new trans-continental railroad.

He and a cousin, Lem Harbour, had been out in Fremont County, Iowa, near Farragut, helping out on the farm of his brother William, who had died that spring of consumption, at 32 or so, and left a widow and two little girls. (She did have a brother near)

"It was the year," my father used to say, "that the grasshoppers ate everything in Kansas."

My father and Lem Harbour, along with another farm hand, came on to California.

The nearest R.R. station was at Shenandoah, Iowa, not far from Omaha.

I don't know anything about the trip itself. I just listened. Those three young fellows had a good time. Pa was always telling about Lem's jokes. (So Beulah got her sense of humor from the Harbours)

Lem and the other young fellow got to gambling and were having too good a time to stop. Lem never did go any further. My father went on to Sacramento.

He stayed out West three or four years, working first on a farm, then on a ferry boat which ran between Sacramento and Marysville. He went with the daughter of a Marysville editor named Mary Glover. (Could his name be in a paper?)

He never did go to San Francisco. After all he was a farm boy, and working his way.

But he did make a wagon trip with somebody going to Idaho where he spent one winter and returned next spring. He said anything would grow in Idaho but it was too lonesome for him----only Nez Perce Indians.,

He saw the Columbia River at the Dalles (or are they separate?) and passed through Modoc Indian country just after the bitterly fought Modoc Indian War and told stories of that war.

On the day of the massacre one settler set his horse at a dead gallop for home and sat so straight that he rode a mile with an arrow through his chest before he fell off.

The Indians knew every hole and cave in the rocks.

Pa used to talk about the wonder of the "lava beds". "Nothing like them".

He said he had seen “enough new country” for any man’s life time.

He paid a poll tax in California to vote in the disputed election of 1876,----Hayes vs. Tilden. No bets were collected on the outcome.

He got malaria so bad that he returned to Iowa---for a visit---and stayed till 1901.

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FOREGOING REPORT: **MY FATHER’S TRIP WEST**

was handwritten by Nina Harbour Champion, April 8/9, 1968. Then it was sent to her son, Dale Harbour Champion, living in San Francisco. He had undoubtedly urged her to write up these histories. Until then she had never done it. She asked him----in a note she sent with these reports---- to type up these remembrances. But after Dale died July 24, 2008, I found all of these items in with family papers. So now I have typed them up so nieces and nephews and anyone else in family can have them in the future.

Typing done by daughter: Ninarose Champion Mayer,  
Altadena, California