FRONTIERSWOMEN: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF
THE OREGON TRAIL EXPERIENCE IN THE NINETEENTH
AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES

by

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B.A. Simon Fraser University, 1987.

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS
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of
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Title of Thesis/Project/Extended Essay

Frontierswomen: A Comparative Analysis Of The Oregon Trail

Experience In The Nineteenth And Twentieth Centuries

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ABSTRACT

From the 1840s to the end of the nineteenth century, well over 50,000 people migrated by wagon train to the Oregon Territory. This thesis evaluates the experience of women making this trek between the years 1845 and 1885, through a late twentieth century re-enactment and examines the contemporary experience by comparing it with the record of diaries and historical studies of the early migrations. The result suggests those issues, actions and reactions that are found to be held in common between the two periods. What is enduring about the trek experience, and what is of only ephemeral importance are thus highlighted, contributing to an understanding of the regional character of the Pacific Northwest.

The conceptual framework draws upon the Turnerian frontier thesis, formulated shortly after the migrations ceased. Physical landscapes are emphasized, for direct encounters with elements of the physical geography (storms, way-finding, locations of water, fording of rivers) were crucial. Experiences of women are analyzed in the context of the general migration focusing around the following issues: women's roles as decision-makers along the trail, adaptations in social organization made among women, and between women and men.

The methods employed were a search of, and immersion in, diaries and commentaries written by women on the trail, and participation in a re-enactment of the trek itself. On the trek, taken with a late-twentieth century group, the author kept her own extensive diary and field notes, using these in direct comparison with those surviving from a century ago. As an enduring response to the trek experience, there was and is a conscious appreciation of the physical landscape for its ruggedness, dangers, and beauty. But in the last century there was also an appreciation of its potential, for many women appraised it with a calculating eye for what it offered as a basis for settlement and farming. In response to the migration experience, women learned to cope with toil and stress, banding together in ways that may have been influential in contributing to the relatively progressive position women have held in the life and politics of the Pacific Northwest.
DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my mother and father, my sisters Jan and Joanne, my daughters, Katherine and Erin, my granddaughter, Mary, and to all of the women whose lives have touched my heart and soul in the process of researching and writing this book.

WE'RE HEADING WEST DARLIN'
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A special note of thanks to Dan Turbeville from the Geography Department at Eastern Washington State University, for presiding as external examiner.

My heartfelt thanks also goes to Robert Horsfall for being my friend and confidante, and to other members of the faculty and staff in the Geography Department of Simon Fraser University for their support, especially Ray Squirrel, Chief Cartographer.

For various suggestions, information, and whining sessions, I would like to thank my dear friends Lydia Harris and Karen Ryan.

I would like to express my love and deepest gratitude to those women and men who lent unfailing support to keep me emotionally, spiritually and physically healthy on a continuing and daily basis. My family in recovery includes Mary S., Hella P., Pat L., Craig L., Gerry S., Frank W., Gerry M., Jim M., Bob K., Gene P., Jim W., Ric M., and Glenn V. I wish you all another twenty-four hours.

Finally, and with humility, I would like to thank God.
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The United States of America was plagued in the early nineteenth century by depression (1837-1843) but relieved intermittently by periods of revival and prosperity. By 1870 the continental United States as we know it today was in place. The inclusion of the land west of the Mississippi had taken place "through conquest and annexation, purchase and international agreement." An important international agreement was the settling of the boundary dispute surrounding the Willamette Valley, and Puget Sound. Fort Vancouver, under the direction of Dr. John McLoughlin, Chief Factor of the Department of the Columbia of the Hudson's Bay Company, was the center of economic activity for the Pacific Northwest Territory along with Forts Colville and Hall. The American Fur Company established a post, Astoria, at the mouth of the Columbia in 1812. The value of this part of the continent had been argued both in Britain and the United States for years and "the 'Oregon question' became a diplomatic problem in 1818, with the United States urging the extension of the 49th parallel to the Pacific Coast and Great Britain holding out for the Columbia River as the boundary. In compromise, the two countries agreed to delay the final settlement of the boundary dispute for a ten-year period, thus initiating a "joint occupation" of the disputed territory." It was not
until the depression of 1837 that a real sense of urgency was felt by the United States to establish singular ownership. "And there was another factor. In a fashion that men and women of the twentieth century will never fully understand, farmers of the Mississippi valley and the Plains states had begun to feel "crowded"." The result was that in 1846 the 49th parallel was established as the border between the United States and British territory, formally establishing the United States hegemony over what would become Oregon Territory.

During the 1830s the Oregon Territory was widely publicized as a land of milk and honey by several societies established in the eastern United States for the purpose of promoting the settling of the American west. These included the "American Society for Encouraging the Settlement of the Oregon Territory" and "at least ten "Oregon Societies"... formed in the towns of the Mississippi Valley with members pledged to make the westward trek." The east-bound Astorians (1812-13) were the first known white men to follow the north banks of the North Platte and Platte Rivers to a point below Grand Island (Nebraska); there they obtained a canoe from the Indians to complete the wearisome journey they had been pursuing on foot with a single pack horse.

By 1843, a steady stream of migration to the Pacific Northwest along the Oregon Trail was underway, with the first company of approximately one hundred persons leaving for Oregon "under the leadership of Dr. Elizah White, a member of the Willamette mission."
WHY OREGON

In addition to glorious praises of accessibility and climate put forth by enthusiastic promoters, two important pieces of legislation were instituted. The first was the Preemption Bill passed in 1842. "It protected the farmer who made improvements. It also whetted his appetite for free land." The second piece of legislation was passed in 1850 and titled the Oregon Donation Land Law. "By terms of this law, a married man was allowed 640 acres, one-half of which was to belong to the wife. The land law, applicable to all of Oregon but used for land selections mainly in the Willamette Valley, remained operative until 1855." It should also be noted that not only did the latter piece of legislation encourage easterners to travel west but for the year 1851 it also "...diverted no fewer than 2,000 overlanders from California to the Willamette Valley of Oregon." As a result of the abundance of press devoted to the promotion of permanent settlement in Oregon and the supporting land legislation 'Oregon fever' took hold.

Thousands of people migrated to Oregon during the years 1843 to 1860. Figures indicate that well over 50,000 migrants travelled from the eastern United States to Oregon over this seventeen-year period. And a significantly larger number, 200,000, travelled to California. The year 1849 saw the bulk of the migrants travelling to California to pan for gold while the years 1850 to 1854 saw the largest number
of Oregon-bound migrants along the trails. (see Figures 1a and 1b)

Attempts to understand the historical significance of this westward migration to the Pacific Coast region have been undertaken by several prominent scholars, but perhaps none so well-known as Frederick Jackson Turner.

FREDERICK JACKSON TURNER

In 1893, fifty years after the first major wagon train departed Independence, Missouri for the Pacific Coast, Frederick Jackson Turner presented his influential paper entitled *The Significance of the Frontier in American History* which was immediately hailed as "only slightly lower in the popular estimation than the Bible, the Constitution, and the Declaration of Independence."\(^1\)\(^8\)  Turner's frontier thesis has been studied and argued for and against ever since it was put forward as arguably the\(^1\)^\(^9\) definitive historical interpretation of western American expansion and the emerging American character. Over 100 years later there has been a renewed interest in the ideas and concepts introduced by him. This thesis defines the American frontier within both the framework of time, and space. The frontier occurs during the nineteenth century and, in terms of place, the frontier exists outside the established periphery of human settlement.

Turner believed that the continually westward recession of the frontier was due to specific eastern economic
Western section of Oregon Trail -- Including Alternative Routes

[Map showing various routes and landmarks along the Oregon Trail, including Fort Bridger, Wyoming, Fort Hall, Oregon, and Columbia River, with a focus on alternative routes and landmarks such as SALT LAKE and CEDAR CITY.]
conditions including increased urbanization, expanding markets and immigration. As people migrated west of the Mississippi to escape the sickness, poverty and overcrowding in the cities, they continually encountered untamed land and it was the process of settling this land that developed the American character traits of:

...coarseness and strength combined with acuteness and inquisitiveness...(a) practical, inventive turn of mind, quick to find expedients...powerful to effect great ends...(full of) restless, nervous energy...dominant individualism, working for good and for evil, and withal that buoyancy and exuberance which comes with freedom...

Turner was something of an environmental determinist and believed that "the land made the man". But of course, Turner's use of the word "man" was not meant to exclude but rather include women. The point is he did not differentiate. And in this sense, he did not address how the process of taming the frontier specifically affected women.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

As with everything else written before 1960, the concept of gender is noticeably and understandably missing from Turner's frontier thesis. This study re-examines and broadens his approach to differentiate women's experience of the frontier insofar as it was expressed as a result of the Oregon Trail trek. It should be noted that in the early years of the opening of the American west the percentage of male population was significantly higher than that of women but by the mid-nineteenth century the figures were much more
balanced. This balancing out of the male to female ratio occurred as thousands of families migrated to the Pacific Coast along the Oregon Trail.

The problem is how did the American frontier migration experience along the Oregon Trail specifically affect women, did the women change, were those changes permanent, and if they did change and the changes were permanent, are women a stronger reflection than men of Turner's frontier thesis. Women were on the Oregon Trail in the nineteenth century because they wanted to be there. They knew why they were migrating, they understood precisely what they were leaving behind and although in many cases they did not know exactly what their circumstances would be upon arrival in the new environment of the Oregon Territory, they were anxious and excited to begin again where physical, economic and social conditions were better and the door to unlimited opportunity was open to all.

This thesis examines three issues related to the concept of gender. Firstly, there is the issue of female participation in the migration process along the Oregon Trail. Were nineteenth-century women just along for the ride? Many twentieth-century historians theorize that women were for the most part unwilling actors but their diaries reveal them as active decision makers and equal participants.

The second gender issue relates to women's psychological and physical adaptation to the landscape and how their
experience in relation to the Oregon Trail landscape affected their perceptions of themselves as women, of societal norms, and of their own abilities. Examination of this issue is based on the view of Turner as a geographer\textsuperscript{29} as well as an historian and his work, therefore, provides an important basis for research in historical geography.

Geographically speaking, Turner's approach is broadly one of environmental determinism. Society's character is expressed and perhaps even determined by its relationship to the landscape.\textsuperscript{30}

The formalization of environmental determinism... is frequently attributed to Friedrich Ratzel, yet while his Anthropogeography was conceived as a branch of biogeography he...recognized, like Vidal de la Blache, that the human's role was both 'active' and 'passive'.\textsuperscript{31}

To understand how women were affected, it is necessary to examine what social changes were reflected in the new society formed in the Pacific Northwest. This thesis hypothesizes that what encouraged these women to act in a liberated fashion once they arrived in the final frontier of Oregon was in part the direct result of the cumulative effects of the migration along the Oregon Trail, the intermediate frontier, on their already well-established individual personalities.\textsuperscript{32}

The third issue examined is that of the Oregon Trail landscape experience as unique\textsuperscript{33} and separate for each individual woman. Although each woman's experience was her
own, it took place within a female community experience\textsuperscript{34} and served to strengthen, support and define that community.

\textbf{METHODOLOGY}

Since 1970, historical research and writing has been devoted to the concept of engendering the west using women's journals and the diaries of their migrations along the Oregon Trail. This new western history, which seeks to define a fuller and truer understanding of the past, not only includes women, but also ethnic minority studies. Such studies constitute a challenge to the ethnocentric works of Turner and others.

One of the most widely discussed recent books on western history, Patricia Limerick's \textit{The Legacy of Conquest}, is an incisive feminist and minority-oriented critique of Western history as a heroic national epic. Limerick sets out to demolish the myth of the Golden West by arguing that the West was more often a land of failure than the Promised Land for settlers; and that incorporating female and minority accounts of traditional male-oriented western history debilitates the myth completely.\textsuperscript{35}

This thesis incorporates and re-examines Turner's frontier thesis in relation to specific gender issues, utilizing a comparative exploratory method and the biographical approach. It is the intention of this author to better understand women's short-term and long-term relationship to the landscape in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.\textsuperscript{36}

The comparative exploratory method utilized in the thesis is based on the journal of exploratory traverse method set out by Platt (1959) and exemplified by Lewis and Clark's expedition, 1804-1806. It was an extremely useful
research tool for this study and is further supported by Thomas J. Farnham in his celebrated journal recorded in the year 1839 wherein he comments that "The trials of a journey in the western wilderness can never be detailed in words. To be understood, they must be endured. Their effects upon the physical and mental system are equally prostrating." 37

The migration process had a direct impact on the personalities of women who crossed the Oregon Trail landscape between the years 1845 and 1885 and those changes are reflected in their personal writings. A biographical approach was used to compare those journals written during the nineteenth century and a twentieth-century journal written by this author during a partial re-creation of the same migration process over virtually the same natural landscape.

The basis for the comparison between women on the landscape in nineteenth and twentieth century America utilizes the biographical approach. 38 Thirty-eight women's diaries and letters recorded between the years 1845 and 1885 and this author's diary recorded in the summer of 1993 are examined. They offer significant scope and make note of changes between the rigors-of-the-road in both centuries. The natural landscape did not change but increased human settlement on the landscape and especially the building of the railroads, provided significant relief to the latter-day migrants. The late 1880s still saw a great many migrants coming to settle in Oregon and Washington territories. A large number of these later migrants traveled by wagon
train39 but sometimes travelled short distances by train on existing trunk lines especially in the area of the Columbia River.40

RESEARCH MATERIAL FOR THE THESIS

Women's historical journals from the Oregon Trail are the primary data base for observations about landscape experience in nineteenth century America. They provide personal views and reveal sufficient information to re-evaluate and broaden Frederick Jackson Turner's frontier thesis.

The first criterion for selection of primary material was related to the geographic route followed by each author. Since the Oregon Trail comprised two main routes with several alternative routes opening up over the forty-year period through various states, it was necessary to include a sufficient number of journals that reflected the landscape on each of those main and alternative routes, and which spanned several years, in order to provide a basis of comparison of the landscape and to allow for the personal likes and dislikes of each author.

The selection of primary material is based on inclusion of those historical documents which record the Oregon Trail experience in the fullest descriptive detail not only describing the landscape and climate but also which give the reader a sense of the individual personality of each author. Those journals which record thoughts and feelings associated
with the daily activities and occurrences along the Trail lent themselves more appropriately to this thesis. Journals which would were not included were those which tended to be composed mainly of lists such as grave countings or those where there was not sufficient description of the landscape to be able to follow the geographic route or to get a clear sense of the author's reaction to it.

A wide range of diversity exists with respect to the authors themselves. Their ages range from thirteen years to sixty-six years; there are differences in marital status, education, places of birth, work experience, overall health, and reasons for migrating.

Some of the historical journals and letters come from the Oregon Historical Society in Portland. The rest of the journals and letters have been published in book form by Kenneth L. Holmes in an 11-volume series, material from Volumes I, III, V, VI, VII, IX, X and XI having been utilized here. Both sources of primary materials have transcribed text word-for-word from the original documents in order to preserve the original intent of the writer, in other words, "...to let the diarists and correspondents tell their own story in their own words, with as little scholarly trimming as possible."41

There are no shortage of maps which appear in print for this particular time-period in American history and related to this section of the American landscape. My original maps are compilations based on those found in Holmes' work and
from the work of both physical and historical geographers such as Wallace W. Atwood (1940), Ralph H. Brown (1948), Samuel N. Dicken and Emily F. Dicken (1979), E. W. Gilbert (1933) and D. W. Meinig (1968), and the Federal Writers' Project.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE THESIS

The second chapter contains a literature review and a discussion of the biographical approach in the social sciences and historical geography. Frederick Jackson Turner's frontier thesis is examined in light of current migration theory and as it relates to nineteenth century women. And in conclusion a brief, overall examination of the current scholarly work in women's history is discussed.

Chapter Three reconstructs the Oregon Trail from Independence, Missouri to Portland, Oregon in a physical sense. The trail is divided by four physiographic regions, in order from east to west and through successive states, and the discussion here includes reference to climate and vegetation.

It is in these physical contexts that migrant women's experiences of their physical environment is set, and in which their attitudes and values, not only as women in relation to men, but as amateur botanists and geologists, naturopaths, midwives42, "leaders, writers, scientists, artists, and explorers,"43 may be depicted.
Chapter Four is a discussion of this author's personal journal written during the summer of 1993 while accompanying a wagon train which recreated as closely as possible the original 1843 Oregon Trail experience through the states of Idaho and Oregon. As well as the physical landscape, eighteen other criteria are examined which include expectations and hopes; climate, including dust, wind, temperature and precipitation; hardships related to walking; riding a horse; riding in the wagons; sanitation; campsite locations; clothing and laundry; financial; food; medical; relationship with saloon keepers/alcohol consumption; communities encountered enroute; relationships with day-by-day traveling companions; relationships with community or family of state walkers; male/female relationships; relationships with first nations; regrets and fulfillment.

Chapter Five examines the historical journals using the same criteria set out in Chapter four.

Chapter Six is a descriptive content analysis and comparison between the historical journals discussed in Chapter five with my own journal. Comparison can take place where these journals overlap with respect to the physical landscape of the two western physiographic regions. Generalizations concerning the two remaining eastern physiographic regions will be made separately but they are of less importance in the present work. A comparison of the remaining criteria is also included where applicable and the results discussed. A concluding statement is made with
respect to the thesis problem of re-evaluating and broadening Turner's frontier thesis to include women and the final thoughts on this fascinating study.
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THE BIOGRAPHICAL APPROACH

In both geographical and historical senses there are several categories of literature which apply to the study of women's migration along the Oregon Trail. A plethora of books and articles have been published on the historical and physical geography of western North American regions, the exploratory process as geographic method, Frederick Jackson Turner's frontier thesis, migration theory, gender and geography, western American women's history, and the validity of the biographical approach. But there has been to date no study that incorporates all of this material in a cohesive framework in a qualitative attempt to re-evaluate and broaden Turner's thesis as it applies to nineteenth century frontier women and which also sets out to examine in some practical way the psychological effects of migration through the use of personal narratives. A comparative analysis between this literature and that of a contemporary twentieth century migration experience and biography provides the basis for this thesis.

GEOGRAPHICAL LITERATURE

Due to the vastness and variety of the continent, regional studies have represented an appropriate methodology.

It is this regional geographic framework that forms the basis of this study of women moving along the American landscape. For the most part, literature concerning
regional studies of North America has been dominated by male authors and according to Kay (1991) "The male orientation and near-absence of material on women in North American regional historical geography are easy enough to document...The challenge awaiting regional historical geographers who are no longer content with gender-blind studies is to demonstrate how gender-balanced research could be conducted and what probably will be the implications of doing so." 

Literature which effectively deals with the physical geography of western North America is represented in major integrative works such as Fenneman's *Physiography of Western United States*. The effectiveness of Fenneman's work for this thesis lies in the fact that he divides "the country into natural physical units called provinces and sections." Fenneman discusses ten physical regions of which eight relate to a study of the Oregon Trail. Brown (1948) also discusses physical geography but in a more general way. Of particular interest are his descriptions of the Great Plains, the Oregon Country and the Great Basin. Both Gilbert (1933) and Meinig (1968) discuss the physical nature of western America with the latter emphasizing the Great Plains. Dicken and Dicken (1979) provide an historical geography of the far-west destination region, Oregon. (See Figures 1a and 1b, Chapter One)

An invaluable piece of literature for the study of the Oregon Trail landscape was undertaken by the Federal
Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration of the United States and published in 1939. It was published at the end of one of the worst periods of depression in American history and was written as one in a series of 'main-highway guidebooks' as a tribute to "the American spirit of independence that carried thousands of emigrants from the East to the Pacific Coast..." as a result of the great depression occurring exactly one hundred years earlier. The Director of the Federal Writers' Project, Henry G. Alsberg, notes "the great difference between then and now is to be found in the fact that today there are no longer western frontiers. Since we cannot migrate to undeveloped land as a solution for our troubles, we are now cultivating our neglected human and material resources..."50

This book sets out to describe, in detail, the physical landscape of the main route of the Oregon Trail as well as alternative routes through particular states, paying particular attention to natural physical landmarks used as guideposts by the early migrants.

A second piece of non-traditional geographical literature was Merrill J. Mattes' (1988) Platte River Road Narratives. Mattes was:

...a long-time employee of the National Park Service. As such he served in many of the places about which he has written, so that his unusual accumulation of knowledge is a rare combination of practical, hands-on experience and scholarly research. I suspect that Mattes is unique in having this dual background and that no one else but he could have written this book.51
Mattes' purpose is to provide a "descriptive bibliography"\textsuperscript{52} that serves an historical and geographical overview. "The problem of geographical nomenclature" is highlighted, for "...in the mid-nineteenth century there were many variant terms, which require explanation."\textsuperscript{53}

A review of both the geographical literature and the historical literature concerning the concept of landscape is important for the purposes of this thesis in that much of the historical-biographical material examined is taken up with descriptions of places\textsuperscript{54} and the psychological effect of place\textsuperscript{55} on the daily lives of the women on the Oregon Trail. The available literature supports the concept of individual perception of the migration experience\textsuperscript{56}:

...Take a small but varied company to any convenient viewing place overlooking some portion of city and countryside and have each...describe the "landscape"...to detail what it is composed of and say something about the "meaning" of what can be seen. It will soon be apparent that even though we gather together and look in the same direction at the same instant, we will not - we cannot - see the same landscape...Thus we confront the central problem: any landscape is composed not only of what lies before our eyes but what lies within our heads.\textsuperscript{57}

A valuable piece of recent literature concerning the managed landscape of North America (particularly that of golf courses) has been written by a group of American Environmental Consultants and published by the United States Golf Association. The \textit{Landscape Restoration Handbook} is "an ecological call-to-action." It is a call to those who manage yards, farms, corporate land, parks, school yards,
roadsides, and golf courses to consider a more natural vision for the human-managed landscape...Naturalizing and restoring the earth must become the business of everyone."^58 Although not strictly a physical geography text, of particular interest to this thesis is Chapter Six, titled "Natural Regions of the United States and Their Dominant Ecological Communities" which outlines several 'potential' natural vegetation regions including the Central Plains, Great Plains, Eastern High Plains, Southern Rocky Mountains, Wyoming Basin, Wasatch/Uinta Mountains, High Desert, Northern Rocky Mountains and West Coast Mountains. If the first two regions^59 are collapsed under one heading for the Great Plains, this coincides nicely with Fenneman's eight physiographic regions discussed earlier.

GEOGRAPHICAL LITERATURE ABOUT EXPLORATION

Exploration as geographical process and method is as old as recorded geography. Boorstin (1985) avers that early exploration (geography) was inextricably tied to religion:

The same faith that had fantasized the landscape and imprisoned Christians in dogmatic geography would lure pilgrims and crusaders from Europe on paths of discovery to the East. The Star of Bethlehem, which drew the Three Kings, guided countless faithful in later centuries to their Holy Land. Pilgrimage became a Christian institution and paths of faith would become paths of discovery.^60

Being mindful that pilgrimages are not an exclusively Christian practice or tradition^61, Boorstin also suggests that before there was an understanding of the "facts" of the geography of the earth's surface obtained through the
exploration process, there was indeed "the geography of the imagination" or in other words a landscape created in the minds of men and women especially with respect to the importance of imaginary mountains as dwelling places of the Gods (Greeks, Hindus, Japanese).

The concept of real and imagined landscapes is important in the geographical literature about exploration. With reference to the Lewis and Clark Expedition of 1804-1806, Allen states that:

"Geographical knowledge is not necessarily 'accurate'. That is, from it may be developed images of, or patterns of belief about, the nature of land that are not fully consistent either with geographical reality or with what consensual opinion considers to be geographical reality."  

He establishes three zones of (geographic) knowledge:

...first-degree (real) knowledge, obtained "through active, commercial, diplomatic, ecclesiastical, military, and scholarly enterprise"; second-degree (real) knowledge, derived from travelers' accounts and/or fairly reliable hearsay; and third-degree knowledge, acquired only through rumour and conjecture...

Allen's theory provides for the use of biography as an approach to understanding women's response to the landscape of the Oregon Trail while Platt (1959) positions the exploratory process as method in his book *Field Study In American Geography*. He also cites the journey of Lewis and Clark as example stating that "the whole enterprise follows the ancient objective in geography of providing accurate
descriptive information on hitherto un-known parts of the world."\(^{67}\)

A more traditional form of literature which focuses on exploration is the work of E. W. Gilbert (1933). Norton (1984) criticizes him because:

...unfortunately the majority of (his) work does not attempt either to place specific explorations in any general context or to relate exploration to subsequent developments...There are indications...that historical geographers are revising their approach. The incorporation of behaviour concepts into research has led to assessments of exploratory images (Dicken and Dicken 1979) and to attempts to conceptualize the exploratory process (Allen 1972; Overton 1981).\(^{68}\)

Primary source material in the form of journals of exploration include such authors as John Bäll writing in 1835 concerning "the geology and physical features of the country west of the Rocky Mountains, with miscellaneous facts"\(^{69}\); Thomas Farnham, writing in 1839, who was "hired by Horace Greeley\(^{70}\) along with other eastern influences to make this trip and related his experiences to those interested in moving West."\(^{71}\); Joel Palmer's book *Journal of Travels Over The Rocky Mountains, To The Mouth Of The Columbia River: Made during the Years 1845 and 1846, containing minute descriptions of the Valleys of the Willamette, Umpqua, and Clamet: A General Description of Oregon Territory: Its Inhabitants, Climate, Soil, Productions. Etc., Etc.; A List of Necessary Outfits For Emigrants; and a Table of Distances from Camp to Camp on the Route\(^{72}\); and, Overton Johnson and William H. Winter's book
Route Across The Rocky Mountains. With a Description of Oregon and California: Their Geographical Features, Their Resources, Soil, Climate, Productions, &C. &C...Of The Emigration of 1843. All of the historical journals have contributed singly and collectively to enhance a modern-day understanding of the western landscape. Also, many of these journals were used as Guide Books, often referred to by women as they wrote in their own diaries. Besides their usefulness as guide books, each of these journals was extremely interesting and delightful to read simply for their own sake as pieces of well-written and well-researched literature.

John Ball was a science teacher and a member of J. Wyeth's 1832 party travelling from Lexington, Missouri to Fort Vancouver. His geological treatise was published by the American Journal of Science in April, 1835 and as such provides a sound base of early knowledge of the physical geography of the Oregon Trail.

Thomas Farnham had a "gift for writing..." and, it was not difficult for him to describe his experiences in incredible detail. His descriptions of Indian villages, their customs and dress, forts, landscapes, animals and personal hardships of the trip are of great interest and educational value to all. His journal is of particular interest to this study as it represents the earliest recorded journal this author could find, written by someone travelling by wagon train along the Oregon Trail.
Joel Palmer was a politician from Indiana who had served two terms in the legislature from 1843 to 1845. His restlessness overtook him in the spring of 1845 and he made the trip to Oregon, writing a detailed account of the journey. Palmer's journal is:

...a detailed, factual account of his travels, with accurate information about springs, waterholes, trails, mountain passes, pasturage, dangers to be avoided, Indian customs, and all the other lore than an emigrant traveling the long road to Oregon would need, the document is not without literary interest. It provides a number of fascinating descriptive and narrative passages.

Palmer's journal contains an appendix which includes a dictionary of 'Chinook Jargon' and a very useful Table of Distances. His journal is referred to by women writing along the Trail.

Overton Johnson and William H. Winter's book provides useful information concerning relations between travelling companies and the First Nations encountered along the Oregon Trail. Their company seemed to experience more hostility than this author found recorded by any of the women's diaries examined for this study. The women generally experienced quite the opposite.

GEOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL LITERATURE ABOUT MIGRATION

Ogden in defining the term 'migration' states that "a general distinction is usually made between mobility, which is a very general term covering all kinds of territorial movements, both temporary and permanent over various distances, and migration", which is more restricted in
meaning, implying a permanent or semi-permanent change of residence." And according to Pooley and Whyte:

Until the nineteenth century concern with migration was of a practical rather than an academic nature...

There has been a growing body of research into migration in the modern world by geographers, economists, sociologists... and a variety of analytical techniques has been used... Along with this there has been increasing interest in the nature and role of migration in past societies... In particular migration studies have benefited from the more rigorous evaluation of sources, the development of more sophisticated techniques of analysis and the formulation of new theoretical approaches...

The work of early statistical researchers like Ravenstein79 and a wealth of readily available contemporary commentary on internal migration... made it clear that migration was a pervasive element... during the era of industrialization... knowing that migration had occurred on a large scale was only a start... we are still a long way from knowing in detail the scale, pattern, and nature of internal migration and emigration in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries... 80

It is with the qualitative nature of internal migration as it relates to the recession of the American frontier in the nineteenth century and a re-enactment of the migration experience in the twentieth century, that this thesis concerns itself but Pooley and Whyte raise a concern that although:

Material from diaries and letters can shed considerable light on the individual motives involved in migration, as well as on the detailed processes operating... such evidence is limited in its occurrence and is heavily biased towards those who were literate. Diaries... can include relevant information about migration, but few studies have sought to collect a
Pooley and Whyte, cont'd...

large volume of individual experience on migration, nor have they tried to check the representativeness of this material. They criticize "very small-scale detailed studies with a humanistic bias, based on the evidence of the diaries and correspondence of migrants" as "'parochial' in the best tradition" but they never clearly differentiate between large and small-scale studies. How many migrants constitute a large study and how many a small study? This thesis, although perhaps small-scale in nature, is an attempt to fill in the gap in the humanistic migration literature, the difference being that it is based upon conclusions made with respect to its comparative descriptive content analysis of nineteenth and twentieth century migration over a portion of the same natural landscape by women. This thesis argues that there is sufficient primary historical literature to evaluate women's motives and feelings concerning migration along the Oregon Trail and that bias towards the literate acknowledged, for the most part, these women including those who were literate and barely literate, educated and uneducated, have much to say about the nature of the migration process.

Pooley and Whyte suggest that to date the largest proportion of migration studies are quantitative in nature and take into account:

...the geography or history through which they (migrants) move. Thus migration must be explicitly related to factors such as...availability and cost of
Murphey admonishes the reader that "...for most people migration is a painful and difficult enterprise not to be undertaken lightly." And it is by re-creating and experiencing the physical act itself along with a comparative descriptive analysis of its recorded effect on women in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that will possibly afford a better understanding of the nature of the migration process.

Historians writing about migration in nineteenth-century America often come to the same conclusion and that is that "...incessant wandering...seems the one constant in American society since its founding." Lee goes further to suggest that:

...migration has been a force of greatest moment in American civilization, and that from the magnitude and character of migration within this country certain consequences logically follow. And yet these in turn reinforce the tendency to migrate, so that when we try to arrive at cause and effect we are caught in a never ending circle in which the apparent effects viewed in a different way seem to have produced the very phenomena we first accounted as causes. It is therefore not maintained, paraphrasing Turner, that migration explains American civilization. It certainly does not, but that it was and is a major force in the development of American civilization and in the shaping of American character hardly anyone will deny.
GEOGRAPHICAL LITERATURE ABOUT GENDER

It is only in the last twenty years that the social sciences incorporated studies which highlight women as a specific category of conceptualization. Currently there is much debate about the validity of qualitative versus quantitative methods in the Social Sciences specifically related to feminist research and more particularly about the problem(s) of doing qualitative feminist research in geography. McDowell points out that "Feminists are demanding a new way of doing things, a different approach to research..." and she argues in favor of debunking the misconception that "...work that acknowledges emotions, feelings, personal involvement, empathy and intuition may...be seen as unsound, even as journalistic or as, that ultimate academic insult, 'popular'."

This argument has specific implications for a study of the historical geography of women on the Oregon Trail using the biographical approach. Kay adds further support when she calls for:

...a women's historical geography imperative: to determine how historical geographers of rural regions might incorporate information on women, to reinterpret or extend our traditional narrative forms, and to explore new versions that seem more gender-balanced.

Butlin agrees when he states that:

Great advances have been made through feminist and women's studies publications and groups, and slowly but surely these new perspectives are being experienced in the world of academic geography...As far as historical geography is concerned, the progress is too slow but nonetheless discernible. Rose and Ogborn (1988) have
Butlin, cont'd...

spelled out some of the problems and general issues and possibilities for a more gender-sensitive historical geography. They argue...that through the neglect of women's and gender perspectives in research and writing, and through ignorance of feminism, historical geographers have either marginalized women in their narratives or ignored women to the point where they 'become hidden from geography as they were once "hidden from history". They disappear from the reconstructed past as if they had never been...the neglect of gender as a major social structure means that historical geography is propagating an inaccurate understanding of the past...101

This present study was not designed to support or criticize current feminist theory but it inevitably participates in an attempt to explore the potential of research informed by gender issues. In light of recent work, it must be fully aware of some of the specific issues of feminist contributions, and the possible implications for a study of this kind which seeks to put forth a more accurate gender-balanced understanding of the past.

TWENTIETH-CENTURY HISTORIANS AND THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY AMERICAN FRONTIER

The period of the American frontier which Frederick Jackson Turner attempted to analyze, coincided "with Jacksonian democracy -- the so-called "middle period," which lasted 50 years more or less. It was preceded...by the early national period, extending from the Founding Fathers in the 1780s to Jackson in 1830..."102 This periodization of American history forms the basis of Earle's "experiment in macrohistorical geography."103 Earle accepts "traditional historical interpretations"104 which suggest that
American history can be relatively neatly divided into 50-year intervals and that within each 50-year period there are "six shorter and typically overlapping phases: crisis, creativity, conflict, diffusion, dissent, and decline." He also suggests that "the driving force behind the periodic structure of American history is recurrent and multiregional agrarian innovation and spatial diffusion." In this sense then, the taming and consolidation of the American frontier was more a function of the spread of the well-established and experienced rural east to form the new rural west than the epic-quality history of man versus nature. But the concept of diffusion is not sufficient to explain the frontier in terms of human experience.

There is currently much heated debate that opposes the Turnerian view of the frontier with the New Western History. Nineteen-ninety-three marked the 100th anniversary of the meeting of the American Historical Association during which Turner delivered his essay on The Significance of the Frontier in American History in which he stated that:

...American development has exhibited not merely advance along a single line, but a return to primitive conditions on a continually advancing frontier line, and a new development for that area. American social development has been continually beginning over again on the frontier. This perennial rebirth, this fluidity of American life, this expansion westward with its new opportunities, its continuous touch with the simplicity of primitive society, furnish the forces dominating American character.

Critics of Turner's frontier thesis rallied forces after his death in 1932 and the debate has raged in-
cessantly ever since with staunch supporters like Frederick Merk and Ray Billington. This thesis attempts to re-examine Turner's frontier thesis (frontier as agent) using the concept of environmental determinism. It considers the physical act of migration, the interaction of the people, more specifically women, with the landscape, and tries to determine what, if any, affect these had on women's characters, individually and collectively. It does not attempt to settle the dispute over the concepts of frontier versus west (both powerful ideological places) nor the debate over the fact that some historians believe the American frontier has yet to disappear entirely. This author believes the frontier, as defined in chapter one of the thesis, still exists.

TWENTIETH-CENTURY HISTORIANS AND THE OREGON TRAIL

Romantic and real fascination with the Oregon Trail is exemplified by the literature of nineteenth- and twentieth-century writers and historians. A classic in American literature is the celebrated novel The Oregon Trail by Francis Parkman. Based upon Parkman's own personal experience of the Oregon Trail his work is a blend of fact and fiction that provides for a good read but does not provide specific assistance in a study of this kind.

A recent historical work on the Oregon Trail was John D. Unruh, Jr.'s The Plains Across, The Overland Emigrants and the Trans-Mississippi West, 1840-60. This book was written as a follow-up study to his earlier work, The Plains
Across, published in 1979. In the former, published posthumously after his premature death in 1976, Unruh:

applies "the concept of change through time" in order to increase our understanding and to offer us new perspectives about overland emigration. The fulcrum on which this innovative study balances is found in the focus on "the interaction between the overlanders and other groups in the West -- the army, the Indians, the Mormons, the traders and other entrepreneurs -- as well as in the interaction of the overlanders with the flora and fauna of the West." Utilizing a broad scope and incorporating new data from the neglected decade of the 1850s, the author traces "the ways in which trails, the West, and the overlanders themselves were changing".119

This book is a dedicated attempt to write an accurate, gender-neutral history of the Oregon Trail. It provides valuable information for this thesis on many issues including numbers of migrants, motivations, and maps but its real power comes from debunking the prevailing myths and stereotypes concerning travel across the nineteenth-century American landscape. The great migration of 1843 and the gold rush of 1849 are anomalies in the broad scope of migration years across the Oregon Trail. Unruh suggests that "the overland trip was unique to each individual traveler, whose perception of it was largely dependent upon his or her expectations, preparations, constitution, traveling companions, luck, and a multitude of related factors."120 Some of those related factors were a result of improvements and changes along the trail in successive years including increased settlement, the building of the railroad, emigrant-Indian interaction and the role of the
Federal Government. Unruh's firm belief that the trip was a "unique experience" for individual migrants regardless of gender is the basis upon which this thesis rests.

John Mack Faragher published his book *Women and Men on the Overland Trail* in 1979. In the category of social history, Faragher examines the Oregon Trail "through the lenses of masculine and feminine experience." He notes that "despite the thousands of pages in print, interesting scholarly interpretations of the Overland Trail experience are a relatively rare commodity, and there is ample room for new scholarship." Another book appearing in the same year is that by Julie Roy Jeffrey *Frontier Women: The Trans-Mississippi West 1840-1880*, in which a chapter is dedicated to a discussion women on the Oregon and California trails. It serves as an argument against the concept of the frontier as a 'liberating agent' in the lives of nineteenth-century women. Lillian Schlissel argues against Jeffrey when she argues that:

> In the end, a woman who came through the journey felt she had won her own victory. The test of the journey was whether or not she had been equal to the task of holding her family together against the sheer physical forces that threatened to spin them to the four winds of chance. It was against the continual threat of dissolution that the women had striven. If ever there was a time when men and women turned their psychic energies toward opposite visions, the overland journey was that time.

And this conclusion is an accepted starting point for this thesis.
Schlissel also notes that women (and men) "wrote of the splendors of the landscape and the rigors of the road..." but the women's journal notations concerning the landscape reveal much more than simply awe at their surroundings. Their interaction with their surroundings worked to change them, and to change their perceptions; it made the not-so-strong of character stronger in the end, and made the already strong even more powerful. And presumably destroyed others who lacked the 'strength'. Migration along the Oregon Trail affected the attitudes and values of each of them.

It could be argued that these three books possibly fall into the category of what historical geographer Carville Earle terms "special-interest histories." Earle suggests that:

For several decades now, American historians have worried about the fate of their discipline: its balkanization into special-interest histories; its elevation of method and technique over substance; its inconclusive churning in historiographic debate; and its loss of coherence and integrity in the interpretation of the American past. History seems to have lost its bearings, its capacity to tell an interesting story, its sense of structure and theme.

This argument aside, this thesis then does not in any way attempt to radically define a new direction or substantiate an old direction for study in the branch of American history commonly referred to as 'Western Women's History'. Rather it is an attempt to combine some mutually supportive concepts and to shed a different light,
to incorporate the geographical concepts of exploration, migration and gender with the history of the Oregon Trail, the historical (and geographical) concepts of Frederick Jackson Turner's frontier and western women's history\textsuperscript{135} using a comparative experience and personal narratives\textsuperscript{136}.

TWENTIETH-CENTURY HISTORIANS AND WESTERN WOMEN'S HISTORY

It is essential for this thesis that a clear understanding be reached concerning the effects of significant events in nineteenth-century America as these events related specifically to the history of women in that period. Current literature includes two extensive volumes\textsuperscript{137} pertaining to women's history written by Glenda Riley. She states the purpose of these books:

...is an effort to simplify the incorporation of women's history into the basic introductory course on United States history...that combines factual knowledge with a specific thesis intended to provoke discussion and further thought...and...necessarily emphasizes... "gender\textsuperscript{138} specific" experiences...focussing on those historical episodes that are more germane to one gender than the other.\textsuperscript{139}

According to Riley:

...industrialization and the westward migration wrought dramatic changes in the face of the new nation between 1816 and 1837. Prevailing images and realities of women's lives experienced widespread alterations as well. The customary image of women as primarily wives and mothers not only persisted, but was enhanced by a highly developed doctrine of woman's sphere. Yet, at the same time, the actual activities and employment of women were challenging the traditional concept of
Riley, cont'd...

...separate spheres. By the time of the Panic of 1837 -- a turning point in the nation's history -- the invented American woman appeared to be solid on the surface but...was actually in a state of flux. All that was certain was that industrial and westward expansion had called the model of American womanhood into serious question.140

The period of Jacksonian democracy and expansion in American history saw women's views of themselves drastically altered. The prevailing literature of the time prescribed "proper spheres of the sexes."141 And it is suggested by some scholars that "it was precisely because the traditional role of wife and mother was being challenged by industrial developments that Americans felt a pressing need to promote and protect it."142

In spite of this, many women in early nineteenth-century America challenged this view.

...it seems evident that some serious contradictions existed between the dictates of the image of womanhood and its actual implementation. In reality: many women worked outside of the home; many ladies thought in terms of oppression and property rights rather than submissiveness; and many women attempted to exercise control over their bodies and reproduction instead of accepting "God's will" in such matters.143

Riley also notes that "many women refused to accept the dogma by practicing the fine arts. They were always self-taught and were usually wives and mothers."144 This may be taken as lending support to the notion that women on the trail had or developed a certain strength of character. It also suggests that if these women were self-taught in the fine arts, then the possibility exists that they were self-
taught in the fields of English, history and geography and possibly works to dispel the notion that it was mostly educated, middle-class women who kept daily journals on the trail. Riley suggests that it is what this thesis labels strength of character which propelled "these women...(into) the forefront of what was soon to become a national reform movement...Women enthusiastically originated and participated in the increasing numbers and types of reform activities." With women's reform well-instituted before the first major wagon train left to cross the Oregon Trail in 1843, it can be assumed that many women who migrated west in the second half of the nineteenth century were at least somewhat versed if not entirely versed in feminist issues of the period which seeks to dispel the stereotypical pathetic, submissive pioneer wife.

Gerda Lerner, well-known feminist and history scholar, urges others to respond creatively by reexamining and rewriting history to include all of humanity. Her scathing criticism is a 'wake-up call' for all those interested, as this student is, in presenting an accurate and true history of the period and place under examination. She writes that:

History-making...is a historical creation...(and) historians...have selected the events to be recorded and have interpreted them so as to give them meaning and significance. Until the most recent past, these historians have been men, and what they have recorded is what men have done and experienced and found significant. They have called this History and claimed universality for it. What women have done and experienced has been left unrecorded, neglected, ignored in
Lerner, cont'd...

interpretation. Historical scholarship, up to the most recent past, has seen women as marginal to the making of civilization and as unessential to those pursuits defined as having historic significance. Thus, the recorded and interpreted record of the past of the human race is only a partial record, in that it omits the past of half of humankind, and it is distorted, in that it tells the story from the viewpoint of the male half of humanity only.148

According to Morrissey "...western women's history emerged as a distinct field during the 1970s. Feminist historians149 went beyond simply incorporating women in the western story150. By identifying women's perspectives as distinct from those of men and by recognizing that history had largely been confined to the latter, feminists revealed the narrowness and inadequacies of conventional historical narratives."151 The amount of current literature which has been published in an attempt to right this particular androcentric bias is worthy of mention. Faragher suggests that "...scores of new books are published annually, and each volume of the Western Historical Quarterly lists half a hundred articles and dissertations."152 This thesis is not new in its attempt to incorporate women into the male-oriented concept of American frontier history but it does shed some interesting light with respect to the geographical conditions and the psychological effects of migration. It is a thoughtful and well-executed study of frontierwomen in nineteenth-century America from the point of view of a mature twentieth-century Canadian frontierwoman, who is in the process of defining her own female experience relative
to her trek on the Oregon Trail performed one hundred and fifty years after that of her American sisters.

Some of the most significant literature to date in the field of women's history is found in a series of 20 volumes (with individual subtitles) titled History of Women in The United States: Historical Articles on Women's Lives and Activities. As its editor Nancy Cott suggests "...the series displays all its range the vitality of the field of women's history." Of particular interest to this study is the article written by Joanne Meyerowitz (1992) titled Women and Migration: Autonomous Female Migrants to Chicago, 1880-1930. It lends support to the concept that women on the Oregon Trail were not, for the most part, unwilling companions but full and equal actors, observers and recorders of the trail experience.

On the subject of migration, Stratton states that "For some of the women, the move to the Kansas frontier was the last stop in a gradual migration westward. Originally from towns and cities in the Eastern coastal states, they had moved continually westward in intermediate steps as new states and territories were opened to white settlement." This applies not only to those moving as far as Kansas but also to those moving to the Pacific Coast. The move west often incorporated a multitude of previous dislocations. The importance of this fact to this thesis lies in the idea that many of the women on the Oregon Trail between the years 1845 and 1885 were expert movers, they had accomplished many
previous moves and the Oregon Trail then became an extended version of previous trips. They had much knowledge and previous experience which would help to ameliorate some of their fears of the trip at the outset concerning practical matters. The major unknown factor (except for a reading knowledge) was the landscape over which they would travel and their response(s) to it.

With the debate over women versus gender still raging, Riley states that "It...seems time for historians of western women to get their own house in order, to clarify approaches and methodological issues." Of the five issues she chooses to examine the last one is of particular importance to this study. Riley suggests that what is needed is "...greater use of comparative research on women in different regions of this and other countries." Although not exactly defined by this approach (that is, it does not compare women in different regions), this thesis does take direction from it as methodology.

THE BIOGRAPHICAL APPROACH AND THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

A basis for a geographic study of women migrants on the Oregon Trail in nineteenth- and twentieth-century America can be established with the biographical approach. Langness defines the term biography to:

mean either autobiography (a first person document) or biography per se (a third person document). Biography also appears under the labels, personal document or human document...Because of the problems of
Langness, cont'd...

interpretation, chronology, editing, and so on...it has been traditional in anthropology to use the term life history...Life history will be used...to refer to an extensive record of a person's life as it is reported either by the person or by others or both, and whether it is written or in interviews or both.162

And life course seems now to be favored.

This approach is currently used by anthropologists, sociologists, psychologists, historians, and historical geographers. The biographical approach is used by anthropologists most recently in a:

...conscious attempt to use life history materials in a cultural context for the purpose of getting at distinctive personality types. The thesis of...cultural variables...with personality as an intervening...psychological...variable was a very important theoretical landmark, and the acceptance of this mode of thinking made the use of life history data a necessity.163

In sociology the biographical approach was first used extensively during the first three decades of the twentieth century. But from the 1940s onward sociologists became more and more positivistic in their approach and "almost abandoned this technique altogether."164 Currently there is a renewed interest in the biographical approach for research into macrosociological studies about "elite groups, whole branches of industry, the process of migration and class formation, the relation of an entire people (the Quebecois) to its recent history..."165 which lends direct support for its use in this thesis. Bertaux argues against positivism
and in favor of the life history approach when he states:

...Basing myself on the example of the life history approach, I would like to tell them (positivists) that their concern with representativity of samples, with data analysis, with proof, can be met also with this reputedly 'qualitative' approach, and that this approach yields even more: a direct access to the level of social relations which constitute, after all, the very substance of sociological knowledge.166

Historians have had a long-standing love for the biographical approach. According to Thomas Carlyle (1830) in his essay titled On History he writes that "Social Life is the aggregate of all the individual men's Lives who constitute society; History is the essence of innumerable Biographies."167 He writes further that

...Universal History, the history of what man has accomplished in this world, is at bottom the History of the Great Men who have worked here. They were the leaders of men...the modelers...and in a wide sense creators, of whatsoever the general mass of men contrived to do or to attain; all things that we see standing accomplished in the world are properly the outer material result, the practical realisation and embodiment, of Thoughts that dwelt in the Great Men sent into the world: the soul of the whole world's history, it may justly be considered were the history of these.168

Currently in history, the biographical (life history) approach, rather than being concerned with the history of great men, is being used to reveal the history of all people including most recently the marginalized, unempowered, invisible groups previously ignored in historical writings, specifically, women and ethnic minorities.169 Gerda Lerner calls "for a fuller analysis of "the mental products of women's lives170, their ideas, their writings, and their
discourse." And she concludes that "the "biographical field within women's history remains one of the most promising and challenging for the researcher." 171

Interest in biography as a tool for approaching feminist research has only been generated recently when it was suggested at a conference held at the Biographical Research Center of the University of Hawaii (1979) as one of the "new directions in biography." 172 Alpern argues that there has been a fundamental issue with "biography as a genre" in and of itself for more than thirty years and that:

During the 1960s and 1970s, when the "new social history" came into its own, esteem for biography fell...In its earliest days biography had been at the centre of the modern women's history movement. In order to rescue from historical oblivion the women who had been agents of change or articulate critics and leaders of their culture and society, the first generation of modern women's historians had spent years restoring to the record the deeds and accomplishments of "notable" women. But in the mid-1970s, such work, by that time called "compensatory," moved out to the margins. 173

Since the late 1980s there has been an increased interest in biography as an approach in many of the social sciences but it is of particular interest for those studies which focus on women in an attempt "to create a more inclusive, more fully human conception of social reality." 174

When combining the study of history and geography, historical geographers are well supported in the literature for their use of the biographical approach but they tend to be more concerned, and rightly so, with the history of
people in relationship to the land.\textsuperscript{175} Therefore this approach undergoes some modification for research in historical geography. This is especially true when combined also with the feminist perspective.

THE BIOGRAPHICAL APPROACH AND HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY

In the field of geography, much of the study to date has been positivistic in nature but as Norton suggests "A disenchantment with positivism and related theoretical and quantitative approaches...is evident both within human and historical geography."\textsuperscript{176} Further, he suggests that "The importance of subjective views of the environment has been acknowledged for a long time, but is only since the 1960s that environmental perception has become a major research orientation"\textsuperscript{177} for historical geographers. He adds that:

...it would be misleading to suggest that a coherent viewpoint has emerged which represents an effective and viable alternative to positivism. However, it has led to the emergence of several relatively distinct views with a common focus on perception, decision making and humanism.\textsuperscript{178}

According to Miles and Crush in the last ten years "...cultural and historical geographers have begun to experiment with a variety of qualitative methodologies pioneered in disciplines such as anthropology, history, and sociology."\textsuperscript{179} In this way the biographical approach has been used for studies of exploration, the biography of landscape, as well as studies on migration and regional historical geography. Currently the biographical approach has also been utilized as an effective tool for the
introduction of gender-balanced studies in geography, history and, more specifically, historical geography.

With respect to exploration studies, Norton states that:

Accounts of the emergence of human landscapes in areas of new settlement characteristically proceed by first examining the details of exploration, contacts with existing aboriginal groups, immigration trends and the related evolution of a frontier economy and society.180

Most of the historical geography studies concerned with exploration such as Gilbert do "not attempt either to place specific explorations in any general context or to relate exploration to subsequent developments."181 But the more recent works of Allen (1972) and Dicken and Dicken (1979) do incorporate appropriate conceptualizations of the exploratory process in the former and an assessment of exploratory images in the latter. Allen uses the biographical approach in his attempt to "focus on the exploratory process itself and on the relationship between that process and man's understanding of his world."182 Dicken and Dicken were interested in "the early perceptions of Oregon. What did people think of it, how did they evaluate it?"183

Marwyn S. Samuels argues that when studying the people-environment relationship:

...there is something unreasonable about a human landscape lacking in inhabitants; something strangely
absurd about a geography of man devoid of men. The fact that we need not bother identify anyone in particular, that culpability and responsibility in and for the landscape have become irrelevant to the quest for landscape meaning...reveals something terribly wrong about the way in which we look at the event and assess the meaning of landscape...it unveils a context in which the idiosyncratic, the particular, the individual himself and the self itself have lost much of their own meaning.184

The main difference between Samuels' conceptualization of the forces shaping the biography of landscape and the biographical approach used by historians, sociologists, psychologists and anthropologists is that for Samuels the main focus is the landscape185 whereas for the social scientists it is the individual as a part of the larger social system.

A current historical geographical study by Bruce E. Batchelor used the biographical approach in an attempt to understand more fully "the social and economic processes of the agrarian frontier around the Alberta parkland communities of Red Deer and Lacombe during three decades after 1882."186

Yi-Fu Tuan takes Samuels' concept one step further when he states that "words alone...can have the power to render objects, formerly invisible because unattended, visible, and impart to them a certain character: thus a mere rise on a flat surface becomes something far more -- place that promises to open up to other places -- when it is named
"Mount Prospect." 187 With respect to an examination of pioneer explorers' journals, Tuan suggests that:

"Mount Prospect" became not only a place for the pioneer explorer — the spot where he once stood or where he (from a camp nearby) knew he could stand to survey the next stage of the journey — but also a virtual or possible place at which to gain a prospect for all who read his narrative and wished to follow his footsteps. 188

A contemporary "woman's version of an exploration narrative" 189 is found in Josephine Peary's My Arctic Journal 190, "published within a year of her first journey to Greenland in 1891-92 with her husband, the polar explorer Robert Peary." 191

In writing their experiences, they were attempting to enter a discourse dominated by the story of man fighting nature, assaulting the landscape, and overcoming the environment. Trying to find stories suitable to their own experiences, they told of enduring and surviving rather than of struggling, and they described expeditions as social milieux rather than athletic events. It was, however, a fairly-entrenched view of nature in which they were trying to find room, and their success was at best limited. 192

The biographical approach is currently being used by historical geographers with respect to studies on internal migration. Halfacree and Boyle state that:

Conventional (macro) approaches to migration research ...were largely based upon a positivistic behaviourist conceptualization of migration...From this perspective, 'migration' was to be regarded solely as an empirical event...while the micro approach emphasizes the migrant's decision-making process. 193

According to Halfacree and Boyle "...studies of 'historical' migration show greater awareness of biographical issues than do studies of present-day migration. This is
reflected in the data...such as diaries...and letters..."194 as reflected in Bartholomew's study "Women migrants in mind: Leaving Wales in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries," and Miles and Crush's "Personal Narratives as Interactive Texts: Collecting and Interpreting Migrant Life Histories."

Bartholomew's Welsh-based study looks at "the process of migration for a group of migrants usually invisible or under-represented in aggregated data."195 She argues that "the use...of the testimony of migrant women, recognizes that they are in a unique position to provide evidence of the experience of migration."196 And further that:

Our picture of the world of the migrant can be enlarged, and migration theory illumined, by individual testimony. In particular, light can be shed on the motivation of migrants and the personal circumstances surrounding their moves. The richness of detail and immediacy provided by oral material is not available from other sources.197

Bartholomew suggests that:

...the question of motivation is central because it could be argued that economic and social factors operated on all those living in a certain place at a certain time, to a greater or lesser extent, but did not necessarily result in migration.198

This work lends particular support for the hypothesis that women in nineteenth-century America who migrated across the Oregon Trail did so as active agents of their own lives.

