

In the year 1866, the undersigned two sisters, natives of New York State, were induced by stories of the wonderful Pacific Coast and especially of the Puget Sound country – told us by a Mr. Webster – whose father was cousin to our father and was living with his family on Puget S'd – to come with him on a visit to his family and see the country. Accordingly, having a strong desire to travel and see the world and being very young and inexperienced we decided to take the trip, much against the wishes of our family and the advice of friends.

At this time the steamship Continental had been purchased from the Government by one Asa Mercer and by him sold to the Ben Holliday Co. reserving the privilege of taking a certain number of passengers to the Pacific Coast.

Mr. Mercer had gone East – for the purpose of advertising the country and persuading people to emigrate to Puget Sound. He especially appealed to teachers telling of the great opportunities open to them there.

The arrangement with them, we were told, was that they should pay a certain sum down for their passages and the balance when they should earn it in the Territory.

My sister and myself were in no way parties to this arrangement. We were merely passengers on the ship, paying the full fare, as did a few others.

After many delays and many decisions, on our part, to give up the trip, the ship sailed from N.Y. in Jan 1866, with, to the best of my recollection, about fifty passengers of whom – contrary to the general reports – there were twelve married couples, three or four children, sixteen unmarried women and widows and nine or ten unmarried men. Besides these there were a few passengers who, like ourselves, had no connection with Mercer scheme, except that we came on the same ship.

The ship came through the Straits of Magellan and Smith's Channel, stopping at several South American ports and after a smooth and uneventful voyage landed in San Francisco, from which we took a sailing ship to Puget Sound and Seattle, reaching there just four months from the time we left New York.

We fully intended to return to our home after a short visit; but time passed and the lure of the Pacific Coast has held us here all these years. We have seen great changes in this time; have seen Seattle develop from a little hamlet of a few score people to its present grand dimensions.

We have been pioneers but pioneering on Puget Sound was never attended with the great sacrifices and hardships of many other places; upon the whole it was rather comfortable and had all the charm of novelty.

Mrs. Amos Brown

Mrs. Angus MacKintosh