

# **NARCISSA OCTOBER 1841**

*by Crystal Calhoun*



## WIELETPOO. OREGON TERRITORY

October 1, 1841

My Dear Jane:

I wrote you a folio sheet, as full as I could write it, to you and Edward, and sent it across the mountains with the almost certain assurance that it would reach you, at least by this time, if not sooner. But it has returned, with all the other letters we sent that way. We have now sent all our spring letters to Vancouver, to go by sea, so that it is doubtful when you will get them, if at all. I mentioned in my letter to you that Mr. Munger had become unbalanced in his mind, and it was thought best for him to return to his friends in the States. He had been prevailed upon to go, and accordingly started, with his wife and one child, to go across the mountains. To them we committed our letters, with the expectation that they would pass through Quincy on their way to Oberlin. They accompanied the H.H.B. Company's party to Fort Hall, and from thence to the place of the American Rendezvous, on Green River, and found that no party had come up from the States, and, from all that they could learn, no one was expected. They accordingly returned to Fort Hall, and concluded that there was no other alternative but to retrace their steps to this country again. Mr. M. was happy in doing so, but his poor wife did it very reluctantly, for her heart was very much set on going to her friends. They came down before the main party, and brought back our letters with them. They had not retraced their steps far before a large party of emigrants and Jesuits arrived from the States. But no one brought any letters from you or Edward; consequently, I was greatly disappointed, and must wait another year before hearing from you again.

The emigrants were twenty-four in number-two families, with small children, from Missouri. This company was much larger when they started. About thirty went another route, to California. The company of Jesuits were twelve in number, consisting of three priests, three novitiates, four laborers, and their pilot, started from St. Louis, one they found on their way. Their pilot is Fitzpatrick, the same person that commanded the party we came with from the States. This company came as far as Fort Hall. They go with the Indians to the Flathead country, or Pend d'Oreille. It is not known where they will settle, but it is reported that they expect to locate themselves somewhere in that region, and in the same language that part of our mission are occupying.

Now we have Catholics on both sides of us, and, we may say, right in our midst, for Mr. Pambrun, while he was alive, failed not to secure one of the principal Indians of this tribe to that religion, and had his family baptized. He acts upon his band, and holds from us many who would be glad to come and hear us. And then, the Indians are acted upon constantly through the servants of the Company, who are all, scarcely without exception, Catholics.

We feel no disposition to retreat from our work, but hope to stand our ground, if such a thing is possible. Fitzpatrick is expected here when he has accomplished his piloting for that company, and is said to return to St. Louis this fall; if so, I hope to send this by him.

# Surviving The Oregon Trail

History - Geography - Survival - Homesteading

I may have mentioned the death of our kind neighbor at Walla Walla, Mr. Pambrun, in my letter this spring; although it was written before it transpired, yet it was not sent until afterwards. Early in May he received an injury from his horse, which caused his death in four days after he was hurt. Husband was with him all the time during his sickness and death. It was a most distressing scene. He was only anxious to die that he might be relieved of pain.

A short time before he was sick he got his mind upon marrying his daughter to one of our mission. I mean our Brother Rogers, who came out with the last reinforcement. This was a great trial to us, for we did not consider her worthy of him, besides being a half breed and a Catholic. She has had no education, except barely to learn to read and write. It was his subject of conversation by day and by night while he was alive, and in his will he appropriated more to her on his account, than to his other children, besides giving him much of his personal property, and willing him a hundred pounds sterling. This was that his wife and children might have a good home. In his mind the bargain was completed, and all the arrangements made, before he died. He was riding out with Brother Rogers when he was hurt. After his death the family was removed to Vancouver. We have since learned that she refused to marry Mr. Rogers, and he has returned the property willed to him. We think he has no reason to regret it on his own account. But the consequence of it all has been it has taken Brother R. out of our mission, and he has gone to settle for himself on the Willamette, or in that region.

We regret the loss very much, as he was a valuable member of our mission. This was not the only reason of his leaving us. He was stationed at Lapwai, with Mr. Spaulding, and could not be contented to remain in that part of the mission after Mr. Smith left.