



Mrs. Marsh Corbitt's doll was first brought to Oregon in 1851.

A Century Old and Still a Doll

BY MARY GOODALL

Oswego Free-Lance Writer

MOST of us have read fairy stories at some time or other in our lives about the doll that talked.

One doll in Portland could tell stories that would interest anyone who likes to know something of the very early days of our city. Mrs. Marsh Corbitt, owner of the doll, treasures her not only for her beauty and quaintness, but also because the doll was present at some of the most stirring events in the young city of Portland.

The doll, named Clara Louise by her young mistress, was brought to the Oregon country on the bark Francis and Louise, sailing from New York in November, 1850, and arriving in Portland in April, 1851. Her owner was named Sarah Lavina Abrams, whose parents were Mr. and Mrs. William Penn Abrams. This pioneer couple were the great-grandparents of Mrs. Corbitt, who was a Lavina Abrams before her marriage.

Early family annals relate that Abrams, on an earlier voyage to far-away Oregon, had been delegated by a group of Portland businessmen to buy books for the beginning of a Portland library. The sum of \$1200 had been collected. Abrams made the purchase at Harper & Brothers, publishers, and the books were placed in the cargo of the ship bearing the family to Oregon.

Also in the ship's hold was a stock of goods which Abrams had been commissioned to purchase for Henry V. Corbett.

The Abrams family were devout Presbyterians and they like many

other Portlanders, longed for the day when their church might be represented in their new homeland. So, on January 1, 1854, a meeting was held in the parlor of the Abrams home. The famous doll, on the lap of her little mistress, was a witness to the decision of the group to found the First Presbyterian church.

The most startling story the old doll could tell, if she could speak, would be of the wild commotion caused by the start of the first saw-mill in Portland. On the riverbank at the foot of Jefferson street, Abrams and C. A. Reed had set up the equipment for this venture.

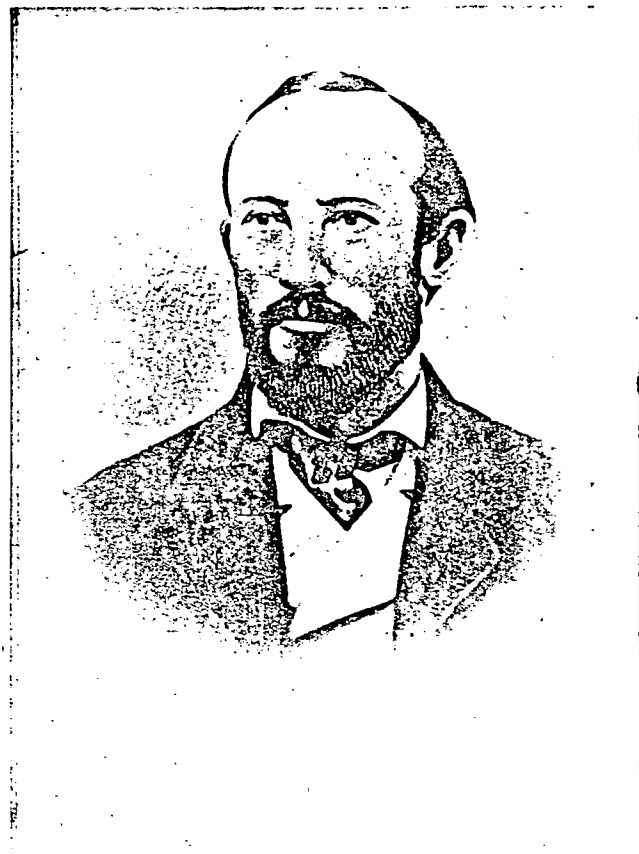
An encampment of Indians just south of the site watched the activities with interest, wondering what new contraption the white man would bring next.

Suddenly the shrill shriek of the steam engine threw the Indians into a wild frenzy. They fled to the dense forest nearby and could not be persuaded to come out within sight of the noisy monster for quite some time.

One of the first jobs turned out by the mill was an order of planks needed to build Canyon road, which had been a sea of mud.

Another early job was the sawing of lumber for the First Presbyterian church building. The edifice occupied by the congregation in 1880 was at 3d and Washington streets.

Sarah's old doll was kept in the Abrams family and now under Mrs. Corbett's careful stewardship, she has the same fine black-eyegged dress that her mistress so admired in the olden days.



