

● **OVERLAND, 1852**

from October Roses

Inspired by Women's Diaries of the Westward Journey by Lillian Schlissel.

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My name is Emma Logan, and I come from Tennessee
It's there I spent my childhood with my friends and family
I married young John Logan back in 1844
That day he promised Pa I'd never go far from his door

The children came so quickly, but my Ma was so close by
She'd help out with the births, and then she'd hold 'em when
they'd cry
I thought my life was settled 'til the day John said to me
"Pack the wagon, woman. We are leaving Tennessee"

He had a notion to go West, he was the restless sort
And Lord knows, land was cheap, and our money always short
But I cried the day he told me, and I begged for us to stay
He only said, "We're goin'. It's best we don't delay".

'Twas in the Spring of '52 that we left Tennessee
Leaving my dear mother who I never more will see
And my friends, I thought my heart would break to leave them all
behind
For my husband's great adventure, his fortune for to find

For two months we had travelled--and half our oxen dead
Our wagon bein' slow the others chose to go ahead
I measured each day's progress by the miles and by the graves
And the fear that gripped my heart I will remember all my days

The baby came in August in a cold Sierra storm
We huddled in the cold and wet and waited for the morn
How I longed for women's company, a woman's tender care
Next morning early we moved out, to rest we did not dare

My sweet baby Sierra was the first child that did die
We laid her in the hard-baked earth, and I too weak to cry
Then cholera took my oldest boy - his sister, Annabelle
Fell out of the wagon and was crushed beneath the wheels

Half my children gone and the winter comin' on
We came to California nearly starved, our money gone
John went to pan for gold and soon forgot the kids and me
And now I take in washin' and I curse his memory

Now if your husband tells you, load the wagons, you must go
To seek your fortune in the West, my dear, you must not go
But remember what I've told you lest your fate be like my own
Make your own choice. Let him go. You're better off alone