

Future pages on the Adventures of my Oregon Ancestors are being written. They will include:

- The Robinson, Thompson, Motley, Stilson, Kirkham connections

Notes for future reference:

Ancestors:

- GGG Grandfather John Robinson, aka Captain John Robinson, aka "JR", aka Jack Robinson
- GGG Grandmother Margaret (Peggy) Carnahan Wilson
- GG Grandfather Arthur H. Thompson, aka A. H. Thompson
- GG Grandmother Miriam Arnath Robinson-Thompson-Tuller
- Step GG Grandfather Jeremiah Gerome Tuller, aka Jeremiah Teller, aka Jerry Tuller
- G *Grandaunt* Clementine Tuller-Bell. MD
- G *Grandaunt* Edith Tuller
- G Grandmother: Jessie Marion Thompson-Stilson-Blakesley
- G Grandfather: Frelinghuysen Stilson
- GG *Granduncle* Obediah Motley (John Robinson's other son-in-law)
- GG *Grandaunt* Elizabeth Robinson-Motley (Miriam Robinson's sister)

Lexington (first County seat in Clatsop) on Tuller land claim. Lexington absorbed the town of Yellow Bank, then was itself absorbed by the town of Warrenton. I believe that Tuller named Lexington for his hometown of Lexington Kentucky.

The Robinson, Motley, Tuller story continues around 1854 in Benton County where they relocated following seven years on Clatsop Plains. Here is some of the story leading up to that time:

Jeremiah Tuller married into the Robinson family in 1850, following the murder of Miriam Thompson's husband during the California Gold Rush. Jeremiah had preceded the family to Oregon in the Jesse A. Applegate Oregon Trail wagon train of 1843 and by 1845 had established the town of Lexington on his land claim in Clatsop.

The Joel Palmer Oregon Trail wagon train roster has Arthur H. Thompson and his wife Miriam Robinson traveling to Oregon in 1845. Several members of the Joel Palmer wagon train decided to join Samuel K. Barlow, whose train had left ahead of them, to cross over the south slope of Mt. Hood and create a trail there. Winter over-took the group, the wagons wintered-over at "Fort Deposit" on the south slope of Mt. Hood and the first party to descend the blazes of a new

trail (to soon become the Barlow Trail) were Mrs. Arthur H. Thompson, Mr. and Mrs. Buffum and Joel Palmer.

While the rest of the family was traveling west on the Oregon Trail, Miriam Robinson-Thompson was the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Holmes in their Oregon City cabin. At about the time that the Holmes family moved into their new house, in February 1846 (a historic home which still stands in Oregon City), Miriam departed for Yamhill County, where Jessie Thompson was born in June 1846. The rest of the family group joined Miriam and Jessie, their wagon was retrieved from Fort Deposit, and they proceeded down the Willamette and Columbia Rivers to Clatsop Plains.

By July 4, 1847 John Robinson, Obediah Motley and Arthur Thompson, with their families, had settled and started dairies at the south end of Clatsop Plains, the present location of Gearhart and the north end of Seaside. Oregon State Archives information on these claims are:

- John Robinson, Vol 4 pg 266, 24 Apr 1847
- Arthur H. Thompson, Vol 4 pg266, 24 Apr 1847
- J G Tuller, Vol 7 pg 107, 17 Jan 1848
- O Motley, Vol 8 pg 085, 09 Aug 1848
- J G Tuller, Vol 8 pg 164, 31 Jan 1849

The Arthur H. Thompson land claim had a creek running through it and it could have been named Necanicum Creek. In later years surveyors came through the area and re-named the creek "Thompson Creek" for the historic Thompson Farm, which it ran through. Thompson Falls is an important location point for the Thompson claim. It is said that the Thompson land claim had adjoined the Lonk Claim and continued into the mountains.

An interesting note: Robert S. MacEwen and his wife Cordelia Rebecca Noland were in the 1846 train to Oregon traveling with the Robinson and Motley families. I suspect that the MacEwan's left the Robinson's at the fork of the Oregon and California trails and possibly took the Barlow Trail route. The Robinson, Motley and MacEwen families left Clatsop County for Benton County together in approximately 1854. Children of R.S. MacEwen and Obediah Motley, Alexander John McEwan and Clementine Motley, were married and their grandson, Robert Reed McEwan has been a long-time resident of Gearhart, Oregon. Robert Sturgeon MacEwan was the only McEwan to spell his name with a "Mac".

