

HADLEY NEWSLETTER

(Hadley, Headley, Hadlee, Hadly, Hadleigh, etc and their related kin)

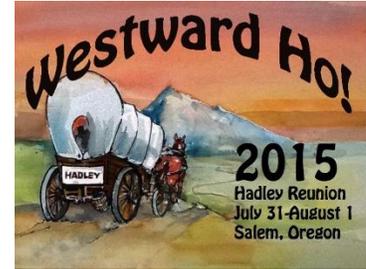
Vol. CXXXII

Feb 2018

Hadleys Following Their Dream on the Oregon

Trail: (Part one of four Parts)

The vast lands west of the Mississippi River were claimed by France at the time the US gained its independence from England in 1775. During the administration of Pres. Thomas Jefferson, James Monroe was sent to France to negotiate a land sale with Napoleon for the sum of fifteen million dollars, of which only about 11 ½ million was actually paid – the remaining 3 ½ million was paid by the cancellation of debts. This land purchase of 828,000 million square miles doubled the US territory and is known as the *Louisiana Purchase*.



Watercolor by Mona Podgurski

At the time of this land purchase, the US consisted of only 24 states and the government had no real understanding of the land they had just purchased. They knew it gave them control of the Port of New Orleans and by extension, the Mississippi River. They also knew they did not want France on their western front.

Lewis and Clark were commissioned to explore this newly acquired land. What they found, for the most part, were friendly Native Americans, some French Fur trading stations, a few Christian missionaries, vast and abundant array of wild animals, seemingly unlimited trees and miles of fertile land, ample fresh water, and landscape of unimaginable rugged beauty.

To take advantage of this new land, coupled with the known lands west of the Continental Divide, the US Congress in 1850 passed the *Donation Land Act*, which was to last for a period of only four years. Just prior to this act, the number of American pioneers out-numbered the British pioneers. This imbalance caused the British to relinquish their territorial land claims and resettled in British Columbia, Canada.

The Donation Land Act offered to any adult American 160 acres of land, provided they lived and effectively used the land for a period of five years. The land transaction took place in Oregon City, in the new Oregon Territory. Another unique feature of this act was that it provided to women the same offer as it did for men and thus, for the first time in US History, gave women the right to own land. As such, a married couple could now jointly own 320 acres of land. This begins the Oregon Trail story of the **Hadleys**.

*The start of next month's saga will mostly be about **Amelia Hadley's** preparation for her 4½ month journey from St. Louis Missouri to Oregon City in the Oregon Territory via the Oregon Trail.*

Hadleys and the American Revolution:

We feel there is a significant need for someone to research and write the history about members of our Hadley family who served in the struggle known as the *American Revolution*.



This revolution was fought about 150 years after our patriarch, George Hadley (ca. 1612-1686), came to the North American shore. This timeframe amounted to roughly six or seven generations for our Hadley family. During the intervening years between George's arrival to North America and the American Revolution, various branches of our Hadley family grew rapidly and spread from the Massachusetts Bay Colony throughout the eastern parts of the North American continent. The challenges in communicating with relatives and family members, who in many instance moved a distance, caused families to become disconnected with each other. Within several generations, members of our Hadley family lost contact with each other and did not even know about the Hadleys who had "moved away." Virtually all were, to some extent, farmers. Those who became full-time fishermen had a small farm too, which was used primarily to feed just their own family. Some members of our family had sizable commercial farms, other became members of the clergy, a few became teachers, some were merchants, and many were builders of both dwellings and ships while others were involved in the lumbering business. Still there were some who learned a specialized trades and our patriarch George was one who had learned the craft of weaving.

At the time of the Revolution, some members of our family retained their allegiance to the Crown and a few moved to Canada, while several sailed back to England. Most stayed where they were in the Colonies. Our Hadley relatives fought in all the seven *French and Indian Wars* and most were skilled hunters as well. For the most part, they were self-dependent and highly committed to the freedom of not having to answer to anyone except their own family and themselves. They were fiercely independent and had learned to care and govern themselves. Most had a strong belief in God, although they were far from what we would call zealous in their religious practices.

The Revolutionary War files on record with www.fold3.com lists 2770 Hadleys, although many of these files are associated with pension applications and payments for a Hadley that provided a service during the Revolution. Some provided service by supplying food to the troops. Others provided transportation or livestock while many did provided direct military service. There are also records detailing a punishment given to **Bishop Hadley** (ca.1750-Aug 1781). Bishop was given 200 lashes on his bare back for sleeping at his post. Most punishments were usually not so severe and we have found no other records of punishment given to any Hadley during the American Revolution. With the extensive collection of records on the Hadleys, there are bound to be a variety of interesting stories yet to be uncovered by anyone wishing to search those records. These records could well form the basis of a Hadley research project from which a book is just waiting to be written. We hope a reader of this email will consider becoming that person.

"The family is one of nature's masterpieces"

George Santayana

James R. Hadley 65 Rondout Harbor, Port Ewen, NY 12466 (845) 339-5363

Email: Jim@HadleyGenealogy.net or Jags@hvc.rr.com

Website: www.HadleyGenealogy.net or www.HadleyGenealogy.com