

During the time the legal suits were being filed, Letitia and the children left their home of seven years and moved to the upper Cow Creek Valley in Douglas County. They took what remained of their worldly goods. It is thought that she may have traveled there with the Nidey family, who were pioneers in 1852. The distance from Letitia's home on Soap Creek to the Hardy Eliff cabin where the Nidey's first camped, is about 160 miles, or about one week's travel at that time. There she made her home with the Hardy Eliff family in the upper Cow Creek Valley. She worked for Eliff family and also served as the community midwife.

There's a story from this time that has survived over 160 years. Although it may have been exaggerated over time, we believe some of it to be based in fact. Once when Letitia was staying with the Nidey family all of the men were away from the cabin. At some point the Nidey girls were playing outside their cabin when they were harassed by a group of men on horseback, acting in a hostile manner. Letitia is said to have emerged from the cabin, a "large coalblack woman with a deep voice," brandishing a carving knife or a cleaver and frightened the men away, thereby saving the girls. The men were said to be shocked by the appearance of a big, loud, threatening person with black skin and a weapon, and reacted as if seeing a ghost or evil spirit.

While living in Cow Creek, Letitia found a lawyer who was also an anti-slavery activist. He took her case and sued for what was essentially back wages, arguing that David had promised Letitia that she would inherit his property. He argued that this was an arrangement David had failed to write in a will but it was verbally understood between them. He also argued that Letitia and her children depended on this money. Letitia's lawyer squared off against Greenberry Smith's lawyer. Smith's lawyer was John Kelsay, a notorious pro-slavery white supremacist. This court case had great symbolic significance in the Oregon Territory and beyond it.