William Penn Abrams b. Aug 15 1820 Sanborton NH.
d. Nov. 26 1873 Portland Ore.

William Brandes b.Aug.25,1884 Portland.Ore. d.Oct.4,1936.Portland. resided at 1950 N.E. 62 Ave. is survived by his widow Lillian M. (Murray) Brandes and five brothers.Fred,Otto, Louis,Theadore and Frank Brandes.

Mr. Brandes died Sunday Oct.4th at the St.Vincent's Hospital Portland ,of pneumonia.

After more than two years service as the Deputy County Auditor, Mr. Brandes was appointed deputy county clerk Jan.7,1918 and served in that capacity up to the time of his death.

George Fox b.July 1624, Drayton,Leicestershire,England. d.Jan. 13, 1690 or 91. London England. Married in 1669 Margaret Askew-Fell, widow of Judge Thomas Fell,daughter of John Askew.

Abrams

Willis G. Corbitt
707 S.W. Westwood Drive,
Portland, Oregon .97201
Jan. 30, 1971

Mr. Herbert F. Adams
One Landor Road
Boston, Mass. 02126

Dear Mr. Adams:

Even as you have trouble in obtaining information about people who have moved to the western part of the U.S.A., I have the same experience with those who lived in Mass. at one time.

Should you, in your research work, find that there are vital records for the city of Boston and some of the towns listed on the accompany sheet, and be able to obtain from them dates of birth or deaths for those that I have listed, that favor would be greatly appreciated.

You could write in the data on one of the enclosed sheets and return it to me in the enclosed envelope. The other can be retained for your reference and files, in case you find the desired information in other than the Boston records.

Should any of your work tie in with the Abrahams or Abrams record, I could supply you with more data along the lines of the last John Abrams listed, as his grandson William Penn Abrams (Aug. 15, 1820 - Nov. 26, 1873) was an early settler in Portland, Oregon, and has an interesting record of his own.

Sincerely,

Willis G. Corbitt

Della A Murray
James. Not. 21903. June 7/1964
Callison — m Sarah. Frasier

27 16

June 7/1964.
Bur. Mt Pleasant. Cemetery

B 12.
p 320 Della - E Boyce. 38
1860. —
Witness Mary E Shurze
Charles F. Burkhart

Dec 22 1898
m Dec 22/1898 J C Murray
Home of Mrs Mary E Shurze.
by G Hafner. pastor
Portland Ore.

William L. Abramo 24

12-328
Jan. 25. 1899.
Portland

Anna E Murray 21

Charles E Thompson of Huber. Ore
 J F. Thompson of West Point Calif
 Mrs. S. Wiley of Weyburn. Sask Canada
 Mrs. B Carr of Portland

No. of Vols. in Set

New Title Yes No

Call No.

SIZE

Leaves covers Yes No

Remove covers Yes No

Rub 3SRub
S/Rub MI

COLOR

TITLE

Place contents in front

Marsh M. Corbitt was born and raised on his parent's farm near Fairfield. His elementary education was obtained in the district school. After he moved to Washington with his parents in 1905, he lived on their farm and each day rode on a horse, nine miles, to the high school at Kiona. In 1907 and 1908 he attended the high school at Prosser, Wash., until his parents moved to Seattle, then he entered the Lincoln High School, graduating with the class of 1911. The following year was spent as a salesman for an automobile and tire company. Then he entered the University of Washington in the fall of 1912, expecting to study law, but changed to education and graduated in 1917 with the degree of B.S. in Education.

In order to finance his education, he spent the vacation periods working on farms and as salesman of books, candy, lungmotors and aluminum ware.

During his high school and college years he was prominent in all lines of student activities. He was on the track and basket ball teams in high school, the debating teams in both high school and college, and participated in a number of oratorical contests. One time winning the S.A.R. prize of thirty dollars in a contest among the four High Schools in Seattle. While in high school he held a number of offices both in the Class, Debating and Athletic Assns. He was a member of Delta Upsilon and Tau Kappa Alpha Fraternities.

