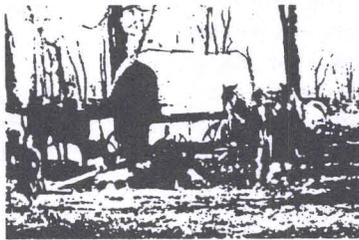


GRIGSBYS ARRIVE IN CALIFORNIA

My grandmother, Katherine Delilah Grigsby Dye, was the only daughter of John Melchesadeck Grigsby and Margaret Emeline Hale.

The first large and successful wagon train to CA was the Grigsby-Ide wagon train of about 100 wagons. Forty of the wagons that set out from MO in the Spring of 1845 were headed for CA. Sixty additional wagons were picked up at Fort Hall, Idaho. These 60 wagons were bound for OR but Col. John Sutter sent his scout, Caleb Greenwood and his son to Fort Hall and promised free land to any Oregon bound wagons who joined the CA group. All of these wagons arrived inside the gate of Sutter's Fort on Oct. 10, 1845. Twenty of these wagons did not stop at Sutter's Fort but continued west the 60 miles to Napa County. With them were the first two Grigsbys to arrive in CA, Captain John Grigsby, (36 yrs. old,



b Mar 3, 1806 in Maryville, Blount Co., TN, m. Nancy Wilson in Monroe Co.) who was made wagon master of this wagon train at Fort Hall, ID and his youngest brother, Franklin Temple Grigsby, who had just turned 16 on Aug. 15, 1845. Captain John, and Franklin Temple were sons of George Grigsby and were my grandmother's first cousins, thus my first cousins two times removed.

Capt. John Grigsby and his brother, were the first two Tennessee Grigsbys in California, with Capt. John as one of the leaders in what has been known in CA and U.S. history as the "Bear Flag Revolt". They raised a newly made flag named the Bear Flag over CA on the morning of June 14, 1846 and proclaimed the area as the California Republic. 208 days later Fremont negotiated a surrender giving the Mexicans all the respect and courtesies they expected of him and with his proclamation, and with their surrender, "All Californians now had all the rights and privileges enjoyed

by all Americans." This document is known as the "Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo." This is considered one of the fairest and most responsible documents of surrender ever written.

All the men who participated in this Bear Flag Revolt and all their descendants are known by genealogists as the Bears. In short, the story is told like this: "At about half past five in the morning on June 14, 1846 Captain John and his brother Franklin Temple Grigsby were part of a group of thirty-three rough looking desperados who surrounded the Sonoma garrison of General Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo and arrested him."

"These were all patriots, farmers and family men who had risked everything on a torturous journey into California. Theirs was the first wagon train to cross the Sierras, with 59 children and many cattle. For almost a year

they had been scratching out an existence and now they were being threatened by Mexican bureaucrats." (per Olive Grigsby Bush, a foremost California Grigsby historian.)

This was not the end of Capt. John Grigsby's entry into CA history for on Nov. 12, 1846 Capt. John Grigsby showed up in Monterey with 30 settlers and thrice as many horses ready to move south with his good friend and ally, Captain Charles C. Fremont. Instead, Fremont asked Capt. John to command Company E of the California Regiment, maintain the garrison at Sonoma and to hold the ground, and see that the crops were protected and harvested.

The second wave of Grigsbys came to CA by oxteam in 1850. The group included three Grigsby brothers who were sons of Samuel Harrison Grigsby: Achillis (aka Kellis, 32 years old), Terrell Lindsay, (30 years old) and the youngest, John Melchesadeck (aka Mels, 20 years old) Grigsby. On July of 1850, Elizabeth Wilson, wife of

Kellis died on the Plains. The Hale family was also a part of this party because William Wilson Hale was the wagon master and young Mels Grigsby was his sidekick.

The third and final wave of Grigsbys began in the Spring of 1853 and included Samuel Harrison Grigsby (59 yrs.) and his wife Mary Polly Lindsay (also 59) who died one week after they arrived in Napa or on Oct. 11, 1853. Samuel Harrison and Mary (Polly) were married Dec. 4, 1815 in Roane Co., TN. On Oct 1st of this trip, Lillard Harrison Grigsby and his wife and others died of camp fever (probably typhoid) in Bear Valley, CA. Also in this group were Samuel Harrison's brother, George, (72 years old) and George Jr. (36), Jesse Foster (34), Samuel Harrison II (22) and Benjamin (19) some with their families. These Grigsbys, who came to CA, were all descendants of Aaron Grigsby (b 1752/3 in Stafford Co., VA) who settled in Lynnville, Giles Co., TN. Most of these Grigsbys left TN in 1836 and by December of that year many of them were settled at Onyx on the Osage fork of the Gasconade River in Pulaski, Co., MO.

The Hales came to California in the same 1850 wagon train with my great-grandfather, John Melchesadeck Grigsby. This wagon train left MO in the Spring of 1850 and arrived in Napa, the first week of Oct. 1850. The Hales did not stay in Napa but settled first on the Russian River near Healdsburg and later moved to Knights Valley. John Melchesadeck Grigsby became good friends with William Wilson and stayed with their group. In early 1851 on a hunting trip they first saw Clear Lake in Lake Co. from the hills surrounding the south end of the lake. Mels married William's daughter, Margaret Emeline, on Feb. 23, 1853 in Lakeport and by 1854 both William and Mels were listed among those first settlers of Lower Lake, Lake Co., CA.

Submitted by Thomas Dye
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