

On April 23, 1912 I (*Edmond S. Meany*) sent Miss Katharine B. Judson, then serving as research assistant to Orting for the purpose of interviewing Mr. Van Ogle on history. Among other narratives by him she brought this one about crossing the mountains:

“Leaving the summit, went about six miles on a backbone, steep slopes on each side, to the jumping off place. Mr. Lane was in the lead that day. He had a team of four horses. We rough-locked all the wheels of his wagon with chains. He started down with two men to hold the tongue of his wagon; the horses being taken off and a rope around a tree behind his wagon. The distance of steep grade was 180 feet. It was too steep for a footing. The wagon swung around, broke the coupling and tongue and upset. They could not hold it back or steady it. My team was next in line. I drove for Mr. Sarjent; so I had to follow. I was driving four yoke of oxen. I took off three yoke, leaving only the tongue yoke. All the wheels were rough-locked with chains. One hundred and eighty feet of rope was attached to the hind axle of the wagon and passed around a stout tree. Two men gradually let out the rope. The oxen braced their feet and slid straight down the hill without lifting a foot. Mr Sarjent had brought this rope with him, coiled up and fastened to the under side of the wagon box of one of his wagons. He thought he might need it. We had sent Mr. Lane ahead with his horses to get food for us. Then I drove a quarter of a mile with the wheels rough-locked and the other oxen pulling. All the teams came down this way; the loose cattle went over Indian trails. Thirty-eight wagons came over that hill in that way. Lane’s wagon was left behind. About a year later, he went back and got it. Then we were seven days until we got to Boys Creek, across the river from where Buckley is now. We left wagons up in the mountains and had to go back after them. There were no oxen killed for skins at all. I was twenty-eight years old and saw everything that was going on.”