The study undertaken by Miles and Crush "represents an extension of earlier efforts to rewrite the historical geography of Swaziland "from below" using the insights and
methods of social history." Their concern was to add "the historical voices of rural African women" to a twentieth-century migration experience using the life-history or personal narrative technique for collecting oral information. This approach differs somewhat from the biographical approach in that data were collected from women who are still alive and therefore subject to criticism due to the lack of immediacy to the events, and, as well, this approach raises the debate concerning "the power relations of class, race, and gender between interviewer and interviewee." The biographical approach utilized for this thesis, however, examines nineteenth-century diaries and journals which offer written testimony of events recorded daily and therefore represent the first-hand thoughts and comments of women long since deceased. Although the approach differs the objective of the researcher remains the same, that is "the key task now for feminists working in the social sciences is to deepen our knowledge of the variety of women's experience."

Jeanne Kay argues that "regional and national historical geographies of North America...fall into the narrative form known as the national epic..."; that these geographies are male oriented; and that by incorporating the biographical approach with the concepts of national epic and gender, and "themes borrowed from Western women's history...used...as informative and appropriate guides," historical geographers might arrive at a more "gender-
balanced regional historical geography."204 She uses diaries and letters of three women homesteading in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century in eastern British Columbia "to provide a glimpse into the "other" Anglo economic system of the frontier -- the domestic, subsistence economy."205 Kay also discusses:

...two principal approaches to reinterpreting national epics in order to include women. One way would simply be to include women's role in the epic's specific themes: making a living, transforming the land, the experience of the journey. Another way would be to understand that the root meaning of immigration legends really has less to do with a summary of activities...than with the elemental theme of refinement of character through difficult travels and hard work in a new land. At this level, the epic becomes more individual and more applicable to both men and women. The distilled and personal meaning of a national epic to someone engaged in it lends itself both to other scholarly variants of the Euro-American settlement plot (as in...Turner's emphasis on the liberating potential of the frontier) as well as to the records of individual lives with which women's history so often is concerned.206

Kay's study supports the hypothesis put forth in this thesis which suggests that women were psychologically redefined as a direct result of the effect the landscape, over which they migrated, had upon them.

THE BIOGRAPHICAL APPROACH IN THE THESIS

The biographical approach utilized in this thesis is a synthesis of some aspects of the literature already
discussed. Ten elements form the basis for this study:

1. The biographical approach is a valid method for the social sciences as it leads to a deeper understanding of the value systems of individuals in society and those of society at large.207

2. To understand society fully, it is necessary to study the history of each individual, woman and man, in that society. This can be accomplished by studying individual biographies.208 And it is from a historical study of individual lives that one can generalize about past social processes.

3. While utilizing the biographical approach in a historical feminist study may lead to an exaggerated importance of particular individuals, it can be argued that it is necessary in order to expand the history of women's lives and re-interpret frameworks within which historical studies are conducted.209

4. The purpose of this thesis is to study how women's lives were effected by the migration experience along the Oregon Trail and how the changes in their lives, both individually and collectively, were reflected in a new frontier society. The most effective way to approach a study of this type is to utilize primary documents, diaries and letters, written by the women under review.210

5. "Studies of historical migration show greater awareness of biographical issues than do studies of present-day
migration. This is reflected in the data sources used—such as diaries, oral evidence and letter.211
6. The biographical approach, a micro approach, allows for a fuller understanding of the decision-making process as it relates to individual women migrants.212
7. This thesis argues that just as a biography of the landscape undertaken by some geographers, seeks to understand how the landscape has been shaped by individual human effort,213 the opposite is also true in that the landscape has had a central role in shaping the biography of the individual.
8. The epic migration of women across the landscape of the Oregon Trail in the nineteenth century transformed them spiritually, on an individual basis and collectively, and that transformation was not gender-specific. The best evidence of the transformative effect of the journey is found in their personal diaries and letters.214
9. This historical geographer favors the narrative-descriptive approach which allows for a lively and colourful spotlight on specific phenomena. Theory which supports the study remains quietly in the background.215
10. Historical geographers have set a precedent for the use of the biographical approach in migration studies and gender-balanced regional historical geography.216
Nineteenth-century women's diaries and letters written between 1845 and 1885 form a solid base of research material with which to conduct a historical geography concerned with women's migration experience on the American western landscape. They are for the most part a daily recording of observances, events, and emotions as they happen and thus much of their quality as participant-observer documents lies in their immediacy.

For the historian the journals would fall under both the category of contemporary records and confidential reports. Contemporary records include such items as notebooks and memoranda:

kept by many individuals...to remind them...of things to do, ideas to be remembered...literary excerpts worthy of note, and so on, are high in credibility because intimate and confidential, close to the events with which they deal, and innocent of effort to influence others.217

Confidential reports include such things as the journal or diary "...said to be "the personal document par excellence" for the psychologist, when spontaneous and intimate. It also ranks high as a historical document if it meets those conditions."218 Also personal letters:

...if they are spontaneous and intimate, rank high in credibility. But...since they frequently are intended to exert influence or to create an impression, since they often are not private and confidential but are intended for all the members of a family and a circle of friends...they are inferior as testimony to some other kinds of documents.219
For historical geographers nineteenth-century North American narratives can be classified "according to the basic intent of their authors: promoters, officials, travellers, natural historians, and settlers." A sixth category identifies "problem authors...whose writings were sufficiently multipurpose as to defy classification according to any one dominant motive."

The western women's journals contain material which would fit several of Merrens' categories, those being promoter, traveller, natural historian and settler. The women writing were often promoting the migration experience to family, friends and extended kinship back east in order to entice as many people as possible from their former social circle to move west; the women writing, more times than not, were seasoned travellers, having made at least one permanent move already in their lifetime; the women writing were for the most part either privately, publicly or self-educated and in many instances well-read and/or experienced concerning the physical geography of North America (real and imagined), geology, natural vegetation (botany), climate, native folklore, homeopathy and in this way were very much natural historians; and women in their writings often spoke of the landscape they were migrating across in terms of its suitability for agriculture and livestock, always with a vision turned towards their ultimate settlement destination, the Willamette Valley. A few of the women writing were teachers, midwives and writers (journalists) by trade and
more than a few were either active feminists, or, at least, well-versed in feminist writings.

There is no one distinct classification for the women's diaries and letters written between 1845 and 1885 except as immediate written records of a geographical experience never to be repeated in the history of North America. The recreation of part of this experience as a 150th anniversary celebration during which this author's diary was written, is the basis for a comparative descriptive content analysis. Daily records were kept on tape (nine 100-minute, two-sided tapes) and transcribed over a period of three months. My diary can be viewed as the personal narrative of a participant-observer, from the perspective of a twentieth-century frontier woman.
CHAPTER THREE: PHYSICAL LANDSCAPE SETTING

This chapter outlines the historical geography of the landscape by "the reconstruction of the physical setting of the stage" at the time of the first major wagon train along the Oregon Trail in 1843. (See Figures 1a and 1b)

The Oregon Trail crossed four of the eight physiographic regions of the United States, including the Interior Plains (which includes the Great Plains), the Rocky Mountain System (which includes the Northern and Southern Rocky Mountains, the Middle Rocky Mountain Province and the Wyoming Basin), the Intermontain Plateaux (which includes the Columbia Plateaux) and the Pacific Mountain System (which includes the Sierra-Cascade Ranges and the Willamette-Puget trough).223

INTERIOR PLAINS

The interior plains:

...can be divided into two parts, the Central Lowlands, sometimes known as the Prairies, and the Great Plains. Both regions are underlain by rocks in nearly horizontal beds...The boundary between the Central Lowlands and the Great Plains is an escarpment facing east, and usually not more than a few hundred feet in height. The chief differences between the two regions are differences of rainfall and natural vegetation rather than differences of topography. The boundary between the two regions...is almost the same as the hundredth meridian. The line marks a definite change from a well-watered lowland to a higher and semi-arid plateau.224

Prior to 1855 the Great Plains were commonly referred to as the 'Great American Desert' (which includes the western portions of Nebraska and Kansas) and it was not
until the railroad surveys of the second half of the nineteenth century that "the High Plains were compared to the steppes of Russia."225

Fenneman explains that "the term 'Great Plains' has commonly been associated in the popular mind with monotony of landscape; also with short grass which has in a rough way distinguished the Great Plains from the Prairies or long-grass country to the east."226

Gilbert describes the physical relief of the Great Plains region as:

...a true plateau rising from a level of 1000 to 2000 feet, on the western border of the Central Lowlands, to a height of 5000 to 6000 feet at the eastern base of the Rocky Mountains. These plains are about 1200 miles in length and about 300 miles broad, and are sharply distinguished from the mountains of the west.227

Since the early migration along the Oregon Trail began at the western edge of the Central Lowlands of the Great Plains physiographic region, more attention is paid to the High Plains subsection which includes:

...the prominent north-facing Pine Ridge escarpment 1,000 feet high in the longitude of the Black Hills, but lower to the west and less definite farther east...Continued erosion is...shifting this escarpment southward. The High Plains are...losing ground on the north as they are on the east and west. They were at one time much more extensive.228

It appears from a comparison with historical maps of the route(s) of the Oregon Trail and more recent physiographic maps, that when the women were writing in their diaries about being in the Black Hills, they were more
likely writing about the 'Sand Hills' located north of the Platte River, or perhaps the 'Big Badlands' which occur between the Pine Ridge Escarpment and the Black Hills proper. The Black Hills themselves are located in South Dakota and no map exists which shows the Oregon Trail passing through this state.

The Black Hills are "entirely surrounded by the unglaciated Missouri Plateau."

The Black Hills section...a true mountain uplift, is distinguished not only by superior elevation but by its upturned strata, erosion of which has produced a characteristic mountain topography.

Confusion surrounding the nomenclature of the Black Hills is elucidated and explained by Brown:

...There were two Black Hills regions in early descriptions of the West; though they are widely separated in space, the repetition of the name nevertheless has caused some confusion among writers. An arm of the Rockies projecting into the Plains in Wyoming, afterward called the Laramie Mountains, became known among early travelers and settlers as the Black Hills; but this name has been obsolete for many years.

The Black Hills of South Dakota, still so known today, were viewed in early times, as now, as "an oasis of verdure among the open and level plains." When seen from a distance the forested slopes of the mountains appeared dark or black, hence the descriptive name.

The women's journals often speak of the sand hills which occur on the north side of the Platte River in western Nebraska and Fenneman notes that in the High Plains area:

...North of the Platte River and chiefly between the 99th and 103d meridians are 24,000 square miles within
which a dune topography dominates...some of these hills are several hundred feet high...There are also many lakes in basins which owe their origins to drifting sand. Over several thousand square miles the dunes may be said to be still drifting; elsewhere they are more or less fixed. The area of drifting sand varies with the rainfall from season to season. In rainy summers most of the area is well grassed and supports a considerable grazing industry.232

From those migrants who travelled along the southern part of Kansas on the Sante-Fe Trail (which eventually joined the Cherokee Trail following north to join the South Platte Trail) we read descriptions of the Red Hills.

Fenneman describes the Red Hills as the:

...so-called "Great Bend Lowland" (which) finds no natural limit on the south, short of the ragged and picturesque escarpment 300 to 400 ft. high which borders the Great Plains...This escarpment is not a single abrupt descent but a deeply eroded belt 10 to 20 miles wide, known as the Red Hills. The descent here combines the "breaks of the plains" with the retreating escarpment of the underlying rocks. The upland level is held locally by beds of gypsum which, while very soluble in a humid climate or by circulating ground waters, make a resistant cover in a dry climate. The white gypsum, underlain by bright-red sands and shales, gives gorgeous coloring to the escarpment, already picturesque on account of its terraced canyons, jutting headlands, branching divides, and outlying buttes.233

NATURAL VEGETATION OF THE GREAT PLAINS REGION

According to Brown:

Everyone agreed that the most striking feature of the Plains was the absence of trees. The "great open spaces" emphasized the extent of the Plains, which seemed endless to travelers plodding on foot or drawn in a slow-moving wagon train...It was quite natural that the western Plains grassland would popularly be
Brown, cont'd...

called "prairie," although the better-informed soon pointed out that this was not good usage. Many new grass species were identified: the tall bluestem in the area of more ample rainfall, the little bluestem and needle grass farther west, and the still shorter buffalo grass and grama of the western High Plains. Broadly considered, the Plains grassland was a transition belt between the humid prairies of the Midwest and the true desert grasslands of the Southwest.234

Between 1854 and 1869 there was increased support for the notion that trees could be supported in the Plains region. Randolph B. Marcy (1854) suggested that "...instead of clearing up the timbered lands for the plough, as in the eastern states, it will be necessary to cultivate timber..." and F.V. Hayden (1869) of the Geological Survey wrote that "...indigenous trees, such as cottonwood, soft maple, elm, basswood, black walnut, honey locust, and various willows, could be planted and cultivated..."235

CLIMATE OF THE GREAT PLAINS REGION

In the mid-nineteenth century, not much was accurately known of the climate of the Great Plains region. The earlier notion of this area being a desert was dispelled with reports from the railroad surveyors who suggested that it "was...clear that rainfall was variable from year to year, but no definite trends could be detected from so limited a series of observations."236

Some regions reported as much as 20 inches of rainfall237 per year (generally a maximum) while others much
less but "the Plains were decidedly not the "rainless region" which had been pictured by many persons."238

There was no accurate knowledge concerning snowfall amounts "but there were the usual beliefs and suppositions. Snow was believed to accumulate to greater depths than was actually the case."239

Temperature records240 as with precipitation levels are not available with any consistency and so one must go by the historical journals themselves where the temperature was often recorded by instruments available at the time.

THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN SYSTEM

The Rocky Mountain System comprises:

...the northern and southern Rockies...separated by the Wyoming Basin. A plateau-like surface...virtually continuous from the Great Plains through the Wyoming Basin to the Colorado Plateaux, but the structure of the Wyoming Basin is similar to the structure of the Rockies. Isolated mountains rise from the horizontal beds of the Wyoming Basin and indicate the continuity of the structure. In central Wyoming the basin is 250 miles241 broad.242

Those migrants travelling along the South Platte route through the South Pass243 describe their relationship with the landscape of the Wyoming Basin. The significant mountain ranges mentioned in the women's diaries include the Laramie, Rattlesnake, Sweetwater, Wind River, Bear River and Salt Water. These ranges "divide the province (Wyoming Basin) into a number of more or less separate basins..."244 some of which include the Laramie Basin245, the Wind River246 and Shoshone Basins (to the south and north of the
Wind River respectively), the Bridger Basin\textsuperscript{247}, and the Great Divide Basin\textsuperscript{248}.

It is also important to gain some understanding of the drainage pattern of the Wyoming Basin as described by Fenneman in order to understand those diary entries which describe the migrants' reaction to several of the rivers which pass through deeply-cut canyons\textsuperscript{249}.

The Laramie escapes to the east through a canyon across the Laramie Range. The North Platte after cutting through mountains to get out of North Park, crosses two more ranges...before reaching the Great Plains. The Sweetwater flows east across the end of the Wind River Range and in and out among the granite hills of the Sweetwater Range before it finally joins the Platte...The Green River in the western part passes to the south through the Uinta Mountains by a 3,000-ft. canyon. Its eastern tributary, Bitter Creek, flows entirely across the Rock Springs uplift, cutting through great hogbacks in notches 1,000 ft. deep.\textsuperscript{250}

The alkali flats so often referred to in the historical journals occur as a result of the climate in the area. Alkalinity occurs due to the evaporation of water from the soil and removal upwards of salts in the soil profile. As well:

Sand dunes are locally important and even silt dunes occur. The northern part of the Rock Springs uplift has a considerable area in which sand dunes dominate the topography. In the Great Divide Basin the want of vegetation among the alkali flats permits the soil to drift. Where the process is active enough, silt dunes are formed.\textsuperscript{251}

Some discussion of the Middle Rocky Mountain Province is also necessary for a clearer understanding of the historical journals. The Middle Rocky Mountain Province is
made up of the mountains of western Wyoming which includes primarily the Wind River and Teton\textsuperscript{252} Ranges and the mountains of the Idaho-Wyoming Border\textsuperscript{253} which includes the Bear River Range and Wasatch Range\textsuperscript{254} in the south.

For nearly 200 miles the Wasatch and Bear River Ranges, trending north-south, form the western front of the Rocky Mountain province... At the north the Bear River Range terminates with... clearness within the great bend of the Bear River which in its northwesterly and westerly course is followed by the Oregon Short Line.

On the west these ranges descend with remarkable abruptness to the Bear River, Great Salt Lake, Jordan River, and Provo Lake\textsuperscript{255}

THE INTERMONTANE PLATEUX

This physiographic region "can be divided into three parts, the Columbia Plateaux, the Colorado Plateaux, and the Basin and Range Region."\textsuperscript{256} Only the Columbia Plateau\textsuperscript{(x)} are of direct relevance here.

The Columbia Plateau embraces about 100,000 square miles in Washington, Oregon\textsuperscript{257}, and Idaho. It is, in the main, built up of nearly horizontal sheets of lava, the surface of which flat or rolling, but there are many variations\textsuperscript{258} from this simple character. The province is bounded on the west by the Cascade Mountains and on the north and east by the Rocky Mountain province\textsuperscript{259}

There are two principal types of rock in this region, those being basalt (lava) and acid lava. The latter are found especially the Snake River Plain area and parts of eastern Oregon, and are "lighter colored, sometimes red or purple."\textsuperscript{260} The presence of lava rock is noted many times in almost all of the historical journals examined and is described by the migrants as volcanic, being black in colour
or burnt-looking in appearance. This type of rock occurs as a result of basalt lava flows that have been exposed and which reveal their "scoriaceous upper surfaces, evidences of quick cooling at the lower contact and of slower cooling in the interior. All are black or nearly so."²⁶¹

According to Fenneman, rivers of this region, including the Snake, "are antecedent to some of the main structural and topographic features..."²⁶² Further he adds that:

A...striking illustration...is found in the Snake River. From Wyoming it enters the extreme east end of this province, where, for many miles, its several branches run over the surface of a flat plateau 5,000 ft. above the sea. At Idaho Falls the stream drops 30 ft. into a canyon whose depth gradually decreases, leaving the stream again on the plateau surface. Seventy miles farther down stream at the American Falls (long. 113 degrees), the stream drops 50 ft. into a canyon. Except for a stretch of 50 miles in the lake beds of western Idaho where the land adjacent to the river is dissected, the canyon which begins at the American Falls continues almost without interruption to the junction with the Columbia. The Snake is thus exceptional in the great proportion of its course between canyon walls. The height of these in southern Idaho varies from 50 ft. (at the American Falls) to about 800 ft. The plateau level falls from 4,742 ft. at Idaho Falls to 2,125 ft. at Weiser...on the western border of the state. Thus far the Snake is plainly a consequent stream, first on the lava cover, then on the lake beds.²⁶³

Some older volcanic rock occurs through this particular region in the form of buttes and lava cones which "represent the summits of much eroded, older...mountains, very different in appearance from these steep buttes...are the many broad low domes...produced by the up-welling of the liquid basalt."²⁶⁴
The Blue Mountains formed an integral part of the Oregon Trail migration experience. Dicken and Dicken (1979) state that:

The Blue Mountains...were crossed by the early explorers beginning with the Astor (Hunt's) party in 1811. The region was and is a short of bridge between the Snake River on the east and the Columbia River on the north.

The most important route led from the Snake River in the vicinity of Ontario, up the Burnt River, then through the sites of Baker and La Grande, over the Columbia River near Umatilla.265

This was the course followed by the 1993 wagon train. (See Figure 2)

"The Blue Mountain section in Oregon becomes contiguous with the Northern Rocky Mountain province in Idaho, the two highlands being separated only by the deep canyon of the Snake River, fifteen miles wide at the top."266 Fenneman notes also that there "are half a dozen mountain groups or 'ranges'," that fall outside of the general name of Blue Mountains. Those included in the Blue Mountains are "the Elkhorn Range west of Baker City, the Greenhorn Mountain Range some thirty-five miles farther southwest, and the Strawberry Mountains, a high group between the East fork of the John Day River and the 44th parallel."267 The Strawberry Mountain Wilderness Area is located to the south of Canyon City, Oregon (US 26) and east of US 395.
The Blue Mountains are mentioned often and generally with much feeling as they were both a major obstacle and a place of some welcome relief to the migrants after the heat and dust experience on the Snake River Plain. These mountains presented a significant problem to the travelling companies due to the sharp and extremely steep incline to ascend on the eastern slopes as the wagon trains wound up out of the Grande Ronde River Valley in the vicinity of present-day La Grande, Oregon.

A distinct subsection of the Columbia Plateau region is delineated by Fenneman under the subsection North Central Oregon which includes:

The area between the Cascade Mountains on the west and the Blue Mountains on the east...Its underlying rocks are the same...

The drainage is north to the Columbia and is sufficiently vigorous to cut steep-sided channels and gorges in the basalt. To a greater extent than in eastern Washington the minor streams in this district head in the mountains and therefore carry more water. From the Walla Walla on the east to the Deschutes on the west at least five streams from the mountains reach the Columbia.

The landscape on the eastern side of this particular region is made up of "...loess or volcanic ash and the topography between streams being determined partly by wind. Toward the west the valleys become more canyon-like, or coulee-like, partly because of greater aridity and partly because the soil cover is less thick, and streams, even intermittent streams, cut into the basalt."
Photograph 3-1

ORIGINAL OREGON TRAIL THROUGH BLUE MOUNTAINS
VEGETATION OF THE INTERMONTANE PLATEAU

Characteristic vegetation in the area of the Wyoming Basin is "sagebrush and short grasses" while "river floodplains support...cottonwood, willow, and alder."\textsuperscript{271}

The region of the Columbia Plateau supports "sagebrush and dry grassland communities...with woodland (Juniper) and forest (Ponderosa Pine\textsuperscript{272}) communities in the mountains."\textsuperscript{273} According to Harker (1993), there have been many changes in the vegetation pattern for this particular region during the past century. European settlement brought with it grazing animals and "since the 1860s...cattle and sheep grazing have impacted much of the steppe and many exotic or nonnative species have introduced into the ecosystem."\textsuperscript{274}

CLIMATE OF THE INTERMONTANE PLATEAU

The great Interior or Plateau region (including Rocky Mountains, Wyoming Basin and Columbia Plateau\textsuperscript{275}) has a very varied relief. Temperature is therefore largely a reflection of elevation and general statements are of little value...Perhaps the most important factor affecting explorers living in the open is the extraordinary diurnal range of temperature which prevails throughout the whole region, particularly in the west.\textsuperscript{276}

Precipitation levels\textsuperscript{277} for this part of the continent are still quite low owing to the fact that "the whole area is in the rain shadow of the Pacific ranges and arid conditions are the natural result."\textsuperscript{278}
Photograph 3-2

KEENLEY PASS, OREGON - COLUMBIA PLATEAU REGION
400 YEAR OLD TREE ON SUMMIT OF BLUE MOUNTAINS
THE PACIFIC MOUNTAIN SYSTEM

Gilbert describes the western section of the Pacific Mountain System as comprising of:

...a range of Coastal mountains consisting of the Olympic Mountains, the Oregon coast ranges, the Californian coast ranges and the Los Angeles range. This series of mountain ranges is separated from the Sierra-Cascade range by the Californian valley, the Willamette valley and the Puget Sound valley. In about lat. 42 degrees there is no great valley, as the two mountain ranges are joined by the Klamath Mountains.279

According to Fenneman:

...the northern Cascades consist of ancient sediments vastly older than the present topography, strongly folded, generally metamorphosed, and intruded by granitic batholiths. They are contrasted in this respect with the middle and southern Cascades which consist almost wholly of volcanic rocks...280

The volcanoes which exist in this region include "Mt. St. Helens (8,365 ft.) and Mt. Adams (12,470 ft.)...and also Mt. Hood (11,225 ft.) south of the Columbia River281."282

The Willamette Valley to the west of the Cascades "is about 125 miles long and generally not more than 20 to 30 miles wide."283 It is a "very flat alluvial plain" which is prone to flooding. This is due to the fact that:

...the Willamette River is a sluggish stream with an intricate series of meanders. Apparently a fault crosses the stream at this place (Oregon City), the block on the south side being uplifted at the edge and tilted south, thus helping to stagnate the stream higher up.284

The Willamette Valley "is by far the most important
MOUNT HOOD, OREGON IN THE CASCADE MOUNTAIN RANGE
agricultural district of Oregon..."285 and as such was the final destination of the majority of nineteenth-century Oregon Trail migrants.

CLIMATE OF THE PACIFIC MOUNTAIN SYSTEM

According to Gilbert the Pacific Mountain System:

can be divided into two parts. The climate of the northern portion resembles that of north-western Europe, while the south enjoys a climate which is similar to that of the Mediterranean. In both parts diurnal and seasonal ranges of temperature are slight286, because the influence of the ocean is everywhere predominant.287

The difference in amount of precipitation for "the eastern and western sides of the Pacific ranges is very marked." There can be as much as 100 inches fall "on the north-west coast of the Pacific border region..." while on the eastern side according to Lewis and Clark, "The air is drier and more pure, and the ground itself is as free from moisture as if there had been no rain for the last ten days."288

Gilbert suggests also that "in the northern region (of the Pacific border region) there is a winter maximum, but there is also abundant rain in the summer. The rainfall is partly due to the relief and partly to the succession of cyclones and is similar to the rainfall of north-western Europe."289

VEGETATION OF THE PACIFIC MOUNTAIN SYSTEM

The most common types of trees are the Douglas fir, Pacific silver fir, Mountain hemlock, Sitka spruce, and
Redwood, and their distributions reflect a pattern of zoning according to elevation.

According to Harker "the floodplains of the Willamette and Columbia Rivers support Riparian Forests which are frequently dominated by deciduous trees. The interior valleys of the Umpqua, Rogue, and Willamette Rivers support communities such as oak woodlands, chaparral, and dry grassland."290

In addition, there are "minor but unique communities" which include "the prairies in the Willamette Valley and Puget Sound; alpine meadows and parklands occurring above treeline in the Cascade Mountains; and lava, mud flow, and serpentine areas associated with the geology of the Cascade Mountains."291
CHAPTER FOUR: TWENTIETH CENTURY MIGRATION ALONG THE OREGON TRAIL

THEMES RELATED TO THE THESIS:

MIGRATION ALONG THE OREGON TRAIL, SEEN IN PERSPECTIVE BY THE WOMEN IN THE DIARIES

In reviewing the historical diaries and journals written by women, it is apparent that several categories of commentary are common to the majority of them including: expectations and hopes; comments related to the physical landscape and particular hardships related to the migration across a constantly changing and challenging terrain; climate including temperature, wind, dust and precipitation; hardships related to food preparation including the consistent lack of wood for fires; lack of drinking water; relationships with other members of the wagon train as well as interpersonal relationships with family and friends, including longtime friends travelling together and newly-founded friendships en route; relationships with the Indian populations; financial concerns; health concerns; death and marriage; joy and sadness; fun and toil; and lastly, fulfillment or disappointment at the trail's end.

One thing that can be said of all the women's diaries and journals is that they reflect quite vividly the personality of each individual writer and in this way are remarkably interesting and very useful primary historical documents.

