September 3, 1846

I can feel my heart beginning to sink into despair and sorrow. So many tragedies. While walking alongside their wagon, Minnie’s only son Alex tripped over a rock into a tar pit. We tried to save him, but it went all to fast. Alex had sunk into the tar. Minnie is so numb, she can’t cry, but sit there, her face etched with pain and sadness a mother will feel when she looses a child. Leah, (pronounced Laya) wandered away, in search of some water. We couldn’t find her, but instead found Indian tracks into the area she went. They look like she had been kidnapped. Fred had to make a hard decision. If we stopped and searched, we would run out of water fast. If we didn’t, we would have to abandon her. For the health and welfare of the wagon train, he decided to give up on hopes of finding her. I can’t believe I will never see my dear friend again. I will never forget her.

**Devil’s Flat**

As I look around this desolate, the hottest you could ever imagine, place, all I can see is desert for miles around, bones for the remains of dead cattle, and empty, dried out water holes. It sickens me to see our empty water barrels, and sick cattle. Betty’s face is so thin, and always so thirsty, she always wants barrels of water we don’t have. We all have parched throats, but we can do nothing but take a sip of water every few minutes. As for our cracked lips, we rub axle grease on them but it is no good. If we get through Devils Flat, how, I think a miracle of rain and the once dried up water holes filled with fresh, sweet water, not the stale, fragnant water we have to boil to take germs out of. Hades Desert is probably in the same conditions, and the mountain pass will be even worse. But the sights of Oregon keep my spirits up!

Yours, always and forever,

Sophie Bethany Cline