
We are met to-day to celebrate the hundredth coming of the descendants of Simon Frost, and also to commemorate the centennial of the trip of three sturdy pioneers who left this community in 1849 to trace the plains and climb the mountains in search of gold. As far as I can learn, there were eight in that little band who departed for that long and perilous journey from the home of E. P. Frost in Grubville about the 1st of May 1849. One was Simon Frost, who was born in Ky. in 1789 and came first to Washington Co., Mo., and then to Crawford Co. He was the father of Franklin George and Christopher Frost and Mrs. Robert Wilson. He died on the trip about 10 miles west of Independence and was the only casualty among the group. The others were George Frost, M. E. Atwood, Mrs. Dover, Mrs. Motherhead, Ewing Wiltchek, my Grandfather John Mannion and my father Frank Williams. There may have been others. There were several others who went from Jefferson Co. and surrounding counties. Among them were James A. Wilson of Bethel; James McCullough, Booker and Shetton Richardson, Mr. Dunkworth, Thomas Harbison, father of Dr. W. C. Harbison, who was then 65, and body in the surrounding country 50 years ago. So far as I have ever heard, Shetton Richardson was the only man who made the trip, returned to Jeff Co., and then made the second trip and stayed home.
This is a handwriting sample of a page from a handwritten letter.
of protection from the Indians and providing game to eat. Our group, no doubt, was joined along the way by others who were on a like mission. The letter mentions that they passed many on the way who were carrying their packs on their backs and were begging their way. Perhaps those who were traveling by wagon fell in together and formed a kind of caravan and at night as was the custom of the trade groups, formed a circle with the wagons as a means of protection from the wild beasts and the Indians. Their day's drive was likely divided into two parts, an early start in the morning and a drive of 5 or 6 miles, then a stop at noon for food and drink and then the afternoon drive of about the same distance. It took them 6 men and 7 days to make the journey, and while it is not known just what route they took they would have almost directly west had to travel a distance of at least 2000 miles to reach the Sacramento Valley in Cal. There were many hardships and dangers and much sickness along the way but only the one death in this group.

Thomas HARBISON who went about the same time but not with this band, died of yellow fever after reaching Cal. That dread disease was raging at that time and took its toll from among those crossing the plains as well as throughout the entire country. In St. Louis about 1 out of a population of 20,000 died of the terrible malady.
I have no information of how Mr. Fouts' letter was transmitted or how long it was on the way. The rush of thousands to Cal. made necessary a quicker transit of the mail. To meet the situation the Pony Express was organized which carried mail from St. Joseph, Mo. to San Francisco, Cal., a distance of about 1800 miles. The distance was covered in 8 days. There were 80 riders constantly in the saddle, 40 going each way at the same time. The mail was carried in relays, each rider making 40 or 57 miles and then transferring the mail immediately to another. At the end of this line delivered to the next who at the end of his line delivered it to the next who at the end of his line delivered it to the next who at the end of his line delivered it to the next who at the end of his line delivered it to the next. When the Pacific Telegraph was completed and began sending messages the Pony Express was abandoned.

At the writing of this letter it was stated that Mr. Fouts had been sent to Sacramento to stay in winter quarters where the price was cheap compared to that at the mines.
that at the mine. Here is a sample of the prices at the mine, for $1.00 a pound flour 75¢, potatoes $1.00 a pound, can meat 60¢ per pound and hams 30¢ a pound. Mr. Fred in his letter said that he and my father had been out that day, fixed up their washer, carried the rack, dirt and gravel about 20 yards in a pan and washed out better than an ounce of gold which showed the something like $20. While money were plentiful the gang was rough and rugged and he advised his brother to stay where they were and that he hoped to return the next fall by water as he never expected to cross the plains again. Living in a tent in a mining camp in all kinds of weather without any of the comforts of home and the association of loved ones was enough to make them homesick and as he said, he visited a thousand times that he was back on James Creek. He said my father stayed about a year and returned in about 2 yrs. by water and across the isthmus of Panama. These were perilous and trying times and it took courage and fortitude to undertake such an adventure. The story

The story
It took those pioneers over a year to make their journey. Today one can go from St. Louis to San Francisco in 6 hours, which is about 720 times faster than they traveled. I wonder if we today are living over 100 times as fast as the they did. During the 100 years which have intervened since those pioneers crossed the plains, vast and momentous changes have taken place, changes greater, varied and more which took place in the entire history of mankind before that time. If those living at the beginning of the Christian era, nearly 2000 years ago, could have been brought back to Earth in 1849, they would have recognized it as much the same as when they livedヾ

But of it, Washington could not have brought back alive. He would not recognize this Earth as the same on which he lived a century and a half ago. Scientific research and inventive genius have transformed our manner of living and made it easier. This has been truly a period of transition, a change from the old to the new. Many material comforts and conveniences and even luxuries have been dreamed upon. The improved means of communication and the modern methods of transportation have made us all neighbors and are shortened the distance. It is a long cry from that day 100 years ago when that little hand kept America on that long and perilous trek to Cal.
But with all the progress and advancement that has been made, perfection has not yet been reached. Disease and crime are still prevalent, ignorance, prejudice, and superstition are still wide spread; jealousy, envy, and greed are still common; inequality, poverty and hunger are still to be found. So with me to day to the far away places, in other lands and not so big cities, hungry and ragged, see the little children living in huts and shacks, in dark and dusty tenements, children who have never breathed a breath of pure unpolluted air, who have never enjoyed a clear bright beam of sunshine, notes have never heard the song of a bird or smelled the fragrance of a flower, and as you can look into their sad and forlorn faces we realize that while all our boasted progress has not brought contentment and happiness to all the people, strife, selfishness and probable ambition are still with us. Within the last few decades our nation has been called upon to fight two of the most destructive and devastating wars in the world's history, wars which brought death, sorrow and suffering to millions of men and women and which have left in their aftermaths worse hardships and burdens which will be felt for generations to come. If mankind is to survive on this earth the 3rd world war must not come. Now, five years after our last war
The nations of the world are intimately and fiercely striving to perfect an association of nations that will bring us united and lasting peace. Let us pray that their efforts will not be in vain. Surrounded by an age of progress, societies, and the spirit of settlement, thought and unstable circumstances during their most eighteen and terrible calamities, we must hold steadfastly to the duties of character which supported and sustained our forefathers, which made them great and noble and which they transmitted unimpaired to us. Obedient love is just as important a duty of the distressed is just as the practice and truth of the vital to our society. They must be. Faith in God and man must remain as solid as the Rock of Ages. Charity must be the ever fleck of foot and heart, of hand and life humanity. Friendship, loyalty, and devotion must live on. Patriotism, love of home and country must be true and lofty. Honor, integrity and virtue must ever remain unrestrained and unfilled. These are the things worth while. They are the great visions realities of life which are the same yesterday, today, and forever. They must and they will abide. Let us all hope that these noble virtues may be instilled in the heart of every man and that the nations of earth united and inspired by these lofty ideals may at last find the path that will lead us to the way of peace. The way that is broad and easy upon which we may all march into the dawn and become a brighter, a better, and a happier man.