Where my journal and theirs differ most is in the area of migrant relationships with native people of the
various First Nations' tribes; the concern for fuel and water; and food preparation. In most other categories both the nineteenth and twentieth century diaries may be directly compared.

LACK OF WOMEN'S VOICES IN THE WRITTEN HISTORICAL RECORD

As stated previously, it is only in the past two decades that women's voices have been seriously examined and used to rewrite the history and historical geography of the United States in order to reflect a less androcentric interpretation of past events. Although the struggle to establish women in their rightful place as fifty plus one percent of history makers in the academic literature has been and continues to be a hard-fought battle, it is not without its rewards and this thesis, which includes a personal journal of my twentieth-century migration experience will hopefully serve to strengthen that position.

CRITERIA:

EXPECTATIONS, HOPES

I left Vancouver with fear and trepidation but also with an air of excitement. My fear was related to the fact that I was not completely convinced of my ability to physically and emotionally complete this journey, and even if I was able to finish what I had started, I feared my lack of intellectual ability to successfully convey the experience through the medium of writing once I returned home. My fear was also related to my financial position (or
lack of it); the state of repair of my vehicle and its
ability to transport me over any and all conditions; and, my
total lack of previous experience with any of the landscape
over which I would be travelling.

My hope was that I would have the experience of a
lifetime and along with that, I would be able to collect the
data required to form the basis of an original contribution.

After seven hours of driving, the loneliness and
sadness of leaving my home and friends in Vancouver set in:

Sunday's drive, July 25, 1993 - I stopped to use
the restroom and to buy a coffee at Macdonalds in
La Grande, Oregon and to phone Dale (collect) due
to my unease about the trip and my ability to com-
plete what I had set out to accomplish. He con-
vinced me to keep going and let me know that he
would help take care of things at home as well as
be there for me if I needed to call collect anytime
just to talk or if I was in trouble. It was in-
teresting that only after having been away from
home for one night, how 'far away' I felt from my
best friends.294

That sentiment quickly faded the next day when I
arrived at the campsite in Boise, Idaho. And on the first
doctor after joining the wagon train, I note that:

Personally, I am feeling right now that I do not
want to go home although I am sure that will fade...
I am really enjoying Idaho which I did not think I
would, even beyond the heat aspect of it, friendly
people; I have never seen so many horses in my life
in fields, on the road, it's great...I can see myself
doing another wagon train again and again and again...
made contacts with people that do this on a yearly
basis and boy I could sure handle a lifetime of
this."295

One big expectation of this migration experience which
was hardly realized was that we would travel over more of
the original trail than ended up being the case. In one of the pieces of promotional material I received, the statement was made that "Like the original pioneers, you will be traveling through hot, rugged, dusty terrain." This implied travel over natural landscape and it was a common complaint and disappointment for the majority of the core group of riders and state walkers as well for day walkers:

...I heard a rumour that a couple of the (day) walkers demanded their money back from the group organizers; either they had walked part of the day or all of the day, or none of the day, but they demanded their money back based on their expectation that they would be walking on the old trail itself. I never did hear the outcome.

There are many times throughout my diary that I anticipate what it will be like when my journey is complete and it is time to go home to Vancouver:

I think it is going to be very hard to leave, in fact I know it is. I made another friend...Nan. What a lovely girl to just sit and listen to me, she was extremely helpful and basically all she did was just listen to me talk to myself about how I was feeling...

One of my biggest hopes about this twentieth-century migration was to experience as closely as I could some sense of the past. This hope was realized on many occasions but none quite so vividly as on August 15th, 1993 when I was afforded the opportunity to spend a few days riding on horseback. On this particular day "at the second break...I took over riding for a ladyfriend, Noranne, who suffers quite badly from arthritis."
...it was very very hot, and very very dusty and I was not appropriately dressed for the occasion (I did not have my hat nor my sunglasses nor my camera.) I must have ridden half the day today. A lovely, gentle horse, very easy to handle and an excellent gait... It was absolutely thrilling to be able to ride across the old trail and it made me feel in some ways much more a part of the action than riding in the wagons, although both experiences were essential to me in order to appreciate a fuller richer understanding of the early emigrant experience.300

IMPRESSIONS OF THE PHYSICAL LANDSCAPE

One of the biggest differences between my journal and those of the nineteenth century is that I spent very little time describing the landscape and my impressions of the landscape at the time. I relied on my camera to record my landscape impressions for me but it is interesting to me that even today, almost three years later, I can still clearly see in my minds eye the landscape on each day of travel and remember fondly the smells, sights and sounds. My impressions of the landscape over which we were travelling (see Figure 3) combined with the relationship between the people and workers and communities and activities along the way worked altogether to produce my feelings of awe, joy, and belonging.

But if I can still recall and "feel" the experience of the trip so vividly after three years, the impact of the
Some of the most interesting landscapes and one of the roughest days of walking was along the historic Barlow Road on Mt. Hood, Oregon.
much longer and much more difficult trip undertaken by the
nineteenth century (women) migrants must have had a
proportionately greater impact on their later lives.

REFLECTIONS OF IDAHO

BOISE:

The landscape in the vicinity of Boise and to the west
as far as the Idaho/Oregon border is one of high desert
located on the eastern edge of the Columbia Plateau at an
elevation of over 2,700 feet above sea level. It is
surrounded to the north by the Sawtooth Mountain Range and
is at the mercy of the prevailing westerlies which, by the
time they reach Boise, are dry thus leaving little in the
way of precipitation during both winter and summer.

There were fields of mint we passed by, the aroma of
which was being carried past us on the wind; the odor
was very sweet smelling.
...alongside were acres and acres of Norgold potatoes
and the sculptured mesa-like landscape blended into
the mountains to the north...it was truly sublime.
The colours were reds, oranges, yellows and greens...
bold, magnificent and somehow very healing, and very
comforting for my soul.301

REFLECTIONS OF OREGON

The landscape of Oregon varied greatly from the eastern
border to the Cascades. We traversed the north-eastern
corner of the state through canyons and across the Blue
Mountains, then followed along the Columbia River gorge
until the vicinity of The Dalles, where we veered a little
bit south (inland), crossed the Cascades at Mount Hood and
ultimately arrived at the Willamette Valley. Elevation
varied anywhere from 98 feet above sea level at The Dalles to approximately 4,600 feet on Mount Hood, but for the most part, we travelled at an elevation that was consistently above 2,000 feet.

NYSSA:

...it's very true that the mountains and higher ground that surround us...as we travel change their positions day-to-day and appear to be getting...closer but into day four although we still seem quite close to the mountains visually, physically they are further away than they appear.302

KEENEY PASS:

On the day trip between Nyssa and Vale, we travelled through Keeney Pass and had our first experience of original wagon train ruts.

This is beautiful coming along here into our third hour of Thursday and we are coming along an old road, there are no telephone poles to obstruct the view or detract from the scenery, absolutely lovely, very different.303

...it's a valley area, hills on both sides, no trees, just sagebrush and bluebunch wheat grass...the soils of the area are mainly volcanic ash from Crater Lake...The original ruts are marked on both sides of the pavement by two types of markers, the older ones (1940s) are made of concrete slabs (almost looking like grave markers) and the newer ones of white plastic mounted on steel rods.304

The bluebunch wheat grass has been reintroduced onto the landscape by the state of Oregon in an effort to restore cattle grazing in the area. It is a native plant used for grazing but was overgrazed in the past. Doug Jones of the
VIEW FROM THE VALLEY SIDE AT KEENEY PASS, OREGON
VIEW OF RIDERS ON OLD OREGON TRAIL IN KEENEY PASS
National Forest Service for the state of Oregon informed me that:

...the overabundance of sagebrush in this area is due to the fact that previously uncontrolled natural fires, wild fires would have kept the sagebrush from encroaching as much. There would have been a lot more grass and less sagebrush. When they (the state) started fire suppression, the sagebrush got thick out there...The federal agencies are using controlled fires to build up the area slowly and recreate a more balanced ecosystem in this particular area.305

At our lunch stop at the Keeney Pass Historic Site, I hiked up the side of the hill and I stood near the peak on the original trail and it so quiet, hot and dry. I tried to imagine in my mind's eye that it was July 29, 1843 and the wagons rumbling and creaking up over the rise, and for just a moment I swear I heard them.306

DURKEE:

We had a rest day on July 31st, 1993 at Ontario, Oregon. I used this time to retrace our steps from Vale to Ontario and at Durkee. I left the interstate to follow an old gravel road up into the hillside of the surrounding canyon area in order to capture some photographs of the landscape especially those of original trail ruts in the area. These ruts were visible from the road but to photograph them it became necessary for me to crawl literally on my stomach underneath a barbed wire fence surrounding someone's private property. The weather this day was hot (91-95 degrees F.) and dry. The whole time I could hear the sound of a rattlesnake. The photographs show "how the
emigrants had to switchback up and down the other side of the hillside in order to traverse this canyon area"307 while our migration experience took us along the highway.

BAKER CITY:

The next point of interest is Baker City located in Pleasant Valley and from the Interpretative Centre, the highest landscape vantage point, it was possible to look northwest and consider the same view the migrants had before them in the nineteenth century. The view included the Sawtooth Mountain range to the east and the Blue Mountains ahead. In fact, we had moved upwards in elevation from approximately 2,155 feet at Ontario (following the Snake River) to 2,788 feet above sea level at La Grande, Oregon308 which is located in the foothills of the Blue Mountains over the period of a week.

At the summit of Blue Mountains:

The change in the landscape between the plains which were desert-like, the intense heat, sun, wind and dust and the Blue Mountains with its beautiful river and dense old-growth forest would have given the emigrants a taste of what was to come west of the Cascades. We as today's travellers found this a welcome change, but to the early emigrants, they viewed this part of the journey as tiresome, hazardous and fraught with difficulty.309

One of the park rangers talked about the oldest tree, on the summit which is estimated at 400 years, a big Douglas Fir, which would have been 250 years old at the time of the 1843 migration. At its base you can view the scars produced by the constant action of the wagonwheeeels over the exposed roots.310
Trees aged 130 years old or less have grown up in the large ruts (swales) thus altering the landscape picture from 1843 to the present.

The photographs (see Chapter Three) included in the thesis, are black and white do not do justice to the colour of the bark on these magnificent giants. One method of determining the age of the Douglas Fir is to compare the colour of the bark. As the trees age, there is almost a scaling of the bark off the tree and a significant change in colour from dark brown to this beautiful copper gold.

The following is an explanation of the choice of routes over the Blue Mountains. The ruts are still clearly visible. (see photographs in Chapter Three)

...the (e)migrants were not the only ones who used this travel corridor, before the emigrants were the native American peoples back as far as prehistoric times, it was one of their major corridors and after the one-way traffic of the emigrants when they discovered gold in Baker City in about 1861, then this particular route or trail track was adopted as the stage road and there were at one time three commercial stage coaches, the pony express and thousands upon thousands of freight wagons that fed the east-west traffic during the settlement period... The Hudson's Bay folks adopted those best travelled corridors previously used by Native Americans.

...large rocks were moved out of the way by the emigrants to form almost a border on each side of the wagon trail and provide an easier passage route. Other smaller rocks that had not been moved had been rounded by the movement of the wagon-wheels over the many decades. Small rocks off the path of the wagons are much more angular and pointed as is characteristic of lava rock.
The landscape today as we were making our way out of Pendleton, Oregon to Echo was quite monotonous and quite desolate, consisting mostly of large ploughed fields. We headed off the interstate and travelled across some gravel roads and stubble wheatfields for approximately 5 or 6 miles. The road we took followed the landscape up and down over gently rolling dips and crests. When we were in the lowest places, the only thing we could see were plowed fields of wheat stubble and dirt.314

WELLS SPRING:

On Wednesday, August 18th, 1993 we reached Wells Spring, Oregon. Our campsite was directly across from an old United States Navy, bomb testing site. Travelling from Wells Spring to Cecil, Oregon took place across "...extremely rolling topography. Hills, hills, hills. Up and down, up and down...Sue counted more than twenty...we travelled on gravel and dirt roads which were more reminiscent of the old trail..."315

Again the photographs included in this chapter are unable to reflect in colour the desert-like qualities of this particular area, the aridity, the alkalinity, and fields of sage brush. I would describe this area as burnt. It reminded me very much of the landscape around Lytton, British Columbia.316
COMING ACROSS THE WHEAT FIELD OUTSIDE PENDLETON
DRY, HOT AND VERY DUSTY
LANDSCAPE IN VICINITY OF WELLS SPRING, OREGON
Along the route today, Emigrant Road, we noticed some signs posted at regular intervals, which read:

"Welcome to Morrow County"
"This part of the trail was called "Hell" by the pioneers"
"They emigrated past"
"for quite a few years"
"this sand and sage had very little appeal."
"But today it provides"
"many people a meal."^317

This long quote refers to the fact that this landscape which was once covered with sage has more recently been made over into grazing ground for sheep and cattle, as well as for wheat growing.

Following on to Cecil, Oregon:

Cecil is a quaint spit-of-a-place. There is a general store...and this is the extent of it. The place where we camped, Krebs Ranch #1, belongs to a local sheep farmer and the evening's meal...was, of course, mutton...and it was the worst meal, next to the breakfast at Huntingdon, in over 35 days on the trail...The mutton was tough and the portions small. At $10 U.S. per head and over 1,000 dinner tickets sold (which included the surrounding small communities) someone ended up making a bundle on this feed.^318

Cecil is located in a small canyon (Four Mile Canyon) on the Willow River, a tributary of the Columbia. It was here that we again managed to locate some of the original Oregon Trail landscape. Just outside of our campsite area, up a very steeply graded country road, the old ruts were clearly visible. This was the first time since leaving the Blue Mountains that we felt reconnected to the nineteenth-century migration experience.
LANDSCAPE IN VICINITY OF CECIL, OREGON (COLUMBIA PLATEAU, BASALT OUTCROPPINGS)
THE JOHN DAY RIVER CROSSING:

One of the most exciting days of travel occurred on Sunday, August 22, 1993 when the wagon train crossed the John Day River. We were within a few hundred yards of the original Macdonald crossing site. At this point, we were following the old Oregon Trail along the present-day Union Pacific Railway line. We made our way through Alkali Canyon, one of the numerous canyons that make up this part of the Columbia Plateau, the slopes of which were tiered for grazing cattle and sheep. The verdant green pastures, irrigated with water from the Rock Creek, stood in sharp contrast to the dry, yellow-brown slopes.

The river crossing took place at the junction of the John Day River and Lower Rock Creek. The John Day was not particularly cold but had a fairly strong current and was about two and a half to three feet at its deepest point with a stony bottom. "Not all the walkers that day crossed the river on foot but certainly the state walkers did."319 The crossing was facilitated by the National Guard who had three, five-ton military vehicles, HMVs, (pronounced 'hum Vees') which they placed in staggered positions across the river and then strung a cable between each one for the aid of those walkers attempting the crossing. These vehicles also acted as a barrier to the wagons as they crossed in the event that any of the draft animals bolted or a wagon tipped over. "The crossing came off without a hitch. No accidents, no drownings."320
When everyone was safely on the opposite side of the river, the walkers had about ten minutes to change into dry walking gear. The crossing happened quite early in the day and there were more than fifteen miles to go over a steeply rolling landscape. One benefit was that, for the most part, it was on dirt and gravel once again.

WASCO, DESCHUTES RIVER AND THE DALLES:

The next day's march took us from Wasco, Oregon (elevation 800 feet, population 400) down through Fulton Canyon to the confluence of the Deschutes and Columbia Rivers. The canyon was quite narrow and dropped swiftly to an elevation of less than 200 feet above sea level. The canyons in this region are carved through basalt which permits the growth of sage and some stunted pine. And the wind which blew up the canyon from the Columbia brought with it the clear understanding of just how close we were to a large body of water; the velocity of the wind; the drop in temperature; the presence of birds; and for me, having my home on the coast, more than anything, was the distinct smell of water in the air. We continued to travel along the Columbia River gorge from the Deschutes River to The Dalles at which point our route took us back inland.

DUFUR AND TYGH VALLEY:

From the Dalles we migrated south along Highway 197 (California Highway) camping one evening at Dufur "...a quaint, pretty little town." The following day we
Photographs 4-6 and 4-7

ON THE ROAD FROM JOHN DAY RIVER TO WASCO, OREGON
Photograph 4-8

TYGH VALLEY, OREGON
headed for Tygh Valley, Oregon a distance of approximately 24 miles. From the Dalles to Tygh Valley, the landscape consisted of deep rolling canyons and high ridges. The highway was a continual climb from the Columbia River at 98 feet above sea level, to the Tygh Valley Summit at 2,699 feet. Once at the summit we travelled down a gentle slope through Butler Canyon and made our campsite at the Tygh Valley Rodeo Grounds at an elevation of about 1,800 feet.

From the Tygh Valley Summit the view included to the south Mt. Jefferson (10,495), to the west Mt. Hood (11,225), to the north Mt. Adams (12,307) and Mt. Rainier (14,408) all part of the Cascade Mountain Range.

You can see the Cascades clearly from this vantage point. Mt. Hood is very impressive and the early emigrants must have had the feeling that they were getting closer to their final destination. I am certainly looking forward to getting home and it is an indication to me...that they the emigrants also were anxious to arrive at the place where they were going to build their new homes...

From Tygh Valley through Wamic, Oregon to our campsite area at Rock Creek we climbed almost imperceptibly to an elevation of 4,820 feet above sea level. Rock Creek is located at the eastern edge of the Mt. Hood National Forest and in particular is located in the White River Game Management Area. Between Wamic and Rock Creek we traversed a "...brown, burnt, desert-like landscape" until almost as if by magic we had crossed a line drawn on the ground and "...all of a sudden now there are trees. What we are heading into is a blanket of green, a welcome sight."
LANDSCAPE OF BLALOCK CANYON IN THE VICINITY OF WASCO, OREGON
MOUNT HOOD:

And on August 28, 1993 we had finally arrived on Mount Hood. Our campsite this evening at White River (well to the south of the highest peak) was at an elevation of 3,530 feet.

The following day we travelled over the Barlow Pass at 4,161 feet to the National Forest Service campsite at Summit Meadows. Our journey was:

...on the original Oregon trail, over gravel and dirt...
we were never in the sun for very long as the route was through magnificent forest, absolutely beautiful, lush, colourful, and altogether quite breathtaking...

The trail itself was continually climbing and descending, climbing and descending to the point where the grade was so steep that we were almost having to walk on our tip toes...which almost did me in. I did not think I was going to be able to continue but since the support vehicles were unable to follow us over this portion of the landscape, I had no other option but to push myself.327

The organized migration experience was over for me here at Mt. Hood. I travelled by car Sunday, August 29th from Summit Meadows to Oregon City, Oregon, the trail's end. I finished the route that would be followed by the wagontrain along Highway 26 through Sandy, Carver and Holcomb, Oregon.

LAUREL HILL:

I stopped at the infamous Laurel Hill historic landscape site. This is where the early emigrants were
TWENTIETH-CENTURY PIONEERS ON HISTORICAL OREGON TRAIL THROUGH MT. HOOD, NATIONAL FOREST (BARLOW ROAD)
LAUREL HILL ON THE WESTERN SLOPES OF CASCADES
(VIEW LOOKING UP FROM HALF-WAY DOWN THE
INCLINE)
VIEW LOOKING TO WEST FROM SUMMIT OF LAUREL HILL IN THE CASCADE MOUNTAIN RANGE
forced to lower their wagons down the steep western slope of Mt. Hood using ropes thrown around the base of a giant fir tree.

I also stopped at Sandy, Oregon to take colour slides of the landscape facing back to the east, an area known as the Devil's Backbone. The view both east and west was one in total contrast to much of the landscape we had encountered previously. For the majority of the journey, the landscape was one of burnt prairie and bare rock, but at long last the scene had changed to one of lush green forested-hills and valleys, of snow-capped mountains and rushing rivers.

CLIMATE:

Due to the fact that this migration experience took place on an elevated plateau which is located inland between two significant mountain ranges, the Cascades and the Rockies, the climate is distinctly continental with very hot, and extremely dry summers punctuated by the occasional thunderstorm. The temperature range was anywhere from 85 to 105 degrees Fahrenheit and we received a small amount of moisture on two days out of a total thirty-eight days.

Dust was a significant problem due to a combination of factors including the climate which helps to create a dry, alkaline-type soil, the prevailing westerlies which sweep across the unprotected landscape, and the types of agri-
cultural activities which take place on this landscape, including wheat growing, and the rearing of sheep and cows.

DUST:

Saturday, August 7th, 1993 - We are staying at the fairgrounds here in Union, Oregon and it is very very dusty; I have had my shower but with the wind having kicked up, it's dust in your eyes, your mouth, and everywhere else imaginable.328

Sunday, August 15th, 1993 - It was a very long day today. Eventually it got very hot and we kicked up a lot of dust along those old roads and across those ploughed wheat fields...329

By the time we had reached Wells Spring, on August 17th, dust had become a permanent and constant feature, even hardship. It was never possible to feel really clean for very long after my end-of-the-day shower. Dust was everywhere, all day, every day.

...the weather is very very hot and dusty. My car is filled with a very fine powdery dust that sticks like glue to everything.330

The last noticeably dusty day occurred on August 27th between Wamic and Rock Creek, Oregon. "It was a very hot day again and very dusty at the campsite."331 Luckily this day we were camped at the edge of a reservoir and were able to:

...don our bathing gear and go down to the water for a dip. This place reminded me of home with the smell of the water, the birds, the breeze and the view of Mount Hood. It was like being at Alice Lake campground on the route to Whistler, British Columbia and looking up and seeing Black Tusk.332

The only other times that we were fortunate enough to be
able to wash the dust off in a natural setting along the trail occurred at the John Day River and the Deschutes River.

TEMPERATURE:

The temperature for the majority of the trek fell in a range between 85 to 105 degrees Farenheit with a cooler range in the evenings which was comfortable for sleeping. The biggest problem related to temperature was that for the most part we were travelling across asphalt which served to intensify the daytime temperature considerably, sometimes in excessive of 50 degrees higher than normal.

July 27, 1993 - the temperature is now about 86 degrees. It's slowly creeping up to a more normal Idaho summer range between 90 and 110... it's going to be just deathly tomorrow...333

The fact that asphalt magnified the temperature by at least 50 percent was proven the afternoon of July 28, 1993 after we reached camp when Bill, the Frontier Saloon owner, took a thermometer and measured the temperature of the dirt surrounding his trailer. The temperature that day was "...102 degrees farenheit...in the wagons, 146 degrees off the dirt and approximately 175-190 degrees coming off the asphalt for the walkers, and animals. Today was a typical Idaho summer day."334

A rather unique micro-climate occurred in the region of Farewell Bend State Park.

Monday, August 2nd, 1993 - The morning is beautiful even though we are at an elevation of
Kyle, cont'd...

2100 feet. It was so warm last night and so warm this morning, apparently it is due to the wind off the desert to the west of us.335

Farewell Bend State Park is located on the Snake River and was the place where the Oregon Trail parts company with the Snake and heads in a north-west direction up the Burnt River Canyon to meet the Columbia at the Deschutes River. Here we are still in the Blue Mountains and to the west, located between the western edge of the Blues and the eastern edge of the Cascades, is the Great Sandy Desert. The landscape reminded me very much of Merritt.

Amazingly beautiful and different landscape, and so lovely and warm. Again not a cloud in the sky but because of this breeze, balmy is the only word that comes to mind to describe it, almost tropical. This is at 8:10 a.m., August 2nd.336

I lamented the fact that there was not enough light the evening of August 6th at North Powder, Oregon to capture on film the magnificent colours and texture of the sunset.

...We are having an absolutely gorgeous sunset. The rain clouds have moved in which was predicted for Boise and they have to come to us in this area although they have not released any precipitation on us but are dropping it over the Elkhorn Mountains which are in the distance...to the west where the storm clouds seem to be centered, there is lightening, very bright flashes but no rain.337

August 7th, 1993 - ...The weather was warm today, probably hot but moderated by a beautiful breeze which made it absolutely lovely to walk.338

The walk this particular day (August 7th) was between North Powder and Union, Oregon. We travelled "much of today...on gravel and dirt roads which helped immensely."339
due to the fact that the heat was reduced dramatically when not travelling on asphalt. Union is located in a lush, cool, green valley and the scenery was quite beautiful, restful in many ways after so much travel across scrubby, brown landscape. The migration this day was over gently rolling hills and small valleys.

By the time we had reached Pendleton:

The weather Saturday, August 13th was a little overcast, a little cooler (80 degrees) than it has been up to now...but more humid.340

Leaving Pendleton, after a well-deserved rest day:

Initially the temperature today, August 15th, was cool, overcast and quite windy. But now as we are pulling away from our lunch stop at about 1 o'clock, the sun has broken through and it has warmed up considerably.341

The temperature for the period of August 20, 21 and 22nd inclusive (Krebs Ranch #2, John Day River and Wasco) was typical for this part of the country. "It was cool when we first started out at 7 a.m."342 but by 10 a.m. the days were "beautiful, sunny and very very hot" and very very dry with a slight cooling effect by the wind which was usually present through the canyon areas.

As September approached "the mornings and evenings were...getting considerably cooler"343 and the night of August 25th at Dufur, Oregon the temperature dropped to about 35 degrees farenheit. This drop in temperature was
COMING UP THE HIGHWAY FROM THE DALLES
ON THE WAY TO DUFUR
related to the fact that we had increased elevation from 98 feet at The Dalles to 2665 feet\textsuperscript{344} above sea level in one day's march. I had to sleep that evening "fully dressed in several layers of clothing with my sleeping bag covering my head and face. It was damn cold. We all complained bitterly the next morning and it took a good two or three hours for the early morning chill to wear off."	extsuperscript{345} And by noon, the skies were once again perfectly clear, and it was sunny and quite hot.

By the time we reached Mount Hood on August 28th, 1993 we were experiencing:

...Perfect fall days...Cool mornings and evenings with warm to hot days. I am left wondering if when this weather was upon the early travellers that they felt 'hurried' to get to their destination knowing that with each additional day's travel or delay that winter was fast approaching.\textsuperscript{346}

It was on the summit of Mount Hood that I finally left the group. I continued to drive the route that would be followed by the wagon train over the next few days. I stopped at points of interest and continued to take photographs. I ended my trek at Oregon City by stopping for a drink at the End of the Trail Saloon, and then home to Vancouver.

WIND:

There are two aspects of the wind that are worthy of mention. One is the wind as an obstacle to be overcome in the setting up of our campsites for the evening's respite
and the other is the wind as a welcome relief from the intense heat on several of the days' marches.

WIND AS OBSTACLE:

Friday, August 6th, 1993 - It's very very windy tonight but a lovely change from the incredible heat and still night air we have been experiencing so far. Although it is a bit scary to sleep.347

I had to move my car into a position in order to block the wind as much as possible this evening. The wind was so strong at times during the night that my tent was blown over to such an extent it was touching my face. I am truly amazed that the wind did not take my tent and me with it for a nice tumble down the road.

The wind was only a problem two other evenings, one being the night we spent at Cecil, August 19th, 1993. This particular day we were camped at a sheep ranch and:

The weather that evening...was variable. The day itself had been extremely hot and muggy but by about 10 p.m. or 10:30 p.m. a strong wind came up almost from nowhere. There was lightning in the distance prior to the wind picking up. I got to my tent just before all hell broke loose. The wind was so strong and kicked up so much dust that it was literally impossible to see and...for the second time on this trip my tent was at a high risk of blowing from here to kingdom come. It did not particularly rain at all, but eventually the storm moved in and the flashes of lightening (which seemed as though they were breaking directly overhead) were quite scary. My tent managed to withstand the onslaught of wind and dust but not without a great deal of trepidation on the part of its sole inhabitant.348

The next night we camped at Krebs Ranch #2 and the wind blew up again with such force that I pitched my tent directly beside my car in an effort to gain some advantage. One
of the other state walkers, Stella Kaiser, slept in her car and I repacked mine in the event that I might be forced to do likewise sometime during the night. As it was, the rain did not amount to much, although the wind stayed constant through until morning and into the following day and night.

