

JOHNS, SUSAN
?-August 1896

Mrs. Susan Johns, a woman of 48 years of age, died at the residence on the Wheeler ranch northwest of Wheatland last Saturday, after an illness of about 48 hours. Interment was made in the Wheatland cemetery Monday morning at 10 o'clock, after a brief service had been held by Rev. Steere.

In connection with this death we learn that there exist the most pathetic circumstances and unbearable misfortune and affliction.

The deceased woman, her husband and four children, three sons and a daughter, were living a year ago on a ranch near The Dalls, Oregon. The husband, who was of frail constitution, was taken sick quite suddenly, and in a few days had passed away. Shortly afterwards one of the sons died suddenly, and again in a few weeks, another son was called to the great beyond.

Packing up what few earthly belongings the family had possessed, the heartbroken widow started with her two remaining children, a son and a daughter, to travel overland to Detroit, Michigan, where the family has friends. While making the journey through Idaho, and when in the most sparsely settled and desolate part of that state, the daughter was taken sick and before a settlement could be reached or a doctor procured, she had passed beyond the help of human aid. The mother and remaining son made a coffin out of the wagon box in which they had been traveling, and wrapping the form of the girl in a cloth, they consigned it to a rudely made and lonely grave far from the paths of civilization. There were no flowers to cover the mound so sacred, nor shrubs nor grass to cover the spot which was to be ever green in the minds of the two who had deposited the frail form. No marble slab, no superscription, only the drifting sands of southern Idaho, served as a witness to the burial.

Now, thoroughly heartbroken, the mother and son, not knowing what else to do, continued their journey east. Misfortune did not overtake them again, and they finally wended the way over the mountains and plains of Idaho and had nearly crossed Wyoming. When about 50 miles west of Wheatland, the mother was taken sick, and it was with difficulty that she stood it to ride until she reached Mr. Wheeler's ranch. There she was made as comfortable as sympathetic hands could possibly do, and medical aid was at once summoned, but it was of no avail. The Hand of Fate which seemed to have marked the family for its bitterest cup of misfortune, claimed another victim and in a few hours, the spirit that had suffered so much was called to join those of the loved ones who had gone before.

The remaining son, Loomis Johns by name, is but a mere boy in statue, although 18 years of age, and if ever a mortal soul was in need of sympathetic friends or kindly benevolence, it would seem he is certainly deserving of both. We are not informed what the boy will do, but learn that he is considering the advisability of returning to Oregon, where the family previously lived.