Arthur H. Thompson was a hopeless adventurer and, when gold was discovered in California, he left his wife and daughter on Clatsop Plains and went to the Gold Rush to make his fortune. Miriam filed for divorce, but the that was cancelled, presumably upon hearing that Arthur was dead. In April 1849 Arthur Thompson and his other gold mining partners were ambushed and murdered by Indians not far from Sutters Fort at what became know as Murder's Bar on the Middle Fork of the American River. Records indicate that Arthur H.

Thompson was elected to the Oregon Provisional Legislature, however he went to the California gold fields instead. Captain John Robinson was selected to replace his son-in-law, Arthur H. Thompson, and John served in the 3rd Provisional Oregon Legislative Assembly as a legislator for Clatsop County.

On July 30, 1850, Miriam Robinson-Thompson married Jeremiah G. Tuller and daughter Jessie Thompson, 4 years old at that time, is said to have gone to her grandparents, John and Margaret Robinson, who raised her. My father, Arthur Robinson Kirkham, made a note in the family bible that Jessie Thompson was raised by her grand father (John Robinson) "who raised her as his child".

On February 25, 1851 the citizens of Clatsop Plains met at the house of Thomas Owens for the purpose of organizing two school districts. Chairman of the meeting was John Robinson and the secretary was J.P. Powers. This meeting Formally established the first two school districts in Clatsop County.

By 1854 the Robinson, Motley and MacEwan families had relocated to Benton County. John next served in the 1855 session of the 7th Territorial Oregon Legislative Assembly as a legislator for Benton County. The family had lived in Clatsop County for seven years, then relocated to the Corvallis area.

Jessie Marion Thompson, daughter of Miriam Robinson-Thompson-Tuller, married Frelinghuysen Stilson in 1863 and one of their four daughters, Inez Stilson, was my grandmother. Inez Stilson married John A. Kirkham and their only child was Arthur Robinson Kirkham, my father. Jessie Thompson-Stilson's children were:

1. Eunice Stilson-Van Pelt
2. Ernestine Stilson-Stout
3. Arthur Stilson, who lived to about 13 years old.
4. Inez Flo Stilson-Kirkham (Art Kirkham's mother)
5. Jessie Stilson-Leis

Following her divorce from Frelinghuysen Stilson, Jessie married Abram H. Blakesly. There were no children.

In 1870 Jeremiah Tuller homesteaded in a remote area 7 miles west of present Glendale, Oregon. A small, unmarked pioneer gravesite along Cow Creek, near Glendale, Douglas County, Oregon contains the graves of Jeremiah G. Tuller 1822-1895, Miriam A. (Robinson-Thompson) Tuller 1826-1907, daughter Clementine Tuller-Bell 1852-1901. Daughter Edith Tuller, 1857-1931, was moved from the family home, in her old age, to Glendale, Oregon. Edith's grave is in the Glendale Cemetery and there is no record of her grave location. Vandals have obliterated all evidence of the house. Attempts to place markers of the historic site have also been obliterated by vandals.

Clementine Tuller-Bell is to be researched, further, as she graduated from medical school and became a doctor. I have heard that her decision to become a doctor was influenced by Dr. Owens-Adair, who was a family acquaintance from Clatsop County.

Miriam (Robinson-Thompson) Tuller's trail experience was recorded in the Oregon Pioneer Association Transactions, Number 23, 1895.

Robinson children were:

1. Elizabeth, born, October 1, 1816
2. Mary L., born March 12, 1819, and died Nov. 11, 1821
3. Harriet, born July 23, 1822
4. Miriam, born May 21, 1824

From the recollections of R. C. Motley, grandson of Obediah C. Motley:

"Obediah MOTLEY, when they started the idea that they could run boats up the Mississippi River to the new settlements, was given charge of one of them to try and sail as far up the river as he could get. Before he started on the unknown adventure he decided to buy the boat he was to command. He succeeded in reaching Illinois, we do not know at just what place. He sold his boat and decided to settle in that country. He made the acquaintance of John ROBINSON soon after arriving, met the daughter, Elizabeth. He started in Hennepin during the building of the Hennepin Canal, so it is presumed that was the town, although the young couple was married in Peru, January 18, 1835. Miss Elizabeth was teaching in Hennepin when they became acquainted, though possibly her home was in Peru.