WIND AS RELIEF:

I made a note in my diary that as early as the first day of travel from Boise to Caldwell, Idaho, the wind was a welcome relief from the excessive heat of the day. "It is still Monday, although it feels like Friday and it is about two o'clock in the afternoon...The wind has died down and it is getting real hot."349

The climatic conditions of many of the following days were quite similar to that first day. I recorded on August 3rd, while walking from the Troy Ranch to Baker City "a length of approximately 18 miles, of which I did the 18 less probably a mile and a half," that "the weather was initially partially cloudy and cool with a nice breeze...but by lunchtime, noon, as usual the clouds were gone and it was damn hot."350

Once again, walking from Union to La Grande:

August 9th, 1993...it was breezy yesterday which was nice. It was darn windy actually, which kept it cool until later in the afternoon about an hour and a half before we got into town the wind died down and the temperature rose in equal proportion.351

Two of the nicest days of walking relative to the cooling effect of the wind took place on August 23rd from
Wasco to the Deschutes River and the following day for our journey to The Dalles:

August 24th, 1993...The weather was mostly sunny but very windy and somewhat cool as we are walking beside the Columbia River...to The Dalles.352

PRECIPITATION:

There were only two nights and two days out of the entire thirty-four days where rain was a severe and uncomfortable problem. The advantage we had as far as the weather was concerned was that our belongings were kept as dry as humanly possible in either our own vehicles or in those belonging to the wagon train.

The biggest problem for me with respect to the rain was the fact that I had not packed appropriate clothing and my tent was not top-of-the-line by any stretch of the imagination. Some leakage did occur inside my tent making sleep difficult.

SHADE:

The topic of shade is an important one because the first half of our migration took place over a desert-like landscape (the Columbia Plateau) and the only shade trees generally were the ones that had been planted in relation to the building of state park campsite areas and community fairgrounds. We as state walkers were fortunate in the beginning to have the treed, and grassy areas to camp nightly while the teamsters and riders were relegated to
less desirable quarters. But that became more variable about midway in the journey.

Also what began to occur approximately at Emigrant Springs State Park was that there was a growing separation both in physical distance and in emotional distance between the teamsters and outriders and the state walkers. Often-times this was a reflection of the amount of space required to accommodate all of their equipment, animals and themselves. But what it served to accomplish was a clear and ever-widening wedge between the upper class and lower class members of the trek.

Much of our (state walkers') conversation is often tied up with the topic of shade and trying to find some in this intense heat and over the particularly barren, dry landscape over which we are migrating...finding shade at the end of each day's journey becomes an ultimate concern for everyone when we arrive at our daily destination point. Even before the teamsters are off their wagons and before the riders dismount, they are scanning the area looking for the best and most comfortable space for themselves to place their trailers, animals and themselves.353

Monday, August 9th, 1993 - La Grande - It's too hot to lie in my tent to try and get some extra sleep today. It is like an oven in there and there are absolutely no shade trees here whatsoever, so I'm sitting in the mess tent drinking gallons of cold water.354

Other campsites which were absolutely devoid of shade trees included Pendleton, Echo, Wells Spring, Arlington (Krebs Ranch #2), the John Day River, and Dufur.
HARDSHIPS RELATED TO THE MIGRATION EXPERIENCE:

WALKING:

In the month before this journey, I spent some time every day exercising in an attempt to get in shape. At the time of the trip, I was about sixty pounds overweight and this fact alone was a severe stumbling block for the first two and a half weeks. We had been advised in the promotional package that we would be walking at a speed of approximately 3.5 m.p.h. and the organizers held true to their word. The speed at which we walked was incredibly fast, oftentimes exceeding 4 m.p.h. Some of the following excerpts indicate how much difficulty I personally experienced:

...I am continually falling to the back of the group of walkers due to my comparatively slow walking speed.355

...God I must be getting old...I can only keep pace with a 62-year old man.356

...it was bloody hot and bloody long. We walked about 20 to 22 miles. I would say I did about 15 or 16 of that distance...I'm extremely tired, I have ...a headache from the sun (heat and exposure) and over exertion...I'm just anxious at this point to get back, get over to the shower, get my hair washed so that it can dry in the sun on its own and I cannot wait to get out of these hiking boots for today.357

By Friday, July 30th, almost one week into this adventure, it was becoming noticeably easier for me to walk a large part of each day's march. "I am definitely going to walk till noon today as it is fairly flat... (P.M.) I ended up walking about ten miles today and it was good, I felt good, my legs are stiff but I am feeling not too bad."358
By August 7th, the walking had become significantly more comfortable, so much so that "this was the first day that I basically walked all day. I was forced to take the bus about one-quarter mile out of the fifteen-mile day today due to dangerous road conditions." 

We came out of North Powder today at a very even, steady pace for the first little bit and then were introduced to a very easy grade up of about 1/2 - 1 mile in length that got the legs working and I felt extremely good, strong, breathing has become easier, I'm not labouring as intensely. I'd be interested to know if there has been a weight change since I began. I'm feeling much stronger, much better, healthier and much better about myself... 

On August 23rd, I realized a personal goal I had set for myself somewhere near the beginning of this journey and that was to keep up with the other state walkers who were always in the lead following right behind the people on horseback. 

I started off in the front with Yvonne and Barbara and I managed to stay right behind the horses all the way to the campground (Deschutes River) today. I am ecstatic about the fact that I was the first one of the walkers to arrive in camp this afternoon.

When I compared the time it took me to walk nine miles at home in Vancouver to this point in the journey, I found I was walking thirteen to fourteen miles in the same amount of time, three and one-half hours or approximately four m.p.h.

RIDING A HORSE: 

I asked Judi Savage today (August 2) if I could ride her horse for a couple of minutes at the
Kyle, cont'd...

potty break...and she graciously allowed me to do just that...I thanked her profusely for the experience.362

This was the first time I had been on the back of a horse in probably four or five years. I am an accomplished and experienced equestrian rider and it was like the old adage of once you learn how to ride you never forget.

My second experience riding came on August 15th on our journey from Pendleton to Echo, Oregon. I rode half the day that day and then for two or three more days consecutively. And consequently "some things hurt...that did not hurt before, especially my butt..."363 The afternoon of August 15th was a glorious, sunny summer day's ride but the very next day a storm had whipped up and "the rain and wind was in full force"364 and:

...the rain was running off the brim of my hat, down my borrowed poncho and directly into my hiking boots which caused me to ride all morning with little lakes having formed to cover my feet inside my boots. The gloves Greg had lent me were cotton and had soaked up as much moisture as they could possible hold after the first 20 or 30 minutes in the saddle. The wind continually caught this less-than-effective plastic protection and whipped it out from underneath my legs and seat...Other riders and walkers who were appropriately dressed were wearing oilskins and riding boots that came to their knees, leather gloves lined with wool and either jeans covered with leather chaps or wool pants.365

After this day's ride, when we had returned for our vehicles in Echo, instead of returning directly to the campside, I drove back to Pendleton to the athletic club there and paid $3 US to have a whirlpool, hot shower and
sauna. I was chilled to the bone after riding and my legs were in bad shape. The drive back to Butter Creek from Pendleton posed somewhat of a problem in that "I was tempted to just close my eyes and sleep."366 I was utterly exhausted.

I rode again the next day, August 17th and "I felt amazingly well...The weather cleared up, it was hot...I had a much better ride...as it was sunny and warm and I had adjusted the saddle to be more comfortable, more specifically I lowered the stirrups to an appropriate position."367

RIDING IN THE WAGONS

One of the advantages of beginning my journey at Boise, Idaho was that I was able to meet many of the core group of teamsters, outriders, event organizers and support staff. I was able to accomplish this starting on my very first day in Idaho when I introduced myself to David Collins, 'Skinner', who worked as an assistant to one of the teamsters and who also was the wagon train's twentieth-century travelling blacksmith. It was through my association with David that I was fortunate enough to make friends with so many people who were to become quite literally my emotional and physical support system over the next five hundred miles.

One of the first teamsters I had the pleasure of meeting was Jerry Johnson. Jerry was permanently employed by the National Forest Service based in Colville, Washington
A PHOTOGRAPH SHOWING THE BOTTOM PORTION OF JERRY JOHNSON'S WAGON -- THE SUSPENSION WAS DIFFERENT FROM OTHERS ON THE TRAIL AND ALLOWED FOR A MUCH MORE COMFORTABLE RIDE.
as a 'Forest Trail Co-ordinator' and he was also self-employed as an instructor of those wishing to learn how to work as mule-packers and guides. He owned his own reproduction wagon and raised his own mules which were a beautiful Belgian/mule cross. He signed me on that first day as a volunteer for the Forest Service and assured me that I was welcome to ride, free of charge, anytime there was room in the wagon.

Travelling in the wagons on a regular basis for the duration of my experience was a godsend for many reasons not the least of which was the fact that it allowed me a first-hand historical experience. It also not only provided a much needed physical break from the heat and strain of walking, but it allowed me to spend valuable time talking to other people along the way, gathering useful information for my journal and it also enabled me to take photographs which would have been otherwise lost to me.

July 27th - I am spending the day riding in a wagon belonging to Scott & Jackie Simmons, the youngest teamsters in the group...I walked the first leg of the day and got on the wagon at the first break...It's been a...good experience to ride in the wagon, just the feel of it...the noise of the wheels clattering over the road...the smell of hay and leather and horses...and the chance to really sit back and enjoy the beautiful scenery...which of course includes the 'cowboys'...

The wagon was built for his great grandfather, Wilhelm, who eventually settled in the Tilamook Valley...

"I am the fourth generation from him and my children are the fifth...Great Grandpa Wilhelm left Germany in 1887...got to Missouri, headed
RIDING IN THE WAGONS MADE THE TRIP MUCH MORE ENJOYABLE
Kyle, cont'd...

west, him and his wife and one child died of cholera about 5 or 6 days out on the trail...and then his brother took his children, the other children...one or two."369

One of the interesting things about riding in the wagons was that because of the combination of intense heat, the slow pace and the rocking motion, often "...I found myself going to sleep here in the wagon."370

DRIVING MY CAR:

I, along with two other state walkers, Stella Kaiser and Pat Lyttle, travelled by car. The other six had arrived at the original departure point by other means and were being transported on a daily basis by a large school-type bus belonging to the National Forest Service. Each morning they would pack up their things, put them on the bus and once we had arrived at our daily destination point they would simply get their things from the bus and set up camp.

What eventually began to happen as we got closer as a group is that the group of six would save enough space for the three of us who were hampered by cars. Hampered in the sense that it was very time-consuming and energy-draining to deal with bringing our vehicles up with us each afternoon. In the beginning we would be out of luck to find any shade for ourselves. Also what began to happen is that the three of us began transporting particular items such as ice and pop in our coolers, and lawn chairs for the benefit of the group as a whole.
One of the most aggravating things...is getting to our destination and having to mess around with getting back to our vehicles and then retracing the days trip over again by car. By the time we reach our destination for any particular day I have just about had it with the heat, dust, bugs, sweat, tiredness and the thought of going back to my car is a bother although as I think of it now in some ways it is nice because it gives me a bit of quiet time by myself to reflect on the day and add notes to my diary and take more photographs.371

The worst drive back to the evening's campsite occurred on the afternoon of August 17th, 1993:

It was a long, hard drive back from the old campsite tonight. Dusty, out of the way. David Ruth, who was driving the forest service bus, was in the lead but appeared to be lost...it took us about twice as long as it should have and he could have gotten all of us who were following him (8 cars) killed. He led us along a dirt and gravel road for about three-quarters of an hour that was so dusty we had to travel several hundred feet behind each other...as it was nearly impossible to see your hand in front of your face even inside your own vehicle...I was so stressed by the time I got to Wells Spring that I could have killed someone, that someone being David specifically.372

WASHROOMS/SHOWERS/SANITATION

There were two portable shower trailers supplied by the organizers of the wagon train, one for the women and one for the men. Each trailer was outfitted with five individual showers, with both hot and cold running water but not electrical outlets. Two rows of portable washstands, with sinks and mirrors, were set up directly outside the shower trailers. And chairs were provided for those who showed up late and had to wait.

Portable toilets were placed at strategic positions relative to the particular campsite topography. These
toilets were also placed each morning on flatbed trucks and moved ahead of us on our day's march to be used for potty breaks. We would normally take one break about two hours before lunch and one break after lunch. Sometimes the distance between breaks was longer or shorter due to the availability of space along the roadside and the associated danger with such a large group of people and animals.

For the most part there were no complaints about the toilets, showers and level of sanitation. But there were three occasions when there was absolutely no hot water for showers at the day's end and also, the closer we moved to our final destination, the more people joined in on a day-to-day basis which meant that lineups for the use of the facilities often became quite long and extremely annoying.

The core group of teamsters, organizational employees, national guard, horse riders and state walkers made up a constant group of approximately 150, while on any given day there were as many as an additional 50 to 200 people made up of day walkers, horse riders and/or wagon riders.

CAMPSITES:

We were treated to a variety of campsite locations including rodeo grounds on several days, state campgrounds, city parks, private ranches and community school grounds. Each one had its advantages (trees and grass) and disadvantages (no shade, dust and cactus) but overall the campsites were each unique. The biggest factor for campsite
location was always the size of space needed for the wagons, the people, the animals and the support vehicles. We needed on average five acres to be comfortable.

It's interesting the different places we've had to camp at night...last night (29th) was lovely because the horse people and the wagon people were on the dirt and bunch grass and we were tenting in a park area, under shade trees, on beautiful cool green grass, but I understand that once we travel to Ontario we are back to rodeo grounds which seem to be the order of the day, mainly because (and it makes sense because of the horses and wagons) of the sheer number people and equipment necessary to outfit this trip, but when you get in this long, dry grass, it's pretty dusty and bugs galore...so nights like last night come well deserved and enjoyed.373

We were again fortunate to be located on a grassy area behind the rodeo grandstand while the teamsters and riders were relegated to the dust and bunch grass.374

John Day River campsite - tonight in camp was a bit of a disaster. We were in camp by about noon, the temperature got hotter by the minute, we were camping in a field of dry, stubble... with absolutely no shade, again.375

AUTHENTIC CLOTHING

I was quite embarrassed (and envious) of the fact that the majority of the people (Americans) on this migration had been aware for many months that it would be taking place and in some cases, such as in the case of Rachel and Cathryn Lamb, they had known for almost two years previous to the event taking place. They had been organizing and getting ready for the trip especially in the wardrobe department and here I arrived with absolutely no inkling how out-of-place I would eventually feel regarding the issue of authentic or reproduction clothing (as well as appropriate present-day
riding gear for all weather situations). Much of this was due to the fact that I made the decision to travel approximately three and one-half months beforehand and was extremely limited due to my financial situation.

Rachel showed me the inside of their horse trailer which has a separate compartment for herself and Cathryn to sleep in. They built a couple of beautiful pine boxes, one for clothes and one for tack. She'd actually stopped at a place in California to buy some buttons while she had been on a trip there last year and started a conversation with the shopowner about this trip and how much she was planning for it, and the woman came up with some hooks and eyes and buttons that were authentic nineteenth-century apparel.376

SEPARATION OF CORE GROUP FROM STATE WALKERS:

I enjoyed the journey much more when the core group was smaller. We were closer together in a physical sense each night when we set up and also it took less time for dinner, and showering, so there was more of the evening left to enjoy reading, writing, visiting with friends, and relaxing.377

FINANCIAL:

My twentieth-century migration experience cost in excess of $3,000 Canadian. That figure does not include the cost of maintaining my home in Vancouver over the five-week period of the trip. That figure also does not include the estimated cost in wear and tear on my vehicle of travelling over 1400 miles378 and the $100 deductible on my car insurance that I had to pay upon my return to Vancouver in order
JUST ABOUT THE PRETTIEST WOMAN ON THE TRAIL, RACHEL.
ONE OF MY FRIENDS AND CONFIDANTES ON THE TRAIL, CATHRYN.
to get the front end of my car restored after my close
encounter with a deer on the highway just outside of Tygh
Valley. It does include the approximately $400 for film and
processing.

I was constantly aware of my lack of surplus cash as
attested to when I write that I:

Went into town today thinking I might buy some
authentic clothes... but I am still concerned about
spending the money before this coming weekend, before
the support payment for Erin goes in the bank and I
cannot get a balance prirtout from the machines here
so I am not sure what financial state I am in and if
Dale was able to get the $150 or any portion of that
from Eric as payment for subleting my flat...379

FOOD:

There is talk about the food and either the
quality of it, the lack of it and by that I
mean small portions (in relation to the 'community
meals' not the caterers) for men that are doing a
day's work by many people's standards especially
in this heat...380

Most of our meals were provided by the caterers
travelling with us but on several occasions the meals were
provided by the particular communities that we were passing
through in order to boost their economy. Oftentimes, those
meals were absolutely the worst especially in comparison
with our caterers -- whose food was remarkably good.

An exception to the above rule was the dinner we
experienced at North Powder:

... Dinner tonight was excellent. It was put on by
the community, was basically 'all you could eat' and
Kyle, cont'd...

consisted mainly of the *most wonderful baked beans* I have ever had in my life. They had been cooking in a big cast iron kettle over an open fire for the majority of the day.\(^{381}\)

Also "we had a lovely salmon dinner...in the Longhouse on the Umatilla Reserve at Mission, Oregon on Thursday evening, August 12th."\(^{382}\) The salmon was an exceptional treat and we were further honored by a display of authentic singing and dancing.

**MEDICAL PROBLEMS:**

People and animals suffered a variety of aches and pains along the trail. Most human ailments were related to heat prostration and blisters while animal ailments included neck sores and joint stiffness. Other incidents included bumps and bruises related to riders being thrown off their trusty steeds.

One very serious medical issue arose in the case of the oldest member of the state walkers, Dr. Larry Auspos (76 years of age), from Wilmington, Delaware. Larry, who stands about 5 ft. 3 inches tall and weighs in at about one hundred pounds soaking wet, spends almost all of his time hiking and trekking up and down and around America and many other parts of the world. But on this trip, there was a period of a couple of days where we were concerned that he was going to suffer either a heart attack or stroke due to the effort he was exerting in such an extreme climate. One way he used to help himself along the trail was on particularly steep
inclines, he would grab hold of one of the outrider's horse's tails and allow himself to be gently pulled up.

One of the outriders, Judi Savage, suffered a broken ankle which happened when she was trying to stop a runaway wagon sometime before I joined up at Boise. She wore a cast the whole way through Oregon and adjusted her spur to fit overtop. Presumably, she suffered agonizing pain with swelling inside the cast, made worse by the heat and exertion.

The wagonmaster, Jerry Schubert, suffered some broken and bruised ribs in the same incident described when he and his passenger were thrown from his wagon. The passenger left the wagontrain immediately at that point but Jerry stayed on to finish the trip, albeit in a reduced physical capacity.

There was a medical doctor who accompanied the wagon train but he was the constant butt of jokes as there was some apprehension about his qualifications for the position. I had an occasion to need his services for a prescription and found him to be helpful and pleasant.

The following quotes relate to a few medical issues that were prominent along the trail:

Greg was mentioning that it's really a tough go for the animals as well, for his horse, hard on her joints, swelling, water retention, stuff like that, working out on the pavement as much as they do...383

July 28, 1993 - I could barely eat today, in fact I barely did, I had a bit of fruit, some
Kyle, cont'd...

...salad and maybe an ounce of meat, and I've been drinking fluids which is a...good idea but I just cannot stomach the thought of food right now. You just stand around and sweat. So appetites are being affected.

...there is a flu going around...due to some sort of bacteria in the water (the water cans are being kept too long in the sun) and a couple of people have been pretty sick with that...

More banter around the teamsters about injuries to people...having been stepped on, injuries to the animals, neck sores and also joint problems, sprains and things...

More problems with the wagon train, a young couple pulling one of the wagons, their draft horses have developed neck sores underneath their harness and were not treated properly, they used a variety of salves and ointments simultaneously in an effort to remedy the problem and it only made it worse so that now these animals are no longer able to work...due to these gaping sores. So now they have hooked up two wagons together and harnessed two mule teams in tandem to pull them.

Tuesday, August 2, 1993 - ...They had problems along the route today with the new team of draft horses that were brought in for Ernie and his wife. The horses were not in shape to do this kind of work. They became quite winded after the long steep climb out of Farewell Bend; they had to unhitch the horses and let them finish the route unburdened while the wagon was pulled by a truck for the remainder of the day...

Jerry said that most of the problem was due to the fact that although Ernie Scott and his wife said part of the reason they came on this excursion was to learn, that they were just not willing to take anyone's advice.

August 4th, 1993 - I did not record anything nor did I take any pictures on August 3, 1993. We were walking from the Troy Ranch to Baker City a length of approximately 18 miles, of which I did the 18 less about a mile and a half. The weather was initially partially
THESE DRAFT HORSES ARE STRUGGLING TO HAUL ONE OF THE WAGONS UP A VERY STEEP INCLINE -- WE KEEP STOPPING AND STARTING AGAIN, WHICH AGGRAVATES THEIR NECKS AND CAUSES SORES UNDER THE HARNESSES.
Kyle, cont'd...

cloudy, cool with a nice breeze but by lunchtime, noon, as usual the clouds were gone and it was hot. We walked on the blacktop the whole way, and on freshly rolled blacktop for some of the way...it was bloody hot. I suffered an attack of PMS...and emotionally was very close to the surface, teary, feeling like I just could not go on, my legs were bothering me so much by this point, not only when I walked but the aching would keep me awake at night also.389

One of the outriders was hurt yesterday...his horse got his leg caught on a step attached to the back of one of the wagons, the horse went down and Roy fell off but his foot caught in the stirrup and he got bounced around, nothing broken but a lot of bumps and bruises.390

By Saturday, August 21st I found that I was having much difficulty coping with the combination of being tired, sore, emotionally drained and homesick:

I began walking with everyone else today at 7:00 a.m. but after about five minutes I quit walking and returned to the campsite. We were walking on asphalt once again and it was only a matter of a couple of minutes brisk walking before my shins were screaming out in agony. The problem for me all along this trip has been that once I had developed shin splints, I found that each morning regardless of how much I stretched prior to walking, my shins would immediately ache and would not stop hurting until well into the second hour of exercise. This morning it was just too much...On my return to the camp I was in tears. I talked to David about how I was feeling, about being pushed physically. He tried to offer as much support as he could...391

Eventually, I went over to the saloon to talk to the owners, Bill and Janice (Keeler), and explained to them that it was not so much a matter of not being capable of walking rather it was the speed at which we were expected to travel. I decided at that point that I would start off again by
myself and walk at my own pace for the day regardless of any flack I might receive from the organizers. The walk this day was a relatively short one (13 miles). There was a steady stream of support vehicles moving the former campsite to the next location in case I got into any trouble.

Bill and Janice gave me some fresh fruit and a couple of packs of fruit juice for my day's journey. When I needed to take a potty break I would have to find a convenient spot away from the road. I started off a good hour after the others and at one point I had almost caught up with the wagon train which was proof to me of just how much time was spent in stopping for breaks with such a large group of people. My more leisurely pace made infinitely more sense especially considering my injuries.

The most difficult day's drive for the draft horses and mules came on Wednesday, August 25th as we pulled out of The Dalles and headed south to Dufur, Oregon:

The grade of this part of the road coming up out of The Dalles is quite steep\footnote{392} and very very long. We are having to stop every ten minutes or so to allow the wagonmaster's team of horses to cool down and 'blow' (catch their breath). The wagon I am riding in today is being drawn by a mule team and once again, the mules are being held back by the draft horse teams.\footnote{393}

This particular day was meant to be the final showdown between those drivers using mules and those using horses. According to the former, mules were the best choice for pulling wagons loaded with goods and people over the
combined distance and types of landscape encountered between the Wyoming/Idaho border and Oregon City.

After several stops, Bob, the driver of the wagon I was riding in, became quite incensed and:

pulled his team out and continued on up the hill past all the other wagons including the lead wagon, until a state trooper in his cruiser finally caught up with us and pulled in front of us forcing us to wait. Bob sure caught hell...The other teamsters who were also using mule teams, applauded Bob's efforts...394

Apparently, according to Mike McKinley, it had been pre-arranged at a meeting the previous evening...that each of the wagons being drawn by a mule team would pull out one after the other and continue up the grade at the first sign of the wagonmaster, Jerry Schubert, having to rest his team. No one but Bob had the intestinal fortitude to actually follow through.

Bob said to me that "he would never follow draft horses again and that he would definitely never follow Jerry Schubert again, even if he was being paid $10 US a mile."395 And that as far as Bob could tell "there is only one wagon in this parade and it's that (Schubert's) red barn..."396

He continued on to say "If them old black horses can't make it, he (Jerry) better put 'em in a trailer and haul 'em to Oregon City."397 And further that:

If all that Jerry Schubert was interested in doing was racing to Oregon City to lead them in the three-mile parade into Oregon City, then he should just haul them horses over there and wait for us to catch up and fall in behind him for the three miles, but instead he's made it a 1,000-mile parade.398
The problem of neck sores discussed earlier was exacerbated by the frequent stopping and starting. Every time the teams started up, the collar was pulled back over the top of their necks and every time they stopped, the weight of the wagon pushed the collar forward over the same spot. The backward and forward motion was made worse on such a steep grade.

LAUNDRY:

Finding some place where anywhere between one hundred and fifty and three hundred and seventy-five people could do laundry all at the same time was always an interesting experience for the wagon train. It was often eight or nine days before we would either be close enough to civilization to find a laundromat or indeed before we had the time to take care of such personal business. On our rest day at Cecil, on August 19th, a small group of us women state walkers (Sue, Barbara, Yvonne and myself):

drove... into the nearest real town to see if we could find a laundromat. The only thing we could find was a couple of washers and dryers that were available for use at a trailer camp. Between the four of us... we had more than enough laundry to keep several machines running so we opted to go somewhere further afield the next day. We did end up stopping at the local market to pick up some essentials: pop, ice and beer.\textsuperscript{399}

The next day, the group voted me as spokesperson to approach the Forest Service representative Doug Jones, to ask permission to borrow David the bus driver and the bus to
transport us en masse to a suitable location. Luckily David was interested and Doug was amenable.

Eventually we managed to travel as far as Walla Walla, Washington which was approximately 100 miles one way. We could have found somewhere a bit closer but we (now the group included a couple of the teamsters and Mike McKinley, the Idaho state historian) all agreed that we were interested in seeing the Whitman Mission. The trip was afoot and "the day ended up being quite long and very hot and very very muggy" (and my hangover did not help matters) but it was also "nice...because we got to see the Columbia River Gorge in all its splendor."400

RELATIONSHIP WITH DAY WALKERS:

I refer to those people who joined the wagon train for a period of seven days or less as day walkers (and riders) in order to distinguish them from the group of us who were either with the wagon train for a period of more than one month and/or traversing the whole state of Oregon.

I had a multitude of conversations with many different people over the period of my journey and each one of those provided me with a little bit of insight both into their personal lives and also added facts concerning the landscape and general history that I was previously unaware of.