On Nov. 2, 1917 he reported at Camp Lewis, Wash. for military duty as a private in Co. 42, 2nd Bn. 166 D.B. Infantry. He was soon made a Cadet Sergeant and transferred to the Ground School of the Aviation Section in Berkeley, Calif., Dec. 8, 1917. From there, on March 10, he was sent to Rockwell Field, San Diego, Calif., as a flying cadet. He received instructions as a pilot, and was awarded a commission, March 14, 1918, as Second Lieutenant, A.S.S.C. He was transferred on July 24 to Post Field, Fort Sill, Oklahoma; then on Aug. 26 to the Aerial Machine Gun School, Taliferro, Field, Ft. Worth, Texas, where he received orders to report to Hoboken, New Jersey. As that indicated he would soon cross the Atlantic, he obtained a leave and hastened to Berkeley, where preparations were made for his marriage to Eleta L. Abrams at the home of her mother. Just before the wedding he received a telegram which read, "Order revoked. Report to Selfridge Field, Detroit, Mich., after twenty days leave of absence." The military wedding took place and the honeymoon trip made to Yosemite Park. Having met but three times before their wedding, their companionship was brief, for they were forced to separate after the honeymoon trip; she to return to her parents home, and he to military duty as pilot instructor, Selfridge Field, Mt. Clemens Mich., until discharged on Dec. 7, 1918 at the same place.

He then returned to their home in Berkeley and obtained a position as salesman for the Leibold Candy Co., and later for the American Marine paint Co. While in the paint company, he was ordered to Seattle, Wash. in preparation to going to China and Japan. Their plans were changed and he was sent to Philadelphia, Penn., for four months then to Baltimore, Maryland.

In the spring of 1922 he left the paint company and moved to New York City to work for the Dollar Steamship Co. as freight solicitor. Although still employed by that company, he changed his residence to Long Island in the following order: Forest Hills, Arverne, Far Rockaway Beach, Lynbrook and Malvern. In 1925 he resigned from the employment of the Dollar Steamship Co. and accepted a position with the Isthmian Steamship line in the same capacity.

While living in New York, he maintained an active interest in social and business affairs of the community and the organizations of which he was a member. He was member of the N.Y. Delta Upsilon Fraternity Club, a member of the Board of Governors and president of the Board of Directors. One year he was sent to Montreal, Canada, as a representative to the Fraternity Convention. As a member of the Aviation Post, American Legion, he retained his interest in the affairs of the Nation and worked for the betterment of political conditions for he was non-partisan in his opinions.

Eleta L. Abrams was born in Portland, Oregon and moved with her parents William Luen^{Abrams} and Anna Elizabeth Murray-Abrams, to Seattle, Wash. in 1906. Her father was credit manager for the national Grocery Company until he was accidently electrocuted at his home in 1908. She returned to Portland with her mother who later married George Sheran, and they moved to California. Eleta graduated from the Los Angeles High School. She was a member of the Episcopal Church.

 Marsh:

This is the story as we have it written from the known facts. Perhaps it is not all correct and there may be some important facts missing. We would appreciate your looking it over and advising us of the corrections that should be made either as additions or subtractions. In reading it over I note that some of the grammatical construction is not perfect. But it was written under high pressure in a limited time so errors are to be expected. What we would like to do now is to correct those errors and ask your assistance.

In writing the personal history of each one we have tried to include such items as would prove interesting to those who read today as well as in the future. This was determined by the material that proved interesting to us in the accounts of our ancestors. Of course more is said of our own family than of others because we knew more of the facts even though they might not prove as important as the events in the lives of others.

We have also included the dates and places to which one often has occasion to refer to although they are not of great importance in the history of the nation; but think of the census man.)

Willis

Scotia, Calif.
April.27,1930

Dear Eleta:

I have copied the genealogy of the Abrams family as you sent it to me, that is as near correct as I could interpret it from the arrangement of names on your list. As I think that I have made a number of mistakes, a copy of the record is being returned to you for "check and double check", after which you may send it to me for the correction of my copy.

In typing the information I have followed the same system as we used in all of our work. That is I have listed the information in this order.

Name of person. Date and place of birth. Date and place of death.

Date and place of marriage.

Name of person married. Date and place of birth. Date and place of death.

Their Children: .

Name, date and place of birth and death.

Historical account of the life and activities of husband and wife.

You will note in the record of the Abrams family much of this information is missing in order to make a complete record. Believing you might be able to fill in some of the blanks, I have double spaced the material so that you can fill in what you know especially about the later generations.

It is noted that some of the people have married twice. I have listed the children as of the second union when perhaps some should be of the first union. The numbers would remain the same but they would come before the second marriage.