"Capt. MOTLEY remained in the mercantile business for several years until the western fever consumed both him and his father-in-law, Mr. ROBINSON. At the beginning of the Black Hawk War in 183_, John ROBINSON was appointed Captain of the Illinois Volunteers under General WHITESIDES. Mrs. MOTLEY and her oldest child, Clementine, together with her mother and her sister, Miriam, were forced up at Fort Dearborn where Chicago now stands. Capt. ROBINSON lost the sight of one eye at the Battle of Bad Axe (a creek). General WHITESIDES let the Indians lead him into an ambush and the white soldiers were entirely surrounded by the Indians. Captain ROBINSON told his men to scatter and fight the Indians in the Indian way, each man for himself. He got down behind a tree just as an Indian jumped out from the opposite side and discharged his gun at Capt. ROBINSON, saying, "swap." Capt. ROBINSON jumped behind the tree and the Indian's bullet missed him but struck the bark off the tree and the splinter bark struck the captain's eye, destroying the sight. Captain ROBINSON, a large, powerful man, grabbed the Indian and killed him with his knife. The knife was made out of a file. The knife was in the possession of the family for years, but finally disappeared.

"Somewhere near the head of the Platte River a large band of Indians, Sioux, I think, met the train and directed them to halt in a circle, a renegade white man acting as an interpreter. The Indians spread four buffalo robes on the ground and told the immigrants they must pay a toll for crossing their country or territory. It was, I think, a quart of flour, a pint of sugar for each person in the train, and a certain amount of tobacco, bullets, and powder for each yoke of oxen. The flour was placed on one robe, the sugar on another, tea and coffee on a third, and the powder and bullets on the fourth.

"The train crossed the Snake River at the mouth of the Boise River. A young man, for \$2.50, took a bed cord tied to him across the river. He swam and by the cord pulled a cable across. They caulked the cracks of the wagon boxes and ferried the bedding, food, women and children in the boxes by holding to the cable. The oxen swam and pulled the running gear of the wagons across. The young man who took the cable was William ELLIOT. He afterwards came to Oregon and took a claim near us in Benton County, north of town about four miles. He died years ago and some of his grandchildren live on the old ELLIOT place yet.

"The ROBINSON and MOTLEY families first settled near Astoria on the Clatsop Plains, which is now known as Gearhart Park. The Flathead (?) Indians were in control of most of the surrounding country, and in order to fish and hunt they had to buy the privilege from these Indians. Whenever they caught any salmon an Indian came home with them, cut the heart out of the fish, and burned it. No one was allowed to have a fish unless they could be sure the heart was burned. If the heart of the salmon was not burned the spirit of the fish would go back to the ocean where it had lived and tell the other fish how it was caught, and the next year there would be no fishing.

"While the Indians seemed friendly enough, the settlers had to be very careful not to interfere with any of the Indian rites or customs. On one occasion Mr. ROBINSON saw a procession of Indians filing along to the Indian burial grounds. The favorite wife of the chief was dead and they were taking the body for burial. Behind the procession two Indian girls were crying bitterly. Mrs. MOTLEY, who could speak the Indian jargon by this time, (it might have been Mrs. ROBINSON) asked what was the matter. She found out that the two girls were to be buried alive to act as servants for the chief's wife in the next world. The women wanted to interfere, but were told by Sol SMITH, a squaw man who had been with the Indians for years, that it would be impossible. They could not interfere with royalty. That was one of their funeral rites, sacred to them, and were there interference, the Whites in the whole settlement would be massacred. So better judgement prevailed and the girls were left to their fate.

"Farming was not Capt. MOTLEY's calling and when gold was discovered in California in '49 (1848), the ocean again called him. With Robert MCEWIN as a partner he built a schooner and made three trips to California before they sold the boat. In the meantime negotiations had been made to sell their homesteads, and in 1850 they both sold to Philip GEARHART. The two families then came to Benton County, where Captain ROBINSON procured a donation land claim just west of William KNOTT'S place, the MOTLEYS settling just beyond.

"John ROBINSON died September 15, 1876, and his wife passed away September 25, 1878. They are both buried in the old Locke Cemetery north of Corvallis. Mr. MOTLEY died February 15, 1858, but Mrs. MOTLEY lived to be eighty-seven, dying Sept. 29, 1903. The MOTLEYS had (nine) children:

1. Clementine (Mrs. Alex H. McEWEN)
2. Margaret (Mrs. Charles LOGSDEN)
3. John
4. Cephias
5. Obediah
6. Mary (Mrs. ERFORT)
7. Henderson

8. Rudolph
9. Harriet"

Notes on the R. C. Motley WPA Interview (above), conducted in the 1930's:

Philip Gearhart bought the Motley Clatsop Plains land claim in 1874. The WPA interview told of selling the Motley claim to Gearhart in 1850. Perhaps Obediah V. Motley had acquired the Motley Clatsop Beach claim, as indicated by Clara Motley McCorkle writings, and Obediah V. Motley sold to Philip Gearhart in 1874.