The following quotes are just a few of those people who will stand out in my diary and my memory forever as
interesting travelling companions, emotional support and much more:

DAN AND JEAN KOKES, FROM MAPERVILLE, ILLINOIS:

I must say that Jean and Dan Kokes were just exceptional people. Not only did Dan give me my wake up call this morning at 5 a.m., he also gave me part of his dinner this evening (because I was late and there was none left by the time I arrived back at the campsite) and then beyond even that, during a discussion I was having with Jean just as they were packing up to leave, I explained how awkward I felt about not being in period costume and she proceeded to give me what she had been wearing, her skirt and bloomers... she was not going to give me her blouse because it was an antique whereas the rest of her outfit was reproduction. She said to 'just return them when you get home'...

I was amazed at the kindness that was displayed today.

BERNIE (AND DENICE) HUOT, HUNTINGTON BEACH, CALIFORNIA:

...spent the last couple of hours talking to a gentleman who was originally from Canada but now resides in Huntington Beach, California... chatted to him about free trade and learning how to speak Spanish and all sorts of things. God I must be getting old... I can only keep pace with a 62-year old man.

Bernie Huot walked with me for quite a bit of that first day through Idaho... a very interesting man... retired, married for the fourth time... originally from Canada (Quebec)... and learning to speak Spanish by living with a Spanish family in Mexico for a period of time... he and his current wife spend much of their time travelling especially into Mexico and are planning a trip now to South America...

MARY HERBERT, BOISE, IDAHO:

Mary... walked with me for a few miles on Friday, July 30th and we talked about her family of eleven children ages 17, 15, 14, 14, 14, 12, 10, 9, 9,
Herbert, cont'd...

9 and 8 with three already out of the nest. Nine of them are handicapped either mentally, physically or a combination of both including blindness, deafness, cerebral palsy, quadraplegic and autism. "I have several the same age. I figured if I was going to do it, I'd do it all at one time."

She was on the trail with a friend...and had come for "a rest" from her responsibilities at home...She told me about winter skiing at Bogus Basin, just 20 minutes outside of Boise, and she informed that there was a "high desert" type of landscape in the vicinity that I should take the time to discover.

She invited me down to go skiing with her this winter as she takes her children who are enrolled in a handicapped ski program, out almost every weekend.

The following quote sums up perfectly in one sentence my sentiments regarding day walkers on the whole:

It's funny, I've just been on the trail for three days, this is the third day and I feel like I have been on it for a month and I feel like I have known some of these people for my whole life, they are just that easy to get to know, that open and friendly.

RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY OF STATE WALKERS:

My relationship with the other eight state walkers was unique and it evolved over the period of the migration experience. In the beginning I spent more time in the company of the teamsters, outriders and core people than I did with my peers. That happened for several reasons, the most important of which was the fact that I felt so much less than each of the other state walkers. They were all much more physically fit and well prepared for the trip than I; more appropriately dressed for the occasion; more
financially secure; and all were American except for myself and Sue Smith whose home was England.

The situation gradually changed over the period of the trip and by the time we had reached Summit Meadows on Mount Hood, Oregon and it was time for me to leave to return to Vancouver, the mere thought of parting company was overwhelming and brimming with heartfelt emotion. Leaving was one of the hardest things I had ever had to do in my life and remembering it now still evokes a bittersweet sadness.

The following are some of my thoughts as the journey progressed:

At this point (July 30) I was still feeling separate and alone, not part of the group of state walkers. Most of those people did not have their own vehicles and therefore had much more time upon arriving in camp to sit around and chat and commiserate about blisters and aches and pains. Also several of these people (all in fact) were in much better condition than I and consequently walked ahead of me everyday.

August 5th, 1993 - Baker City:

It's 3:30 p.m. Thursday afternoon...I've decided to drive back along the way a bit and take some photographs in colour of things that I may have missed, even though it is deathly hot and humid... Barbara and Yvonne went on a walking tour of downtown which I had already done, Stella and Pat are off doing laundry; Larry is sitting doing some writing; younger Pat has gone to do some laundry and chores; we're all just sort of 'grouping' around today...

August 6th, 1993 - North Powder:

Interesting to think about the emigrants out on a night like tonight with just their tents or underneath their wagons and when it rained, having to live with
Kyle, cont'd...

the wetness in their bedding and their clothes, often for many days, whereas I have the majority of my things packed away in the trunk of my car...Tonight is nice in that it is cloudy so it is darker for getting to sleep earlier, there are no artificial lights which makes for an early night which is well deserved and much needed. Barbara is suffering from blisters and has acquired some salve from Darryl; Yvonne seems not to suffer particularly from the walking beyond tiredness; Larry I have not spoken to this evening; Pat was very very tired as well, the heat and the pace definitely take it out of you; Sue also I have spoken very little to today but she was 'under-the-weather' on the trail...by all indications I shall also be under-the-weather very soon; Stella decided to sleep in her car tonight because of the wind.408

The community of our state walkers is nice and strong and concern is shown around by everyone.409

The following quote was recorded on August 10th, 1993 at La Grande. It is a reflection of the fact that the state walkers and the core group of teamsters and riders had become quite solidified in our objectives and views of the migration experience but every day, as we moved closer and closer to our final destination, there was a larger and larger group of day walkers and day riders. For the most part we resented their intrusion into our feeling of dedication and ownership of the experience. We looked down on them and for the most part considered them an annoyance if not an outright aggravation. The crowd on the trail grew to the point that on a given day there were between 300 and 400 people on the route.

More new people tonight and new horses which becomes a bone of contention for the state riders, state
Kyle, cont'd...

walkers and core people. Today, at least, there do not appear to be many new walkers at least from our perspective here in 'tent city' as we have come to affectionately name our community.410

We got into camp (Krebs Ranch #2) early in the afternoon on August 20th. The weather was overcast, cloudy, very cool and windy. This made for a very boring time but Sue, Yvonne and myself ended up relieving some of the boredom by sitting around in the mess tent for quite awhile and talking about our various relationships with significant others at home and on the trail. Eventually Sue returned to her family in England, Yvonne to her family in Wisconsin and me to mine in Vancouver, not necessarily happier but much the wiser for all of our experiences.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH INDIVIDUAL STATE WALKERS:

BARBARA STINGER (54):

Barbara became a mother to me on this journey. She is a lovely warmhearted, caring, funny lady from Hillsboro, Oregon who was always there to help and to offer a word of encouragement and understanding. She is a Grade Two teacher, her husband Ken is an engineer and they live together on a small hobby farm just outside Portland, raising beef cattle for their own consumption. Their lives are filled with a natural desire for healthy living; they eat balanced meals; they do not smoke; they drink socially; and, they are serious, experienced hikers, climbers and
BARBARA STINGER RESTING AFTER A GRUELING DAY
skiers. If there was ever a model of a truly respectful and loving partnership in marriage, Barbara and Ken Stinger are it.

Barbara was on this trip primarily because of her family history. Her great grandmother came across the old Oregon Trail and Barbara was driven by a desire to have this experience to add to theirs and her own personal history. We did not often walk together on the trail because Barbara was always at the head of the pack of walkers. It was only as I got healthier and faster and able to consistently keep up that we were able to spend some time together walking. More of our personal time together was spent at the days end.

Monday, August 23, 1993 - The Deschutes River State Park was an oasis after the desert-like landscape we had been experiencing for the past few days, ever since Wells Spring. It was interesting when we were setting up our tents today, Barbara and I sat in my lawn chairs facing north just enjoying the beautiful view, and a group of ladies walked in front of us trying to decide where to pitch their tents. Barbara promptly requested that they not pitch them where they might block our view. We nine, as a group, did not feel the least hesitation in protecting our community.

STELLA KAISER (61):

Stella Kaiser became my adopted aunt on this trip. One of my mother's sisters is named Stella and I had never met anyone else with that name. Stella is a 61 year-old, pixie-like, grey-haired woman from Oregon City, Oregon who in many respects has more of a zest for life than many women I have met who are half her age. She is a gentle, caring quiet
Photograph 4-20

STELLA AND KYLE KAISER CELEBRATING THEIR 46TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY ON THE TRAIL
woman with an obvious inner strength who also is an experienced hiker and was always near the head of the pack. She was our resident worrier.

Stella's husband, Kyle, came several times to visit her and us on the trail. I will never forget the first day I met him. Stella, Pat and I had just gotten on the Forest Service bus at Cecil in order to go and retrieve our vehicles from the morning campsite at Wells Spring. The day had been excruciatingly dusty, hot and dry. Stella was sitting right at the front of the bus and she spotted Kyle waving to her from some yards away. I have never in my life seen anyone young or old move as fast as Stella moved the moment she spied her husband. She was up and out of her seat, out the door and into his open arms so fast it made my head spin. I was moved to tears.

He came again to visit at The Dalles and this time he arrived with a box of delicious chocolates. It was their thirty-sixth wedding anniversary day. I will always remember and be touched to the very depth of my soul by their love and devotion.

SUE SMITH (40):

Sue and I became friends almost from the beginning due to the fact that she and her husband Ken and I rode in one of the wagons together very early in the trip. Also she was the only other state walker who had joined the trip at Boise, Idaho, all the others having joined the evening
SUE SMITH, WOLVERHAMPTON, ENGLAND. NO PROBLEM HERE.
before we crossed the Idaho border into Oregon. Also the wagon train coordinators mentioned to me upon my arrival about Sue because they were aware of the fact that I was researching my thesis and thought that she might be a lively addition to my work. And, in fact, she was. Sue is an attractive, energetic, knowledgeable English businesswoman. She had been interested in the Oregon Trail for many years and had done a significant amount of historical research prior to making the trip. Her husband, Ken, travelled with her for the first few days and then left to return to their family business in Britain.

My sister-like relationship with Sue was one which provided me with much needed emotional support over my days on the trail. We talked many nights away revealing to each other our personal histories. I remember Sue with a great deal of fondness and respect.

Here are some personal notes to add:

Tuesday, August 24th, 1993 - ...Sue, Yvonne, Patricia, Barbara and myself were chatting about what is going to be like for each of us once we get home and we are planning a reunion to share our photographs and to catch up - Sue's pub in England was selected as the meeting place of choice possibly in May or June of '94. Sue offered to find me a nice, rich man.

We got together in Sue's tent for awhile this evening because once the sun goes down now it gets quite cool and her tent is about the warmest one (and large enough to accommodate 3 or 4 of us sitting. We talked about getting together next year and also about some more personal information with references to romantic relationships which had developed on the trail.
Sue and I have gotten quite close over the last month, especially over the last few days, walking together and talking together... 413

There was a bonfire tonight and Mike did his Mark Twain performance once again. I rerecorded some of it for Sue...

We went back to the campsite to settle down for the evening but Sue and I were not really ready to retire. She and I decided to get together in her tent for a couple of drinks and a gabfest. Unfortunately, we got a little carried away with the laughing and noise and caught hell from 'mother' Barbara and the others who were trying to get to sleep.

We started to verbally harass one of the travelling reporters, Scott, about his snoring and he promptly quit snoring and joined us for a nightcap. It was fun. 414

LARRY AUSPOS (76):

Of the nine state walkers, there was only one gentleman, Larry Auspos from Delaware who celebrated his 76th birthday on the trail. Larry was the model of respectability but he had his mischievous side and his intellect which combined made him the darling of the group. He reminded me very much of my maternal grandfather, not only in physical demeanor but especially with his particularly old-fashioned yet humorous outlook on life as someone who had lived during the majority of this century; through two world wars; through the major depression of the '30s; the economic boom of the '50s and '60s; through the extraordinary evolution of the American space program; the evolution of the mass media; the assassination of world leaders; and, the rising tide of the women's movement and gay liberation.
LARRY AUSPOS - EVERYONE RESPECTED AND LOVED HIM
His humour was especially revealed the evening we camped at Farewell Bend, Oregon when he:

...wished all of us 'girls' a good evening as he was retiring for the night. Jokingly and hurriedly he caught himself as we began to reproach him, he continued by adding his own version of what we all were thinking but had not time to retort, and that was 'that we are not girls, we are full-blown women and don't you ever speak to us like that again!' We all howled with laughter and he went on to say that '...I have to be very careful what I say from now on...'

PAT LYTTLE (60)

Pat was my other aunt on the trail. Pat is a generous, thoughtful, extremely energetic and organized woman who is married and retired from full-time employment but who, amongst a very busy retiree's schedule, works as a movie extra for Walt Disney Productions in Milwaukie, Oregon just outside Portland. Pat, like Barbara, Stella and Larry, is an accomplished hiker. She was like a mini tornado on the trail. And much to her and our benefit, Pat worked very diligently to collect every printed piece written along the whole length of our journey across the state of Oregon. She graciously provided all of the group with photocopies of the fruits of her labour.

Pat was always off being busy talking with everyone and gathering information as soon as she had set up her tent for the evening. Consequently, I did not record any conversation between the two of us, but she was always there as a constant and absolute tower of strength especially when the going got tough. Thank you Pat.
My relationship with the rest of the state walkers (Yvonne, Patricia, and Jane) was on a much more casual level yet the experience would certainly have been the lesser without their valued contributions by way of thoughts and actions.

SIGNIFICANT MALE RELATIONSHIPS:

DAVID 'SKINNER' COLLINS

The first friend I made on the trail was David Collins, affectionately nicknamed 'Skinner', who worked as an assistant to one of the teamsters and who also worked as the travelling blacksmith. We met the first day I arrived on the scene at Boise, Idaho and David has remained to this day, a trusted and valuable friend and confidante.

My relationship with David progressed quickly from the beginning of the trip to the point where (when he was fired from the wagon train for comments he made to the media about the organizers), I felt he had become one of my closest and dearest friends.

The following comments reflect my thoughts about Skinner:

I registered, got my day passes...and proceeded to scout out the situation. I noticed a very unusual looking man shoeing some mules, he had quite a crowd gathered...I spoke to him about whether or not he would be travelling with the wagontrain...and he assured me that he was...we talked for a bit and I learned he was originally from Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario but now lives in Heber Valley, Utah. He introduced himself as Skinner and he proceeded to ask me if I would have dinner with him...we went to the Frontier Saloon for a drink after dinner, we
OUR TRAVELLING BLACKSMITH -- DAVID 'SKINNER' COLLINS, FROM HEBER VALLEY, UTAH (ORIGINALLY BORN IN SAULT STE. MARIE, ONTARIO, CANADA)
Kyle, cont'd...

continued to talk easily...He walked me to my tent, gave me a big hug and promised that he would wake me up in the morning at 5:30 a.m. so that I would not be late for my first day as I was without an alarm...416

That evening Skinner introduced me to several of the teamsters and that was especially helpful in the case of Jerry Johnson who signed me up as a volunteer for the National Forest Service which enabled me to ride in his wagon free of charge for several days out of my trip. Through Skinner I became a familiar name and face to the core group of people working for Metropolitan Events, the company that organized the trek. He became my alarm clock, my friend and much more.

Talking to Skinner last night I just realized what I wanted to say as well about...how I was feeling about the fact that I am meeting people and talking and getting close for a day or two and then they are leaving and I can imagine for the women and men on the trail when it was such a close knit community of people travelling together than when people dropped off and went other places, it was difficult to get over/deal with emotionally.417

I have now gotten quite used to Skinner coming and waking me up at 5:30 each morning...I don't know... it's just kind of nice to know that you have a friend I guess on this route or something...418

...Skinner did...come to wake me up this morning but I had already gotten up...we did have our morning hug and a bit of conversation and I really enjoyed that I really enjoy the fact that he does that, regardless of anything else that he may do or not do...I gain more comfort from the morning hugs and just being acknowledged...it acknowledges me amongst a group of many many people that are strangers to me. I think some of it is due to the fact that he is Canadian by birth.419
DAVID 'SKINNER' COLLINS, BLACKSMITH
Kyle, cont'd...

Skinner came over to spend some quiet time and to rest in the shade, he was openly attentive which made me somewhat uncomfortable. Larry made a comment to me the next day referring to Skinner as my husband but I corrected him that he was just a friend. Skinner remarked that he found the husband label flattering.

August 17th, Wells Spring:

Skinner was fired today. He told me at noon... and...I was shocked. Apparently he was fired because of an article which appeared in one of the local newspapers...in which Skinner took Metropolitan Events (the organizers) to task over the management of the wagon train...There was a divided camp over the article. Most people thought that Skinner should be allowed freedom of speech and also that he was not saying anything to the reporter that he had not said previously to everyone else on the wagon train at some time or another.

I am very sad that Skinner is gone. I am really going to miss him. He was a bright spot for me, a friend...I will miss him. I will miss the hugs. I will miss the flirting, I will just miss Skinner...a very unique individual. Beyond anything else, he was very helpful to me from the beginning of the trip, always willing to do whatever he could to help. Regardless of his 'faults'...perhaps personality 'quirks' is a more appropriate way to describe them, I cared for him a great deal and I do not know what I am going to do without him for the rest of my journey. I feel a great big hole beginning to open up inside and the rest of the trip will be less... without him, enjoyable, interesting, bearable... Skinner's parting words to me were 'be strong.' I am really going to miss him...I find letting people go, very difficult.

DOUG JONES

The second significant male relationship I developed also began almost immediately. That was my relationship with Doug Jones, a National Forest Service employee, who
DOUG JONES, U.S. NATIONAL FOREST SERVICE, MT. HOOD
worked as an assistant teamster. Doug was extremely likeable and very knowledgeable especially about the physical nature of the trail itself. Doug and I grew close over the length of the journey and to this day I consider him a friend for life.

Doug is a tall, lanky, dark-haired, dark-eyed, moustached man who suits his role as a National Forest Service Trail Co-ordinator. Doug is very intelligent, very generous, very easy going with a gentle, laughing spirit.

Doug was hired as an expert to restore the Old Barlow Road in the Mt. Hood National Forest. It was a three-year project and at the end of the trail he was congratulated by the organizers for his persistence, leadership and vision. He was presented with a couple of awards and "he also received a Certificate of Merit for his creative, innovative and professional accomplishments as the USDA Forest Service Coordinator of the Oregon Trail Celebration, 1993 and the Official Oregon Trail Sesquecentennial Wagon Train."423

The following quotes give some indication of what his friendship meant to me:

Doug showed up at dinner yesterday. We ended up having a couple of beer at the saloon and talking and looking at the stars. The sky here is so clear and the stars are so beautiful. The milky way was entirely visible tonight. I really enjoy Doug's company.424

Doug is back today. I just saw him and he gave me a hug. I was so glad to see him...those hugs from male friends that I have developed and female
Kyle, cont'd...

friends have meant a great deal. They are very necessary to my well being. He saw me, came up and put his around me...I really like Doug. And even though he'll only be here maybe for a couple of hours today, or possibly just the rest of the day, maybe he'll come back tomorrow. I hope that he does. I'd like to spend some more time talking to him...it gives me that sense of togetherness, of community and if you are alone like me, it is nice to know that someone is thinking of you and thinking well of you.425

Doug was back today in camp and we made plans for tomorrow that would allow me to accompany him to take pictures of the John Day River crossing...426

I needed a bank machine to get money out to pay Doug back. I had borrowed $30 from him at the John Day River and he'll be back tomorrow at Dufur. He's been such a good friend to me on this trip. I wish he and his wife did not live so far from Vancouver. I would certainly like to get to know both of them better.427

Doug was here today. He came up behind me to surprise me and to give me a hug. I...enjoy seeing him, he makes me feel connected somehow to the event and to what is going on. Because we have spent quite abit of time talking, I feel a certain closeness to him and a certain bond.428

I have been asked to spend the evening (August 29th) with Doug Jones and his wife but I think I will stay with the group to say my final goodbyes. I will not see some of these people ever again but I definitely plan to see Doug again, if not before Christmas, then when the roads are better in the spring.429

MIKE MCKINLEY

The third significant male relationship I developed was with the Idaho state historian, Mike McKinley.

Mike was a Master's student in American history at the University of Idaho, in Moscow, Idaho and had been hired to act as the Idaho state historian. In this capacity he would
be available to answer questions from the general public in each of the communities we visited. His own thesis topic was crime and violence on the Oregon Trail.

In addition to the former job description, he also dazzled us with two separate performances adapted from his 2-hour stage presentation titled 'Mark Twain in Eruption' where he does a rendition of a 70-year old Mark Twain, the humorist and Samuel Clemens, the man who Mike believes were two entirely different people. The whole thing was absolutely mesmerizing. It was incredible to sit and enjoy this experience under a cloudless canopy of stars and Douglas Fir. The performances took place at bonfire meetings and I was able to record them on tape.

The following is conversation recorded between Mike and some members of the visiting public at La Grande, Oregon:

I listened and recorded a bit of the talk going on last night during which Mike McKinley was conducting as part of his job function as state historian for Idaho. He was remarking about his appearance. For the entire trip he always wore the same authentic clothing, which he never washed; and the fact that his lips were cracked and often bled, and his legs were covered with mosquito bite scars, and that the tan lines on his arms never extended above his wrist or went beyond his face and neck. He talked about the early emigrants looking exactly as he did, somewhat dirty, grimy, and weathered. That is how it was.

OUTRIDERS/COWBOYS:

The outriders were an essential part of the trail experience. Their job was to keep law and order on each day's journey. They acted as protection/troubleshooters for
the wagon teams in that they kept dogs, cars and people from getting too close and frightening the animals pulling the wagons, thus preventing wagon runaways.

They positioned themselves from the front of the wagon train procession to the very back of the pack of walkers. Several of them carried walkie-talkies and in this way were able to relay information concerning starting and stopping for lunch and potty breaks, and any problems.

Three or four of the outriders were much more outspoken and cowboy-like than the rest. And two of those four, in particular, were exceptionally well-suited for their job and overtly enjoyed being in the spotlight, those two being Judi Savage and Greg Mankertz.

**JUDI SAVAGE**

"My name is Judi Savage, maidenname 'Allen,' my first grandfather was the only survivor of one of the few massacres they ever had, they figured he was about 8 years old and the only thing he could remember after his name was George and a family by the name of Allen picked him up and began raisin' him." ^431

Judi spoke about going to New York City in 1964 to appear on the television show "What's My Line?" She was a saddlemaker up until about four years ago (the panel never did guess what she did for a living)...

Judi's now retired but she still trains saddle horses by taking them up into the high country around her home in Grand Coulee, Washington for days on end, she chews tobacco, she spits and she is every bit the 'cowboy.' ^432

**GREG MANKERTZ**

Greg Mankertz, the 'quintessential' cowboy/outrider made an interesting comment today while I was trying
Photograph 4-26

JUDI AT REST AFTER A HARD DAY'S RIDE
GREG MANKERTZ, COWBOY.
WOMEN ON THE TRAIL COULD NOT GET ENOUGH OF HIM.
Kyle, cont'd...

to re-photograph him. He said "I'm not much for that picture taking...it takes a little bit of your spirit every time" and I commented that I would refrain from taking any more but he replied "nah, that's okay, he'd had thousands of pictures taken and so much of his spirit was gone he wasn't sure where it had all gone to and it wasn't worth worrying about".433

It was interesting talking to Greg yesterday...We conversed about his and my philosophy of life and death and those sorts of things. Greg made a comment which summed up perfectly his philosophy of life. He said "...if it can't be done on a horse, it can't be done." He commented that he believed that physical death was the end of it, "the game is over" and therefore "each day should be taken as important, with things to learn".434

THE TEAMSTERS:

At any one time on the trail there were at least nine wagons and for the most part at least half of those were being driven by husband and wife teams, often with the wife in charge of the team.

Most of the teamsters owned their own wagons and draft animals and often used their equipment for other purposes during the year. And many of them did this type of trail work more than once a year, especially those who were involved with annual events such as the Pendleton Round-Up in Oregon.

There was constant in-fighting between those teamsters using horses and those using mules. As well there were disagreements between themselves as to the best remedies for physical ailments related to their animals; the best routes
Photograph 4-28

TWO TEAMSTERS, BOB AND JIM, HARD AT WORK AND LOVING IT.
taken; the speed of the procession; and, ultimately who was the most experienced teamster and most suitable for the position of wagon master.

Record of conversations amongst the teamsters done at the day's end include topics such as:

...climate conditions; people's appetites and/or lack of them due to the heat; talking of illnesses amongst the group; chitchat about future conditions especially concerning the crossing of the John Day River...the talk is that the water should not be any more than 4 to 6 inches deep but because of previous bad weather it could be up to 3 or 4 feet deep which would make it impossible to cross...they were also joking about the beer, the fact that people visiting the campsites at night did not know the difference between donkeys and mules and the fact that people had no idea how dangerous it was to get too close to the wagon train as it was proceeded through individual communities along these narrow, country roads.435

COMMUNITIES WE PASSED THROUGH

There was terrific community support all along the journey. We were always welcomed with open arms and the following excerpts reflect some of the individual flavour of those communities:

...a lot of people came out today to wish us well...give us tins of cookies, fresh fruit...I was astonished at the number of people sitting outside their homes with their children and extended families, neighbours and friends...to sort of cheer us on...take pictures, videos, that sort of thing, really nice, good to see.436

...the whole town of Nyssa, Oregon is lining the streets to welcome us and view the incoming parade...437
THE FOREST SERVICE BUS DRIVER: DAVID RUTH

I do not know what the state walkers, in particular, would have done without David. He was the perfect person for the job for which he had been hired and that was to drive one of the support vehicles, the Forest Service bus. In real life, David was employed as a public school bus driver in Oregon. He was our friend and confidante and many many times he went well out of his way to make our trip as enjoyable, comfortable and as interesting as possible. He never had a bad word to say about anyone or anything and the day he left the wagon train was a sad one:

Wednesday - August 25, 1993 - Tonight was David's last night in camp until Oregon City, so the state walkers had pitched in and bought him some souvenirs to take home, a teeshirt and a cup. He was embarrassed, but pleased I think...We are all going to miss him very very much.438

THE FRONTIER SALOON KEEPERS: JANICE KEELER AND BILL

I spent many long hours talking to Janice and Bill, and Bill's sister and stand-in bartender Ethel, but especially to Janice about my personal experiences on the trail. She was a good listener and a great bartender.

Janice and Bill were constantly struggling with the organizers of the wagon train in order to receive fair treatment as to their daily saloon site and hours of operation. There were many donnybrooks but the last occurred at The Dalles when a "political" decision was made to allow the bar concession to be operated by a particular citizen of The Dalles instead of the organizers honoring
their contract with The Frontier Saloon. Janice and Bill packed up and left immediately but not before Janice took the time to write me a personal note and leave it with Joanne, one of the Arco Catering employees.

FRIENDS AND FAMILY BACK HOME:

I thought of my friends and family often while I was away. I thought of them when the landscape reminded me of home and I thought of them especially at night when I was alone with myself and needing the special comfort that can sometimes only be provided by those people in your life who know you almost as well as you know yourself.

When the going got tough, both physically and emotionally my mind would wander home to the ocean, my friends, schoolmates and my family. I called home when I could find a telephone along the way and I also called my parents back east in Ontario once or twice at the request of my mother, the eternal worrier, and there was comfort in speaking to them.

On July 28th I make a note that in:

Talking to Skinner last night I just realized what I wanted to say...about how I was feeling, about the fact that I am meeting people and talking and getting close for a day or two and then they are leaving and I can imagine for the women and men on the trail when it was such a close knit community of people travelling it was difficult to get over the loss...I found it difficult last night and was feeling quite lonely and wishing that it wasn't as late as it was and that I could have called home to talk to an old friendly voice...439
Kyle, cont'd...