It is noted under No. 7 that Sarah was born in 1819 and No.8 Rosinda in 1825 and all the other children in fairly uniform periods. I am wondering if this Sarah is listed with the right parents. Please check this. OK

The dates would also lead one to believe that John Abrams Jr. moved to Portland Oregon with William P. Abrams in 1851. Therefore one might assume that John Abrams Jr. moved with his family to Gainville Ala. or else he was living with his son at that place. If he traveled to Portland on the same boat as William it should be noted under the historical account of his life.

Were all of John Abrams children born at Sanbornton N.H. (or should it be ~~Sanbornton~~?) OK

According to your original letter Wm.P. Abrams moved to Ala. in 1839 and engaged in the lumber business. The way it is worded it sounds like he began business when but 12 years old. The dates show that he returned to N.H. and was married when 15 years old. Is that correct? It would be well to insert the dates when he moved from Portland to Corvallis and The Dalles if you have them. Born 1820
19 years old OK
22 years old OK

Under No.10 it looks as though Daniel K. Abrams might have gone to Portland on the same boat as did William P. Abrams. Is that true?

I presume you also have additional information as to dates and places of births and marriages that could be added to the names under No. 34, 36, 46, 47 and others. As noted, we have additional information incorporated under No. 53 in the other genealogy.

I thought if you wished to supply the additional corrections and information I would add it to this genealogy although it would not be included in the the published (?) manuscript, except that portion relating to yourself.

I was very pleased to receive the information about the family biographical register. It seems like a very useful form to have on which to keep records. I wish they had started using such things a number of generations ago. It might have helped in the work that mother and I have been trying to do. No I doubt if I do send for one of the \$100. styles of binding. A few of the loose leaf blanks will be nearer my limit. Being situated so far from the center of information and genealogical records it is very hard to obtain historical information except from close relatives and most of them have nothing.

I received the birthday box from your family on Friday and opened it to see the contents. After reading your note to eat the contents at once, I went further in to the package and found the kisses, cookies, dates and everything. The fudge was as fresh and mellow as if made but the day before. I do not see how it kept that way for often the candy that mother sends from Seattle is dry by the time it arrives. Most assured I lost no time in sampling each and every article and all being so good I could not decide which was the best so I had to sample them all once more only in reverse order. I think I rather favor the "Kisses" from Janet. That is if I judged the ones in the individual wrappers to be of her own making. Now those kind of kisses are perfectly sanitary and one could enjoy bushels of them without harm, except for perhaps a little pain around the belt line due to over indulgence. If that is a sample of Janet's cooking ability, then I think her mother will have keen competition in the kitchen from now on.

Marsh, Jr's and Shirley's assistance in preparing the other sweets must have added to their flavor, for they were delicious. Having obtained an early start on the contents, I can enjoy a birthday treat for several days before the eventful day, kind of lead up to the climax as it were. I certainly do appreciate the "eats" as well as the beautiful necktie and wish that you would spread my thanks and appreciations for the gifts, among your family as lavishly as they have bestowed their loving thoughts and good wishes on myself.

What little week news of the weeks as there is will be included in the family letter which must be written upon the conclusion of one and after I have had a chance to reach for a "sweet instead of a Lucky Strike" I sure do not believe in that well known advertisement

Love to all from

Your brother,

Willis. G. Corbitt

Dear Lillie -

I'm terribly sorry I didn't know that you were expecting me to return my family history since I don't know how to make the corrections you want. It has just occurred to me that possibly my Grandmother Alice might be able to supply a few of the missing details so I'll send it to her. All I can do is add a little correction here and there such as I was born Dec. 21, 1899 and not 1908. It would be nice to be 22 again but am afraid I could hardly have married Marsh when I was ten! It is a shame my big family tree was lost before I was old enough to be responsible for it. It went back so much farther and was so complete.

One thing I can tell you is that Edgar F. Gee was the ^(Marsh + G) name of the minister who married us. Being what a time you are having collecting details makes me think every person should be compelled to ~~the~~ write their own Life History. Shall I write mine!!!

With love from all of us -
Eltie



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John Abrams

Born March 3, 1766

Married 1779 to Melitable Harriman

Died Aug. 1841 at Sanboitan N. H.