Mrs. Miriam Thompson acquired her father's, John Robinson, land claim in 1850. Miriam sold the claim to Philip Gearhart in 1851, according to Gearhart family recollections.

Clara Motley McCorkle, daughter of Theodore Rudolph Motley, tells more about the Motley's in her recollections:

Obediah C. Motley was put on a navy training ship, by his family, when he was 16 and by 17 he deserted the navy training ship.

Clara also tells of her father, Theodore Rudolph Motley, making an agreement with John Robinson to stay home and take care of his mother, Margaret Robinson, after John's death, and by doing so Theodore would have the farm. When John Robinson died this agreement was disputed. John Robinson's daughters, Miriam and Harriet contested the will then Miriam's husband, Jeremiah G. Tuller, sued Theodore R. Motley until nothing was left.

Clara acknowledged that Arthur Kirkham was a descendant of Miriam Thompson-Tuller. Art Kirkham was a well-known radio broadcaster with the CBS affiliate station of KOIN located in Portland, Oregon. For the record, Miriam's children were Jessie Thompson, Clementine Tuller, and Edith Tuller. Art Kirkham was Jessie Thompson's grandson. Jessie Thompson-Stilson had four daughters: Eunice Stilson-Van Pelt, Ernestine Stilson-Stout, Inez Flo Stilson-Kirkham (Art Kirkham's mother) and Jessie Stilson-Leis. Jessie had one son, Arthur, who lived to about 13 years old.

More on Art Kirkham: Art Kirkham started his radio career in Corvallis, Oregon, broadcasting sports events. He then went to Radio Station KGW in Portland, Oregon, where he was a radio station orchestra singer. KGW would not let him do anything but sing, so, in 1928 he went to Radio Station KOIN, a CBS affiliate station. In his new position he announced sports events and expanded into broadcasting the news and announcing for other programs, such as, The Consumer News from the mezzanine of the original Fred Meyer Store in downtown Portland and "Red's Gang", a musical program with reports on special interest items. He advanced to a position of executive vice president of KOIN. Art Kirkham was a dedicated promoter of Oregon and proud supporter of the Oregon State Parks. He often worked with Sam Boardman on State Park matters. After his retirement, about 1965, he went to the Seattle Worlds Fair and managed the Oregon Exhibit there. Art Kirkham gave narrated slide shows on the "Oregon Wonderland" for about 20 more years, until his health deteriorated. Art was a well-known and admired radio and television personality in the Pacific Northwest states and was often called "Mr. Oregon".

References for this saga are:

- Letter from Obediah Motley to John Robinson, Sutter's Mills, April 15, 1849
- Recollections of Clara Motley McCorkle, found in Robert C. Wilson Estate, July 2006
- Life on Clatsop, book by Inez Stafford Hanson, 3rd Printing 2004
- Oregon Historical Society Quarterly, June 1901, Reminiscences of Mrs. Fannie Clayton
- Oregon Historical Society Quarterly, June 1901, Reminiscences of William M. Case
- Clatsop Co. Historical Society Quarterly, Cumtux, Vol. 3, No. 1, Winter, 1982, Gearhart family recollections: Miriam Thompson sells to Philip Gearhart
- www.1849.org/ggg/massacres.html A History Of Massacres
- www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~orbenton/wpa/IntervM.html R.C. Motley recollections of the Robinson and Motley Families
- www.oregonpioneers.com/doc45.htm Oregon in 1845, as told by John Minto to the Oregonian, reprinted in Oregon Statesman, 1904, Recollections of Motley, Robinson and Thompson settling on South Clatsop Plains
- www.peak.org/~mransom/n2z.html 1843 Wagon Train Pioneers
- www.oregonpioneers.com/1846.htm Emigrants To Oregon In 1846
- www.webtrail.com/applegate/ The Applegate Trail
- www2.dgsys.com/~dixon/when_did_it_happen.htm
- <http://jeffnet.org/~hugo/virgil.htm> Virgil Pringle's Diary 1846, Oregon-California Trail, Southern Route to Oregon
- www.pbs.org/kera/usmexicanwar/war/wars_end_guadalupe.html Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo
- 1850 Federal Census - Clatsop County Oregon
- 1854 Census of Benton Co, Oregon
- Western Living Center, History, El Dorado Co., Calif., Local History, Murderer's Bar
- The Gold Discovery, Theodore H. Hittell, History of California Vol. II
- Clatsop County Oregon, A History by Emma Gene Miller
- History of the Pacific Northwest, OR & WA, Vol. II, Ninian Eberman recollections
- Douglas County Pioneer, June 1994 edition
- Pioneer Days in the South Umpqua Valley, Vol. 14, August 1981, Tuller Family