Kevin will be visiting me in Pendleton next weekend. It will be nice to see him, a familiar face from home. Also to get some paperwork sorted out and just to get away from here and sleep in a real bed, with real hot water and showers and a real bathtub.440

August 10 - I hope Erin is having a good summer and enjoying herself. I am looking forward to seeing her again. I miss her. I hope everything is safe and secure at home.441

FULFILLMENT/REGRETS:

The following is a quote from my journal on August 20, 1993 recorded the day before the John Day River crossing:

I have decided that when I get home I plan to lead more regular lifestyle as much as possible which means getting up earlier, getting myself organized... fitness at least three times a week becomes a priority. I feel much better physically than when I began this trip. I have lost weight...my legs are stronger and my respiratory/circulatory systems are much improved. I no longer have that heavy, laboured breathing...I will be interested in friend's reactions when I return home...hopefully I will have walked off at least fifteen pounds. I feel that I must make a continued effort to walk more...442

Finally by Monday, August 23, 1993 one month to the day after I began this migration experience "I managed to stay walking right behind the horses all the way to the campsite" at the Deschutes River.

I am ecstatic about the fact that I was the first one of the walkers to arrive in camp this afternoon. Today was a lovely day to walk, not too hot, the sun was in and out but it was windy all day which made it cool and more like Vancouver weather. This is a real high for me and a real accomplishment. In the
Kyle, cont'd...

last month I have gone from being last in the line of walkers to being able to physically keep up with the best of them. The walk was over pretty country, all on asphalt, very rolling terrain and finally with quite a steep descent down Fulton Canyon to the confluence of the Columbia and Deshutes Rivers...

Once I got to camp and set up my tent, I took off my shoes and socks and stepped into the Deshutes to wash my face. The water was absolutely freezing cold but just to be camped close to it felt wonderfully refreshing...

I am feeling wonderful today. I am feeling like I have accomplished something which is good, good and different for me. I am very tired. I put everything I had into walking today and it paid off...I just wanted to be first and stay first all day and I did. Good for me.

Not only did I find fulfillment in the above-mentioned accomplishment but, in fact, I found an incredible sense of personal achievement in completing the whole trip from start to finish, never giving up in the face of emotional and physical adversity and knowing that the primary thing I had set out to do, which was the collection of data for my thesis, had been a resounding success.

My outstanding regret as stated previously lies mainly with the fact that I was ill-prepared physically and financially for such a journey. Other substantial regrets are that I did not talk to more people; that I was unable to take many many more photographs; that on many occasions I drank too much Henry Weinhard's Private Reserve; and that I was under the gun time-wise and could not find a workable solution which would have allowed me to walk into Oregon
City, Oregon with the other eight state walkers for the finale.

But after all is said and done, it was the trip of my lifetime. I am forever changed because of this twentieth-century migration experience.
CHAPTER FIVE: A DESCRIPTIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS OF WOMENS' NINETEENTH-CENTURY DIARIES RECORDED ALONG THE OREGON TRAIL

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is an in-depth descriptive content analysis of thirty-eight diaries and letters written by women in the nineteenth century which contain their thoughts and feelings on a broad range of topics related to the migration experience. Topics include: their reasons for migrating west; their hopes and dreams for the future; preparations for the journey; difficulties encountered along the Trail with respect to all aspects of climate and terrain; difficulties with individual modes of transportation; encounters with First Nations' peoples; relationships between family and friends enroute as well as relationships between women and men, in general; medical issues; drunkenness and prostitution; financial considerations; and most important, their perceptions of, reactions to and interaction with the physical landscape.

The technique employed for the content analysis was a total immersion in the primary source material including diaries and letters, both published and unpublished, as well as newspaper articles, journal articles and film. Each author's work was read and examined, in its entirety, a minimum of five times. The total number of printed pages examined in the first reading, exceeded 3500. A lengthy, painstaking process of selection of the material to be
included in this study was accomplished over a period of many months.

Selection of the material to be included was based on sixteen criteria for comparison between women's nineteenth-century diaries and this author's twentieth-century diary. An attempt has been made to reduce the comparison to practicable proportions.

Oftentimes when searching through the historical material I was amazed to find that descriptions and journal entries revealing the feelings and emotions of the women of one hundred and fifty years ago, were almost word-for-word with my own notes made during the re-created American trek. We have been and continue to be sisters throughout history, and similarity of response is one standard of comparison.

One of the most glaring problems with doing geographical research using this material is the problem with nineteenth nomenclature surrounding geographical names in the historical journals. This may be illustrated by an entry by Mary Matilda Park Surfus in 1833 when she notes that on "July 18th...We come over spring creek and rock creek same old names continually Delia Tingley helps me to learn the names of places and streams She laughs and says Mrs Surfus no use to ask the names of these streams just put down spring or rock creek two thirds of the time." This comment is well-noted, as a quick check of the route through Wyoming and Idaho indicates that for the former state the Oregon Trail passes through Table Rock, Point of
Rocks, Rock Springs, Bitter Creek and Eagle Rock while in the latter state it passes through Mink Creek, Soda Springs, Rockland, Raft Creek, Salmon Creek, Cedar Creek, Sailor Creek, and Big Wood Creek.

No effort has been made to change or paraphrase the diary notations examined for this study. To attempt as complete an understanding as possible of each author employed for comparison here, it is necessary to cite each woman, in every instance, verbatim. To do anything less, in this author's opinion, would be to commit a literary injustice.

**CRITERIA:**

**EXPECTATIONS, HOPES**

The majority of the primary source material examined indicated the migrants' reasons for migrating as well as their hopes and dreams for their new life in the west. The most often cited reasons for leaving the east included: overcrowding; disease; economic difficulties; the gold rush; improved health and climate conditions as advertised by promoters of the Oregon Territory; and simple wanderlust. The following excerpts are a small example selected to demonstrate the variability of push-pull factors.

In a letter written the year before Sarah Sutton and her family left for the cross-country migration in 1854, we read:

...we have received a good letter from him. Ira had arrived there safe and was well pleased they are all
Sutton, cont'd...

glad that it ever fell to their lot to go to Oregon.
they all got rid of the Illinois ague along the way &
have become perfectly healthy...he says he has seen so
much better country than this that he can never be
satisfied to stay here any longer than to fix to get
away if he knew he had but two years to live he would
take the children there to leave them in a healthy land
there is warm winters and the easiest country in the
world to make a good living in...Mr. Sutton is very
(anxious) to get off next spring but it is not certain
yet as we don't know yet if he intends to and leave the
farm it will take 3 wagons at least for our family a
good many here a going in the spring and want him to go
with them as he is acquainted with the way and the
different tribes of Indians...445

Martha Missouri Moore was born October 18, 1837 and she
was 22 years old and married when she made her 1860 journey.
Her husband, James Preston "...was a (sheep) farmer and
stockman. According to family tradition he had already been
to California and back several times, often acting as a
guide."446 Martha was a very independent and experienced
woman as evidenced by her writings.

This seemed to us to be an incredible experience, so
we talked to some of our sheep men friends about it.
None of them showed much surprise as if to say, 'No
problem' One said with a shrug, 'You'd need three good
dogs and one good man for every thousand sheep.'...Also
the sheep would need to be sheared before starting
since 'Heavy wool would be a problem in crossing
streams because it would absorb water and add to the
weight of the sheep...447

Later in her diary Martha reflects as she passes a lone
grave site:

Thursday (May) 31st a rainy day everything goes
wrong...Passed a new made grave. What a train of sad
reflections it awakened on a trip like this. Left home
with bright anticipations and glowing hopes of a
future, only to find a grave by the roadside. This is
the end of man "dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt
return." is the irreversible sentence against all
material matter.
Friday June 1st  The anniversary of our wedding day. One year ago today we were married. Have the joyful anticipations of that bright morning been realized? Has the canvas which was extended in glowing and ornate colors faded from view & left heart sickening desolation? or has the way been strewed with flowers and the paths along the way leading into channels of pleasure. Few have been the trials of my wedded life, few the sorrows that have crossed my path. There has been a loving hand that would chase away all glooms from my brow and hold me close to his bosom in moments of despondency. I passed on the sweetly gliding stream whose course has been through life's sunniest vales, no dark sands have marred its limpid beauty, or adverse winds disturbed its peaceful flow. May kind Heaven add her protecting care and direct our way through paths of peace and pleasantness...

Julia Anna Archibald (Holmes) "was born in Noel, Nova Scotia, on February 15, 1838...she was second to the oldest in a family of eight children...Jane Archibald, her mother, was an early advocate of woman suffrage." We read in the letter of Julia written to:

SISTER SAYER...to my sisters in reform, the readers of The Sibyl,...We were on our farm on the Neosho River, in Kansas, when news reached us that a company was fitting out in Lawrence for a gold adventure to Pike's Peak. Animated more by a desire to cross the plains and behold the great mountain chain of North America, than by any expectation of realizing the floating gold stories, we hastily laid a supply of provisions in the covered wagon, and two days thereafter, the 2d of last June, were on the road to join the Lawrence company.

It does not seem that alot of persuasion was necessary to entice Julia to migrate. In fact one is lead to believe that it was a very mutual decision.

The following is an excerpt from a family letter written by Harriet Augusta Stewart who was 15 years old at the time. (daughter of Sarah Sutton by first marriage).
Nov. 26, 1853, Dear Coussin,

I now sit down to address a few thoughts to my far distant coussins, you must consider this as written to you all...Here I am again after dark you ought to be her to see the girls there is more here then you could Stir with a stick...

We are all pleased with the Idea of going to oregon;...I want to go to see the curiosities and git gold for sewing & to see the buffalo and to hear the wolves howl.

I Marga·et Sutton wants to go because the rest is a going and to meet my brother at the end of my journey.

I Mary Melissa want to go for the fun of travling and to ride a pony or an ox to drive cattle for my kind father, to help us get away from this sickly country..

I Amos Stewart want to go to drive A team and hunt the buffalo and antelope, and let the wolves, and Indians, alone if they will be so good as to let me along - forgive my poor writing. I will let you have enough when I learn to write better. Amos K. Stewart

I Franklin A. Stewart, want to go to see the Journeys & cross the rockey mountains and the cascade mountains and see the tall fir timber and smell the sea breese if I live to get there I will go to school some more Franklin A. Stewart.

I Jim Sutton want to go to Oregon to find a place where I can get rid of these troblesome ge-hals (girls?), for they are more torment to me than forty head of stray ducks, they tease me from the time they open there eyes in the morning till they close there eyes to snore me a tune of peace...455

IMPRESSIONS OF THE PHYSICAL LANDSCAPE

The most important category of comparison between the diaries is related to impressions of the physical landscape encountered along the Oregon Trail. For this reason a rather large section follows which includes diary notations for each physiographic region and for each state.
Some general comments regarding the effect of the landscape on the women migrants appears in their journals. One such specific notation comes from the diary of Lucy A. Ide, written in 1878. Lucy (39 years of age) and her husband and three children travelled to Spokane, Washington by wagon train. Her diary is one of the best examples of recorded differences between travel in the 1840s and almost 40 years later.

July 3 started up the mts. and as for giving a description of the beauty and grandeur & wildness rugged rocks beautiful flowers &c it is beyond my poor powers to tell suffice it to say I feel repaid for all the hardships we have as yet undergone. We camped on the top for dinner here we found strawberry blossoms growing within arms length of banks of snow that have doubtless been there for ages as canyons many hundred feet deep were filled even full so hard that we walked over it. had a game of snowball...456

The following sections and subsections will demonstrate specific responses to and impressions of the physical landscape as they occur from east to west.

GREAT PLAINS457

Some of the early emigrants started their journey from Council Bluffs (Kanesville458), Iowa affectionately referred to as the Jumping-off-place459 located on the Missouri River, the dividing line between the states of Iowa and Nebraska. Others began at Independence, Missouri also located on the Missouri River at the Missouri-Kansas border some 150 miles south of Kanesville460 and 250 miles west of
St. Louis. The third starting point was St. Joseph, Missouri located about 40 miles north of Independence.

ST. JOSEPH, MISSOURI

Sallie Hester (age 14) travelling with her family during the spring of 1849 comments from:

St. Joe, April 27...As far as eye can reach, so great is the migration, you see nothing but wagons. This presents a striking appearance - a vast army on wheels - crowds of men, women and lots of children and last but not least the cattle and horses upon which our lives depend.461

From a reading of her diary, one discerns that Sallie was a romantic girl, full of fun, laughter and joy.

Agnes Stewart, 21 years old at the time of her writing in 1853, reveals that she is a young woman full of deep emotions. She constantly refers to a dear dear woman friend whom she leaves behind in the east. Her use of the English language as she describes the journey holds the reader's interest without pause. About the beginning of the migration experience, she notes that on:

April 5th. Arrived at St. Joseph today...I had expected to find log houses and frame shanties, but instead I find brick houses, and plenty of whiskey. Every man I meet looks like an ale cask himself. To my opinion St. Joseph would rise a great deal faster if the people here did not take so much advantage of the emigrants...462

From the diary of Elizabeth Dixon Smith:

June 3 passed through St Joseph on the bank of the Missouri laid in our flour cheese and crackers and medicine for no one should travel this road without medicine for they are almost sure to have the summer
Smith, cont'd...

complaint each family should have a box of phisic pills and a quart of caster oil a quart of the best rum and a large vial of peppermint essence.464

From the Diary of Sarah Sutton:

The Travel Diary

passing through Missiouri...the wide mississippi river is stretched as a line, deviding the level country, from the Mountainous Missouri he (God) has formed it hilly from the one river, clear into the other, to let us notice his handy work and the wide prairies (prairies) waving in regular green hills are admirable, and reminds us of the poet.465

April 26

...the prairie to day (h)as been up hill and down, but not too steep to cultivate, and the foot of nearly all the hills was a mud hold...every day brings with it something new...traveling is pleasant when the weather is good and the company are in A good humour.466

April 29

We have traveled over a high rolling prerrarie far better than Illinois and well waterd but no timber but a few scattering trees along the creek enough for the wandering Emigrant to make a fire, to warm them-selves and cook their dinner...

From the Diary of Goodell and Austin, 1854:

April 29th...We have passed some very pretty places, not villages,,but farms. It is generally very lonesome along the river. I do not think I should like to live in Missouri very well.467

COUNCIL BLUFFS (KANESVILLE), IOWA

Mrs. Maria A. (Parsons) Belshaw travelled across the Oregon Trail during the spring of 1853 and remarks concerning the settlement of Council Bluffs that on:

May 13th...I saw muddy Missouri for the first time today. There are hundreds of people here waiting to cross. Oh what a wicked place. Swearing - fighting and drunkeness...468
Maria Belshaw was not a happy woman, generally speaking, nor does one get the sense that she was particularly adventurous or outgoing. But when she did explore her surroundings, she recorded heartfelt emotions with respect to the landscape. She found the landscape beautiful and it "...refreshed my drooping spirits." 469

Charlotte Emily Stearns Pengra's description of the landscape in the vicinity of Council Bluffs, Iowa:

Wednesday (May 10th) 1853...and a City it is indeed, built right between two high bluffs with barely room to set the houses and allow a street between them, they are mostly of log covered with board siding in front. There are a great many stores of all descriptions, and well filled... 470

Charlotte is a wonderfully optimistic woman, who seemed at ease with her landscape experience. Even though she makes mention of sickness and being tired often, she always maintains a positive attitude especially in her descriptions of the "romantic country" they encounter.

Fryday 12th Have traveled but a few miles--perhaps eight or ten - over beautiful country--the roads are excellent, and nothing has occurred to mar the pleasure of our journey... 471

INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI

Celinda Hines, 27 years old at the time of her trek, writes about this area in her diary between the dates of May 5th and May 31st: from Independence, Missouri along the Kansas River across the Blue River to the Republican River. She notes that for much of that three-week period the weather was cold, with frequent rain and hail. By May 17th,
the weather warmed up considerably and stayed that way. Her
description of the landscape is quite telling in that she
often refers to the scenery here in the Great Plains region
as "delightful...rolling prairie beautiful to behold" with
"rattle snakes...& star of Bethlehem and prickley pears
wild."472

Celinda Hines was a teacher by profession and shortly
after her arrival in Oregon she married Adam Shipley. "He
came United States Postmaster of Portland" and after 1862
they "moved to a 1000-acre farm...just south of Oswego in
Clackamas County. The land...was fine for growing fruit
trees and grapes in particular..." and Celinda "supposedly
developed a method for preserving grapes in pottery
jars..."473

Those emigrants who left from either Independence,
Missouri or St. Joseph, Missouri generally travelled up the
Little Blue or Republican Rivers to reach the Platte River
along which the bulk of the Oregon-bound travellers
migrated. These northbound emigrants would hook up at Fort
Kearney to begin their westward adventure.

The journals document the migration very often
according to natural physical landmarks which include (east
to west) Ash Hollow; Ancient Bluff Ruins; Courthouse Rock;
Chimney Rock474, Scotts Bluff475 (Mitchell Pass476) and
ending at Fort Laramie (Register Cliff) at the eastern base
of the Rocky Mountains. These physical landscape structures
are situated along the North Platte River route.
NEBRASKA:

FORT KEARNEY

Mrs. Esther Belle Hanna migrated to Oregon in 1852. Although she does not reveal her exact age, one senses that she is in her early twenties (as she is married and without children on the trek). Esther is an accomplished horsewoman and never missed an opportunity to explore her surroundings. Of the landscape in the vicinity of Fort Kearney she writes:

Monday 31...Mr. H. & I walked about 3 miles this afternoon, were on top of one of two high bluffs. No one who has not seen them can imagine the wild grandeur of these bluffs as they rise in succession. From them we had the finest view imaginable of the country stretching far and wide embracing valleys and rivers, forests and hills for miles & miles in extent, far as the vision is capable of reaching. We saw some fine species of cactus today, some in large bunches as large around as half a bushel, we got one in bloom, very beautiful indeed...This is a lovely night the moon is shining brightly & all is so calm and still. I think of home such a night as this, it brings up many fond and endearing remembrances of the past; and when I think of the dear ones I have left I cannot restrain my tears from flowing free & fast. But I am comforted with the thought that I have forsaken friends & home for Christ and his kingdom.

From the diary of Martha Missouri Moore we read of her infatuation with the landscape of the Great Plains (along the Platte River in Nebraska). She and her husband are raise sheep and therefore it makes sense that her description here is worded in such glowing terms:

Monday 11th Cool & pleasant all day. Had a nice ride on Jim. The scenery along this river is very beautiful. It is true there are no Alpine heights to strike with awe the beholder but one perfect scene of rural loveliness. The country is fast settling up. The inhabitants build themselves sod houses and manage to live on nothing...
Moore, cont'd...

Tuesday 12th  Weather very warm...It was a beautiful sight to see the sand hills in the distance and the dark clouds across whose bosoms the forked lightening plays, looming up behind them threatening and pregnant with wrath to man...

Wednesday 13th ...The same scenery still presents itself to our view, the broad river stretching as far way as eye can reach...

Thursday 14th...This is a beautiful river and one would scarcely grow tired of looking at it...480

Lucy A. Ide writing in 1878, notes that on:

June 18 pleasant & cool travelled over clear prairie nothing but herds of cattle & the Platte river for your eye to rest upon such a sameness, here let me say that the grass here is very nutritious for cattle there is 149 different varieties of grass along the platte and a great many different kinds of cactus they look very beautiful the blossom is as large as a dahlia and fully as handsome. of all colors beside a great variety of other beautiful flowers481

NORTH PLATTE RIVER (COUNCIL BLUFFS ROAD)

A distinction must be made at this point between those emigrants who choose to travel along the North Platte River and those who were travelling the southern route along Lodgepole (Creek) River which is a tributary from the South Platte River. The split occurred about Ash Hollow (Nebraska). The Lodgepole Trail entered Wyoming at Cheyenne through Laramie and on to Fort Bridger in the south. The Council Bluffs Road followed the North Platte and Sweetwater Rivers route to the north. The majority of womens' journals which I include in my thesis were those who travelled the northern route. Where the 1993 150th Anniversary Wagon Train began was, in fact, where these two routes converged to continue travel across the states of Idaho and Oregon.
The following is a list of physical landmarks which are often cited in the women's historical journals. They used these landmarks as guide posts to the route of the Oregon Trail.

### Historical (Diary) Landmarks

**Nebraska - North Platte** (Council Bluffs Road)
- Ash Hollow
- Ancient Bluff Ruins
- Courthouse Rock
- Scotts Bluff

**Nebraska - South Platte** (Lodgepole Trail)
- Julesburg

**Wyoming**
- Ft. Laramie
- Register Cliff
- Bridger's Ferry
- Independence Rock

**South Pass (Sweetwater River)**
- Bridger's Pass (Continental Divide)
- Sublette Cutoff

**Idaho**
- Montpelier - Bear Lake
- Soda Springs

ASH HOLLOW:

Esther Belle Hanna notes that on:

Saturday 5. Ate breakfast with candle light, started about 4 o'clock. This is a beautiful place with high bluffs on all sides...And the greatest profusion of wild roses in full bloom and many other flowers, the sides of the bluffs were literally covered with them & the air heavy with the odor of them. I was enchanted and could scarcely tear myself away...Have seen some very rare and beautiful flowers the corea and orchid among the number.482

Martha Missouri Moore, 1860 comments:

Saturday 23rd We struck the sand hills at noon & after laying in a supply of Cedar wood we come into Ash Hollow. Passed the spring but did not get any water. I was bitterly disappointed. The Hollows have always
been associated with dread in my mind. lurking savages sulking coyotes and deeds of crime which made my blood chill. I was therefore surprised to find them as they are a scene with which no one would connect a remembrance of the murders said to have been committed here...It is hard to realize that the tramp of six hundred men (soldiers) has been heard here where everything is now so very quiet 483 nothing is heard excepting the shrill scream of the Kildee and the murmering of the Platte. 484

ANCIENT BLUFF RUINS 485:

This entry by Celinda Hines describes the landscape between Chimney Rock and Scotts Bluff:

17th Friday Warm. All day the scenery was most enchanting intirely surpassing in loveliness & originality any thing I had ever beheld. Bluffs the most picturesque and resembling to the life some old castle of ancient times. About noon we came to Scotts Bluff which much resembles an old fortification...Went up the valley about 6 miles & camped in a most romantic spot near a spring brook...Near by was one of the most beautiful springs I have ever seen. The scenery here is most romantical. At length we tore ourselves away from this delightful retreat and returned to camp. Our people had been much concerned about us. They knew not that the men were with us & thought perhaps we were lost. 486

COURTHOUSE ROCK:

Maria Belshaw writing on June 12th Sabbath Evening reveals that:

Bluffs have about the same appearance as yesterday until this afternoon. On the south side of river there is a rock that has the appearance of an old castle blown down t. the enemy (devil). We are nearly opposite Chimney Rock to night...Had a hard wind storm this afternoon...487

CHIMNEY ROCK

Esther Belle Hanna notes that on:

Wednesday 9. This morning we came to chimney rock...certainly one of the greatest curiosities on the rout. Mr. H. and I went on horseback to see it, and we were
Hanna, cont'd...

well repaid for our trouble. The base is of immense magnitude and is cone shaped, the top is surmounted with a chimney 75 feet high, the whole is 250 feet high. It is composed of a whitish soft substance similar to chalk or magnesia limestone though not quite so white. We ascended nearly 200 feet, with some difficulty as is almost perpendicular, & engraved our names as hundreds of others have done. I think it should be called Monument rock as it resembles one very much at a distance. It can be seen distinctly from 15 to 20 miles distant...488

SCOTTS BLUFF489

Esther Belle Hanna writes that on:

Wednesday (June) 9 At 6 o'clock we came to Scotts Bluffs...rising to the hight of 500 ft. It is said the Rocky Mountains can be seen from these on a clear day a distance of 300 miles...It was a regular amphitheater almost 20 acres enclosed all around with peaks rising one above the other, dotted here and there with spruce & other evergreens contrasting finely with the white rocks. I cannot give the faintest idea of the grandeur and sublimity of this scene, it is beyond description...490

Rachel Taylor (15 years old) remarks:

July 1st...In this days march, we passed a magnificent pile of rocks called in the Guide Book491 Scotts Bluffs.492

WYOMING:

FORT LARAMIE493 (El. 4,250 ft)

Sallie Hester comments concerning:

Fort Laramie, June 19. This fort is of adobe, enclosed with a high wall of the same. The entrance is a hole in the wall just large enough for a person to crawl through. The impression you have on entering is that you are in a small town. Men were engaged in all kinds of business from blacksmith up. We stayed here some time looking at everything that was to be seen and enjoying it to the fullest extent after our long tramp. We camped one mile from the fort, where we remained a few days to wash and lighten up.494
Rachel Taylor tells the reader that on:

July 7th  Very hilly roads.
Mary and I undertook to climb one of the highest and steepest mountains that we could see. This we finally achieved and as we looked at the teams and wagons, as they wound along the road far below us, they looked very diminutive and "beneath our notice." The hillside is covered with evergreens intermingled with flowers of different kinds. A beautiful place, and we would love to stay longer but the advancing train reminds us that we must be hurrying forward. Stopped for the noon day rest at beautiful clear spring and were sorry when the time came to leave...495

NORTHERN ROCKY MOUNTAINS496

Martha Jane Gray's diary written in 1852 reveals her to be a young woman with a zest for life. She often times describes the landscape in such a way that one understands quite clearly her pleasure. Concerning the crossing of the Rocky Mountains she notes that:

June 16 - Wednesday

...passed over the summit of the Rock mountains...If you did not know you could not tell when you pass over the summit of the Rocky Mountains. The roads were good all but a few seemed sandy...497

Sarah Sutton and her family traveled along the Oregon Trail in 1854. She was 48 years of age at the time of her trek, married for the second time and had, in total, 13 children; eight from her first marriage, four belonging to her second husband from his former marriage and one of their own. "Sarah...was not one of those who wrote routine-ly about the finding of grass, water, and fuel...She shared her inner thoughts, her hopes and fears, her treasuring of every
beautiful scene...She was deeply religious."498 Sarah
informs the reader that:

Thursday June 15th...we have for years past heard of the rocky mountains but unexpectedly the time has
arrived, when we can look at them for ourselves and can
see that they are made of solid rock, and heaps upon
heaps of rocks, and not earth as the mountains were in
our own land. in some places the pines and cedars grew
large enough to build there little cabins that these
french and indians traders reside in. these settlers
do not pretend to raise a thing, not even a garden.
one thing the land seems too poor to support any
growth...here they depend on the buffalo and bear...
this is a very cold windy rainy evening but one
blessing has attended us this cold eve, we have plenty
of Cedar wood to burn...these roads are infested with
theives and robers watching for good oppportunity
to take Emegr-nt cattle and horses. the indians are far
better than whites in any estimation.499

BLACK HILLS

Agnes Stewart writes:

Friday, 24. We sat under a tree and ate dinner the
first time for several months, and how pleasant to sit
under a shade once more. It seemed like our old home
where we were raised. I am sitting now under a pine
tree on the Black Hills. And is it possible that we
are in the Black Hills so far from home,---the place I
have so often read about and looked at on the map, but
here we are. I wonder,---is it possible? Today we
made our first ascent...If the Black Hills are not
worse than the traveling we have had so far we will not
be very much afraid of them. It is very warm today,
but there is a cool breeze blowing through the pine
trees more delightful. Two days ago it was so cold
that it was snowing. It is so changeable here that it
cannot be healthy.500

Wednesday, 29...Passed Labouta (or Labonta) Creek
today. It is a beautiful stream, clear and cool. We
had the worst roads yesterday. We had dreadful places
to come down, ugly places to go up, and by the time I
got out to walk up the hills and down the hills I had
just as well be on my feet (all the time). I am very
tired and weary. Today it seems as if it would be
very warm. Oh dear, I wish we were in Oregon, or even
out of these Black Hills. I am tired of them; they are
so dismal looking.501
Celinda Hines lends a different note in her description of the Black Hills landscape. Several of the women disliked this area but she obviously felt differently.