Their Children

2 Mary - Born Jan. 21, 1790
married Edward Shaw

3 John Jr. - Born Jan. 18, 1793

4 Sarah - " Nov. 19, 1796

Married first Ebenezer Bolby who died
" second Gardiner Bowers
she had seven children

5 Betsy - Born Dec. 28, 1800
Died 1802

6 Hannah - Born Dec. 27, 1804
married Geo. W. Sumner
They had 9 children

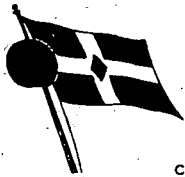
3 John Abrams Jr.

Resided at Sanboitan N. H. came to Oregon
April 1851 and while returning to N. H. died
at sea and was buried in the Gulf of Mexico
July 4 1853

He married first Sarah Abbott Dec. 14, 1815 and
after her death married Nancy Rollins June 11, 1818

Their Children

7 Sarah Born January 6, 1819



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the Flom and reached Portland Ore. April 22, 1851. They moved to Corvallis Ore, thence to the Dalles and again to Portland where he died Nov. 26, 1873. His wife Sarah Ravina who was born ^{Jan. 12, 1828} at Lyme, N. H. died April 22, 1909

Their Children

Sarah Ravina

Born in Gainsville Alabama Aug. 25, 1843

Married Harvey Hogue Portland Ore, Dec. 27, 1861

Had 2 children { Harry Ardey

Chester James
who married

Marion Chase

Dorothy Elizabeth
Margaret Carol

Georgiana

Born Gainsville Alabama Dec. 24, 1845

Died Dec. 5, 1847

William Rollins

Clara Minnie Born Corvallis Ore. Sept. 8, 1855

Died @ the Dalles, Ore May 5, 1864

Nellie Annie Born Portland Ore Oct. 26, 1860

Died Sept. 3, 1861

Harry Augustus Born Portland Ore Aug. 10, 1861

Died " " Aug 28, 1861

William Rollins Abrams

Born Gainsville Alabama July 2, 1848

Married E. Alice McFarland at the Dalles

Ore Feb. 3, 1870

Died June 11, 1921

Their Children

~~William Rollins~~

Their Children

William Luen

Alice Laina

Martha

Ruth

Born June 23, 1878
Married Harold Logan

Born Dec. 3, 1886
Died Aug 19, 1891

Born July 16, 1892
Married Edgar Baker

2 children { Donna May
Chester

William Luen Abrams

Born April 14, 1874

Married Jan. 25, 1899 to Anne Elizabeth Murray

Died March 12, 1908

They had one child

Eleta Laina born in Portland Ore

Dec. 21, 1899

Checked.

MRS. MARSH M. CORBITT

~~47 LYNNMOUTH ROAD~~

MALVERNE, N. Y.

Monday Eve.

Dear Wis -

By now you are proba-
bly back at work and it's
it hard to settle down when
you have been away so long.
You surely did accomplish
a lot in Seattle and I know
what a help it was to
Mother and how she does
appreciate all you did for her.
We think the oil furnace will
be the grandest thing for her
and such a wonderful thing
for you to do.

I just can't get over
all the time and effort you
put into that chart for me

and I'm so glad to have
it. I can fill in a few
more names myself. My
mother's father's name was
James Murray and her
mother was Mary Ross. I'll
see if Mother knows their
middle names also their
parents' names for I do not
remember that. My Aunt Lillie
Mitchell who lives in L.A.
should be able to help out
on dates etc. too for she was
a Ross before she married &
was my mother's mother's sister
if you get what I mean!

Its 11 P.M. & I'm sleepy
so no more tonight. We are
enjoying life so much & many
thanks to you. With love - Etta

Dear Willis -
Thanks a lot for the
pennies - I'll be on the
watch for the Phila. '38
but have not noticed any.

I'll try to get at
translating the French
letter soon tho. I think
you got the "gist" of it.
We liked your verse by
Thos. Hood.

I never thought of the
Mitchells on my side being
related to yours. Its odd
but my uncle was named
Willis Newton Mitchell. I'll
write to my Aunt soon &
see what I can find out.
Never thought about Wm. Ryan

Phelps either. I will try to
look at who's who!

Natur, the girls or I
remember you writing about
the deer hide before. If
you are sure that you
want use it - they'd be
glad to have it.

Thanks a lot for
Shirley Ann's birthday dollar
until she gets around to
writing herself.

Lots of love -
Lita