(June) 24 Friday Warm Came to the Black Hills Laramie Peak has been in sight for a week Some of the road was very rough, some very good. Landscape wild & romantic On the bluffs we were by cedar & pine trees...We camped near a small clear stream in a bed of larkspur the most beautiful...502

26 Sunday Pleasant...After dinner we went to the gorge. The scenery surpasses for grandeur sublimity & peculiarity any thing we have yet seen on the road. The river passes through what seems to be a natural fissure in the earth I should think 700 feet in height We went to the top of the bluff. How grand how magnificent Several miles of the road with teams & camps. The river & its various windings with its valley & bluffs on either side Laramie Peak in the distance with its snow capped crest was before us in all the grandeur of which a landscape can be possessed...503

Martha Missouri Moore is one of those women who did not have mixed emotions relative to the Black Hills. On one hand she saw beauty there but on the other hand she saw them as a physical division between herself and the life and friends she was leaving behind.

Friday 13th The morning comes in intensely hot were it not for the clouds which generally over shadow the sun in the afternoon we would certainly melt. Will this interminable travel never end? But why complain? Man's days are few and full of trouble as a morning flower he flourisheth. This is one way of getting rid of time...Come through an everlasting chain of hills whose sides are as bare of verdure as the great Sahara desert. Many of these hills are composed of red clay & tall cliffs of rock. What wonderful workings of Nature could have produced this phenomenon...504

Sunday (July) 15th...We are now through the Black Hills having been just one week among them. As I look back they rise with bristling ruggedness as if to shut out forever from my sight the home of my childhood and those friends whom I love so well...505
Elizabeth Dixon Smith notes that on:

July 17 made 15 miles disentary pervails in our company we are travling through destitute land no vegetation except at our camping places but the sage and a little stunted pitch pine.

July 18 (Sunday) made 15 miles through what is called the black hills they are intirely barren except now and then a stunted ceder...some of these hills are clear stone others coarse sand.

July 19 passed through a bason of 30 or 40 acres of level land with in this bason is a surface of stone about 15 feet in diameter white as marble but porous like burnt bone and brittle the earth resembles spanish brown made 6 miles...

Sarah Sutton writes:

Mon June 5...we have traveld over the black hills the last too days. To look at them, they appear as though they never could be crossed, but we have Beautiful natural roads, and the pioneers of these western mountains deserve great credit, for selecting such good places for a road...

Fryday June 9th...saw snow to day on the mountains. After traveling about 80 miles over the rocky black hills, we have left them to day to travel again up the level plat river. we have plenty of good neighbours, and friends all along this road, and good health and luck attend us this far on our pilgrimage...

INDEPENDENCE ROCK

All of the diaries examined for this study make reference to Independence Rock. It was a major physical landmark of the journey west.

Esther Belle Hanna writes that on:

Friday 25...Next came to Independence Rock, it stands alone in the Valley of Sweet Water, entirely separated from other Mountains. It is composed of granite & is about 500 ft. long 200 broad and about 250 ft. high. There are thousand of names on it, nearly all who pass leave their names. It is certainly one of Nature's most magnificent structures...
Mrs. Maria A. (Parsons) Belshaw reveals her curious and energetic nature when she notes that on June 30th (we) had:

Fine roads and pleasant weather. Took dinner on right of road about one mile northeast of Sweet Water River. There we had a view of Independence Rock, a Trading Post and a bridge about 1/2 mile east of the Rock... Sweet-Water...not pleasant to the taste...Mr. Belshaw and I climbed the Rock. I felt very dizzy when I reach the top. There I saw hundreds of names, not one that I knew. The Rock is 300 feet in height of granite. Persons can ascend on right side....510

Rachel Taylor notes that on:

July 21st...Later in the day passed Independence Rock ...We have here a frightful as well as romantic situation. Just back of us Independence Rock stands out in bold relief, and in front of us yawns the Devils Gate.511

DEVLIV'S GATE512

In Sallie Hester's description of the landscape in the vicinity of the Devil's Gate, she also reveals her sense of herself as a young adult as opposed to being a child at the tender age of fourteen.

...July 2. Passed Independence Rock. This rock is covered with names. With great difficulty I found a place to cut mine. Twelve miles from this is Devil's Gate. It's an opening in the mountain through which the Sweetwater River flows. Several of us climbed this mountain - somewhat perilous for youngsters not over fourteen. We made our way to the very edge of the cliff and looked down. We could hear the water dashing, splashing and roaring as if angry at the small space through which it was forced to pass. We were gone so long that the train was stopped and men sent out in search of us...513

Rachel Taylor:

July 22nd To day a part of us go to explore the Gate, and find the place as wild and rugged as could be imagined. Passed a trading post and saw the first house that we have seen since leaving Kanesville. A smart shower
Taylor, cont'd...

came up in the afternoon and those of us who were walking in advance of the train got a nice soaking.514

SWEETWATER RIVER (INDEPENDENCE ROCK AND PLATTE)

Celinda Hines describes the area of the Sweetwater River.

6th Wednesday Warm...Very sandy Country barren Sweet Water mountains lie parallel with the river on the north & near it. On the south they are farther off. They are one continued chain of granite rock...Alkali all around south of the river.

9th Saturday Warm & pleasant...The bluffs on either side of the river are of a grand formation & seem to have been thrown up by water...camped on the north side of the river in a beautiful glen.

(July) 10th Sunday Warm & pleasant...After team all but Mr. & Mrs. Judson & Messrs Miner & Nelson went on an adjacent bluff to view the scenery. The valley was at our feet with its river so serpentine that although near yet we could not trace its various windings. Many camps were strewed along its banks. Bluffs the most picturesque reared themselves on every hand while the snow capped Rocky mountains pierced the clouds in the distance.515

Esther Belle Hanna writing in 1852, comments that on:

Friday 2. (July) Encamped last night for the last time on Sweet Water...This evening came to the junction of the Salt Lake and Oregon roads, one leads to Salt Lake distant over a hundred miles. A great many of those going to California take this road...

Saturday 3...prepare for going through the desert. This is 45 miles in extent without grass or water. We will have to travel after night on account of the cattle...517

Agnes Stewart notes that on:

"Monday, July 12. Such a long time since I wrote last that I have almost forgotten how. Since I wrote we have passed the Devil's Gate, crossed the Sweetwater five times, and now ascending the Rocky Mountains, and in two days we will get our first sight of Oregon...518
In the diary of Maria (Parsons) Belshaw we read:

July 4th

Forced the river this morning. Heavy sand roads, Passed a great deal of alkali...Mr. McCarthy found some of the long locked for ice this morning on right side of road we were told before we left home we would have to dig two feet for it, but McCarthy only dug eight inches, and found ice as clear and beautiful as ever was seen. A short distance from the ice is water warm enough to wash dishes in. This ice is found about sixty miles from Independence up Sweet water on low alkali ground...Camped on elevated ground 8 miles from spings ahead found good grass.519

Martha Missouri Moore remarks that on:

Wednesday 25th  Mag & I took a ramble over the mountains. there were many strange things and many to excite our curiosities. and it afforded us a pleasant relief from the monotonous jogging of the wagons.

Crossed the (Sweetwater) river three times this morning saw plenty of names cut upon the rocks, but none that I knew. Those that have gone across in earlier years friends & acquaintances have left no trace of their footsteps here...Quite a number of trains are camped along...520

WYOMING BASIN521:

SOUTH PASS522 (EL. 7,550 FT.) (WHERE THE SWEETWATER RIVER ENDS)

In the diary of Martha Jane Gray we read that on:

June 16 - Wednesday

...passed over the summit of the Rocky mountains...If you did not know you could not tell when you pass over the summit of the Rocky Mountains. The roads were good all but a few seemed sandy. 75 Indians visit our camp this evening.523

WIND RIVER MOUNTAINS524

Sarah Sutton includes a very descriptive account of her experience in the Rocky Mountain region.

Thursday June 15th ...here are the very high rocky mountains on each side of us...within 3 or 4 miles of
Sutton, cont'd...

the bridge, we came to what is called the Devils Gate...the high wall on each side were strait down as the side of a stone house and the river took such a horse shoe turn that the visiter could not get within a 100 yards of it, without ascending the mountain and looking down, or crossing the river...campt for the night at the foot of the rock mount, and have sweet water to make use of. we have for years past heard of the rocky mountains but unexpectedly the time has arrived, when we can look at them for ourselves and can see that they are made of solid rock, and heaps upon heaps of rocks, and not earth as the mountains were in our own land. in some places the pines and cedars grew large enough to build there little cabins that these french and indians traders reside in. these settlers do not pretend to raise a thing, not even a garden. one thing the land seems too poor to support any growth...here they depend on the buffalo and bear... this is a very cold windy rainy evening but one blessing has attended us this cold eve, we have plenty of Cedar wood to burn...

Statey June 17...The tops of wind river mountains are covered with snow and half way down the sides, and the weather is cold...525

Esther Belle Hanna comments that on:

Monday 28. Arose this morning at 3 o'clock, had breakfast with candle light, had an early start: have very bad roads, deep sand and no grass for our cattle, nothing but sage, sage. Came in sight of the Wind River Mountains covered with perpetual snow. There is a long range with peaks reaching to the very heavens. When the sun gilds them they present the most grand and beautiful sight I ever witnessed. No pen can describe them...526

BIG SANDY

Charlotte Stearns Pengra reveals that on:

Thursday 7th Did not start very early this morning, arrived at Big Sandy about noon found no grass of any account- and concluded to enter the barren trail laid down in the Guide as being fifty-four miles without water or grass, we hear that there has been a spring discovered 15 miles from Big Sandy River, and intended to make that point if we could --we have however fallen short, and are encamped by the road side in a very barren place we have grass for the cattle that
Pengra, cont'd...

was cut at Willow Springs, and watter enough to keep them all right. Did not pitch our tent as it is a very dirty spot and we intend to leave early in the morning. I have stewed apples and baked three pans of biscuits made tea and so forth since stopping, feel lonely having no female companion.

GREEN RIVER

Esther Belle Hanna and company travelled the North Platte route and she records that on:

Tuesday 6. We travelled hard all day yesterday and all afternoon in the desert, a little before dark we stopped an hour & half to rest our cattle & get our suppers. Started again at dark & travelled all night stopping at 12 o'clock an hour & half to rest. I had my bed made down & then lay down but did not sleep much. We had good roads most of the way until about 2 o'clock we came to a very steep & dangerous hill descending from the table land, I wrapped a blanket around me & walked down it...The scenery about Green River is very grand & beautiful, the rocks & bluffs are beyond description...

Friday 9. Came to Hains (Hams) Fork of Green River - camped at noon on its banks, it is one of the most enchanting spots I have seen. This is a most lovely stream with gravelly bed, beautiful trees, flowers, and here we get our first strawberries...

Saturday 10. Passed through a beautiful grove of fir and quaking Aspen trees, this is the first shade we have come through since we have been on the rout. Got some lovely roses, pinks and wild honey suckle...

LODGEPOLE (CREEK) RIVER (LODGEPOLE TRAIL: SOUTHERN ROUTE THROUGH WYOMING):

CHEYENNE

Laura Wright notes in her journal dated Wednesday, June 4th, 1879 that:

We got up awful early and Soon as we could went on into Cheyenne to get our horses Shod it is pleasant day and is going to be awfull warm. I am writing while they are waiting to get them Shod...I have been fixing my
Wright, cont'd...

caveling dress to day...Cheyenne is quite a large place Some very large brick buildings...we can go up on the hill and look back at Cheyenne the air is good many Sheep kept here about four thousand head they don't raise any thing much hear that is vegetable but it is all shipped in we saw cabbage potatoes, ripe peaches and all kinds of fruit in market at Cheyanne. The air were two tramps to our camp to night the air is tramps every day533

Mary Matilda ("Till") Surfus writing in 1883 describes "Sheeanne" as a "Large town 8000 inhabitants in it nice lake near it and the mountains are great but not like I supposed they'd be not so pointed and are almost bare solid rock they are rightly named the rockies."534 Mary celebrated her 10th wedding anniversary on the trail which would probably put her age in the range of early thirties. Not much else is known but her diary was very descriptive, thoughtful and illuminating.

She describes the southern route through Wyoming:

June the 13th passed granite canyon Burford Station & Sherman Station have camped in a valley with mountains all around us Cross the highest point at Marshal a small village had bad slough to cross...Climbed up & got some snow 5 more teams joined us today 13 teams now...June 13th camped on Learnie plains (camped at Arrow station. we do not see any timber but get all the wood we need of the R R old ties...heavy frost...) We went up the mts so gradually that we did not know when we were on top I asked the station agent (Marshal) how far it was to the summit he laugh'd and said you are on it now ain't you high enough yet I ans'.. no I'd like to go up in the clouds.536

Sarah J. Collins writing in 1883 describes the moment when she first viewed the Rocky Mountains which took place just inside the Wyoming border travelling along present-day US80. She notes that on "June 6. Camped two miles in
Wyoming last knight about noon to day w(e) got a Sight of the Rocky Mountains Longs Peak they look like Blue and white Cloudes only more pointed."537

Sarah Collins diary explains that on "June 9...they have two Engins to the Train hear they had a Collision of two Freight Traines a short time a go 6 miles west of Chyenne no one hurt...some fine sights among the Wyoming Canions."538

LARAMIE (EL. 7,165 FT.)

Mary Surfus cont'd:

June 15th Campt at Learmie City...tis a nice city surrounded by mountains...Stayed all day 16th to rest wash & bake...Clouds looked beautiful over and below mountains Learmie plains in places bare and sandy in places very rockey in places...oh tis just grate here the plains are so changeable in places tis vary rocky and in others tis sandy level and in places there is grass and beautifull moss and flowers my if I could only paint them...539

Lucy A. Ide writing in 1878 notes that:

July 3 started up the mts. and as for giving a description of the beauty and grandeur & wildness rugged rocks beautiful flowers &c it is beyond my poor powers to tell suffice it to say I feel repaid for all the hardships we have as yet undergone. we camped on the top for dinner here we found strawberry blossoms growing within arms length of banks of snow that have doubtless been here for ages as canyons many hundred feet deep were filled even full so hard that we walked over it. had a game of snowball had a hard drive in the afternoon came as far as Laramie City about 50 miles from Cheyenne Mrs. H. Very tired indeed as we all are but feel for her more as she is not strong yet she is all courage540
Mary Surfus continues on:

June 19...the roads have been bad for 3 dayes mountaineous and mudy. but the sceneary is just grand.541

By the year 1883, we read in the diary of Sarah J. Collins that in the vicinity of Elk Mountain near present-day Walcott, Wyoming that there was "a Store and several Houses."542

BRIDGER'S PASS

From the journal of Lucy A. Ide written in 1878:

July 12 Are passing through Bridgers Pass magnificent scenery one thing I would mention it is a sand mountain standing between two that are covered with green grass no trees all about the same height the sand a leather color it looks like a picture it is splendid we came through the Pass camped at another toll Bridge...we found here a tent pitched a family living here they had ploughed up a little patch had potatoes growing peas &c I can assure you we looked with wondering eyes upon that garden the first of the kind we had seen weeks & weeks there used to be a fort there used also to be stage station in the old days before RR crossed these barren wilds & it was called Sulphur springs & they were truly named for the water in the springs was poure sulphur could put your hand in reach the bottom take large pieces of clear sulphur they used to come a great distance to these springs and drink the water & bathe and many sick people cured so they tell us here-Here also is a little graveyard near the ruined fort and as I looked at the faded tombstones thought someone mourns their buried dead likely never knew where they rest and in this lonely place among the Rockies looking & the ruined fort and & the tumbling tombstones I think I rather be laid to rest nearer the friends of my youth and nearer to Civilization543

GREEN RIVER (SOUTH PLATTE ROUTE)

Lucy A. Ide comments that this part of the Wyoming
landscape presents a magnificent backdrop as her party travels through the Rocky Mountains:

July 16...beautiful scenery high mountain deep gorges and scenery to suit the most romantic

July 17...all in good spirits...

July 18 very pleast morning travelled over very rough roads up & down over mts through deep canyons on & on and at last come in sight of the RR again it looks like an old friend we reach Green River after pass the Devils teapot and other noted rocks (Point of Rocks and Rock Springs, Wyoming) about 6 oclock this is the first town we have seen since coming from Laramie near 300 miles away...

July 20...forded green River which is rightly named as the water is a beautiful Green color544 quite deep nearly up to the wagon box...545

FORT BRIDGER546

Of Fort Bridger itself, Martha Jane Gray writes:

June 24 - Thursday

Day fine after last nights rain...very nice in the evening arrive in camp between 5 and 6 oclock. Get supper and work done up in time...We passed some of the most delightful bluffs eyes ever beheld and tonight we are surrounded by them. The sweetest place in the world...547

Fort Bridger is located on the southern route (Cherokee Trail) in the state of Wyoming. The southern route follows the Lodgepole Trail, joining up to the Cherokee Trail (running south to north through Colorado), and ending at Fort Bridger in the very southwest corner of the state. A few migrant companies continued along the Hastings Cutoff through Evanston, Wyoming to Salt Lake City, Utah and then travelled north from there along the Hensley Salt Lake Cutoff to City of Rocks in southern Idaho. For those who
travelled this route, their journey passed through the Wasatch Mountain Range (Utah) and a revealing and descriptive account of that landscape is presented in the diaries of Mary Matilda Park Surfus, 1883 and Lucy A. Ide, 1878:

Mary Matilda Park Surfus' entry reads like a mini travelogue and should be read in its entirety in order to grasp the picture she is trying very hard to paint with her words:

July the 7th campt in echo canion548...July the 8th came all forenoon in canion came to echo mill549 passed some of the finest sceanry we ever saw saw castle rock it is the collor of brick so is most of the roks along the canion a stream runs through the canion & the RR does to...the roses are in bloom & some of the pretiest flowers...the bluffs and hills on either side of the canion is half mile high some of them red rock steep up with edifices domes spires steeples & arches all naturel (...the rocks in shape of castles domes spires steeples and Arches all natural but almost perfect)550

July the 9th Came through some of the finest sceanery saw the devils slide551 (...and now we come to some of the finest sceanery we have yet seen the Devils slide his eye glass and tunnell and gap the slide is white rock looks like marble. our waggons were on opisite side of slide it looked to be as wide as waggon bed had sides like one and at top was seat rounded off like a big rocking chair. the slide begin at the top of this and ran as smooth as marble clear to Bottom 60 feet long. here and at edge of river it was rounded off in shape of seat the same as at top. & just opisite it was the eye glass it was a round hole through a huge rock July the 9th the tunnel was made thru the solid rock for cars to run through. and the gap is a fearfull looking place high mountains of rock on each side and the canion here is so narrow we can only see a streak of light and so deep deep down and quite a falls and the river plunges down over rock and forms a white spray that is fethery and flies on you
Surfus, cont'd...

and on sides of canyon and makes a roar louder than thunder. the cars run thru the tunnel here. and the river and waggon road so near only just room for them thru the gap...tis a mile thru from one end of gap to the other...tis grand beyond description to me & most of the co. others could not see any thing but fearfull-ness in it...) & saw tunnel for cars to run through saw most curious rocks & hills or mountains the gap was so narrow but one team could pass...our road run on high bluffs in places tis all together the pritiest & grandest sight I ever saw tis imposible to give any idea of how the canyon looked the canyon is mostly erigated houses all long Mormons mostly552

Lucy A. Ide also comments at length concerning this particular landscape:

July 25 reached Evanston (Wyoming) today saw more Chinese here than any place yet old young & middle aged...it seem to be a nice place and much business done here...553

July 26 come 20 miles out into Echo canyon the scenery here is beautiful it is 29 miles through this canyon one continuous down down - high mountains either side and the RR track side by side with us sometime not six feet away554

July 30 came into Weber Canyon the scenery here throws every other place in the shade it is the wildest place one can imagine the Devils Gate is here one solid rock one side up hundreds of feet the other side down hundreds of feet runs the Weber River rushing madly along over great rocks one solid mass of foam and you can scarcely hear yourself speak such rumbling down in such a deep canyon the road is just wide enough for a wagon barely that in some places you rest assured we all walked & I for one kept just as near the middle of the road as I could then my head swam so I could scarcely walk I think it is a half mile through this gate but I must say it seemed hours we were passing it but it looks very grand indeed after all555

From the diary of Hannah Tapfield King written in 1854 we read an interesting and personally revealing descriptive account of the landscape in the vicinity of Fort Bridger:

Sept 10th Yesterday we travelled till quite late & passed some splendid bluffs ruins - These Bluffs are
something I cannot describe. They are Sublime & Mysterious - There is beauty & order in them - and it requires no very fanciful stretch of imagination to form Baronial buildings - "Keeps" - gateways, &c &c. They are very high - I should like to hear a philosophical description of them - They please and interest me more than I have language to express - There is much design in them - yet they say they are solely the work of Nature - Well I must leave them like all mysterious things...We now are going on for Fort Bridger - We saw the smoke from it last night - The air here is so pure and rarified and the sky lovely.

For those companies travelling along the southern route (Lodgepole) through Wyoming, up through northern Utah state and entering southern Idaho approximately sixty-three miles south of American Falls, the following is a description from the journal of Lucy A. Ide written in 1878 of the landscape just north of the southern Idaho/Utah state border in the vicinity of Malad City, Idaho:

Aug 19 went down to the Ferry crossed the snake river...Elma & I see in the distance a beautiful waterfall and start to explore it. We went to the foot first and then had an idea we would like to see the source. So we start alone as it looks like rather hard work to climb the mtn but we persevere and after many slips & falls and stops to rest &c we get to the top over 100 feet and as we look at the little fountains at the top feel amply repaid for our climb. I think here is at least a dozen fountains that throw water up 3 & four feet. We have a curiosity to examine them so we take off our shoes & stockings and wade into the water it seems like a little shallow lake not over six inches deep but as we near the falls we are somewhat afraid although they are small but fall a distance of 100 feet perhaps more. It is not more than three ft in width and these little fountains seem to be holes in the bottom of the pond. We run our hands down as far as we can but find no bottom. They are a curiosity sure but the teams are going on and we must go or be left so we take a last view of the Beautiful Bridal Vail Falls & go on as far as the Miladd River (Malad River). This River is a great curiosity. It runs in a deep dark Gorge and at a depth of 300 feet in some places the Rocks come up.
Ide, cont'd...

perpendicular it sounds almost improbable but it is so for here I sit on a rock writing this down and Lucinda sits the other side and we could reach each others hand if we dared to go near it but it is an ugly looking place I can assure you in one place a few feet from us the water falls quite a distance out of sight then comes up over the rocks and down again it is a natural curiosity to look at this stream we camp here at Miladd River at a stage station...557

IDAHO:

The following is a list of places and dates for the Sesquicentennial 1993 Wagon Train in Idaho.

1993 WAGON TRAIN SCHEDULE

Montpelier (5,941 feet, FWP) June 26 and 27.
Georgetown June 28.
Soda Springs (5,777 feet) June 29.
Bancroft June 30.
Chesterfield July 1 and 2.
Fort Hall (4,445 feet) July 3 and 4.
Pocatello (4,464 feet) June 5.
Massacre Rock State Park June 7 and 8.
Raft River June 9.
Delco June 10.
Burley (4,240 feet) June 11.
Kimberly (Twin Falls - 3,492 feet) June 12.
Filer June 13 and 14.
Buhl (3,792 feet) June 15.
Hagerman558 (Fossil Beds) June 16.
Glenns Ferry (Three Island State Park) June 17, 18, 19 and 20.
Mountain Home (Soul's Rest) (3,124 feet) June 21 and 22.
Boise (2,741 feet) June 23, 24 and 25.
Parma June 27.

BEAR RIVER559 (MONTPELIER, IDAHO, EL. 5943 ft.)

The following commentary from the diary of Charlotte Emily Stearns Pengra describes in vivid detail some of the
natural hazards of travelling along the Oregon Trail landscape:

**Fryday 15th**  Our road lay along the valley of Bear River for ten miles...We then had eight miles of very mountainous road, the hills or mountains, were very high and steep and very hard to ascend, and descend but with stopping often in going up and double locking in decending we overcame all obsticles...We met a man thirty days from Oregon, who is taking the census of the Migration to that country, and he confirmed what we had before heard that there is a new cutt off which would save us some hundreds of miles travel.560

Esther Belle Hanna writes that on:

Saturday 10. Passed through a beautiful grove of fir and quaking Aspen trees, this is the first shade we have come through since we have been on the rout. Got some lovely roses, pinks and wild honey suckle. Began to ascend the Bear River Mountains some of them very high561 and rocky. From these mountains the scenery is most delightful...The mountains on either side of the road are very rough & bear a very singular & beautiful appearance. The earth being of various colors, black, white, red, yellow and intermediate shades...562

Sarah J. Collins writes in glowing terms of her experience at Montpelier in 1883:

July 4. Cool this morning narrow Canions some places only wide enough for the road and a nice spring that runns by the side of it the hill three or four hundred feet high Eate our 4 of July dinner on a little Flatt with hills all a round us and wondering how our Folkes at Home was spending theire fourth we had Canned Strawberries and Cake made without Eggs. we saw a nice ranch this morning a nice Garden some small Trees set out in the yard a Log House Some nice Lace Curtains to their Windows and from Appearance was going off to celebrate the Fourth...Montpelier Ten miles in Idaho, a very nice Place growing grain all arounde it watter running all through it they are celeberating the Fourth heare to day when we see the Stars and Stripes we think we are in the United States yet. This Valley is thickley Settled nineteen out of twenty are Mormons. we see Peppement growing wilde and some very pretty Flours.563
In contrast Agnes Stewart writes:

July 20, Sabbath. Oh, my patience. I have not wrote for so long a time I have nearly forgotten how. So many things and strange places we have come over. We have come over so many high hills. We have come up and down till I forget most of what I wanted to write. We are in the Bear River Valley now. How dreary everything looks to me. I feel like saying that life is a weary dream, a dream that never wakes. We do not know what is to be our lot in life, nor do we know what is before us in the world.

SODA SPRINGS (ON THE BEAR RIVER)

Celinda Hines reveals the nature of the numerous hot springs located here:

25th Monday Pleasant Our road was up the (Wyoming) basin...about 11 Oclock we arrived at the far famed Soda Springs. The first one we visited was clear & the water equalled the best soda water it was very strong. It boiled up out of the solid rock - as they all do - & in its ebullitions resembles the slakeing of lime. Placing the face near the surface the vapor has the same effect which the inhaling of hartshorn (ammonium carbonate, an ingredient of smell salts, was made by chemically breaking down stag antlers and subsequent distillation) produces...Steam-boat spring is so called from the noise...resembling that of a steam boat pipe -- as some fancy...They all come out of a basin of solid rock which where the water flows over is of a copperas color. Many rocks are of a deep yellow color...P M. passed through a volcanic region...Near here the California route leaves the Oregon trail but some of the California emigrants go up to Ft Hall... (written in margin) We camped near a place stones looked as if they had been burned.

Elizabeth Dixon Smith comments:

August 22 (Sunday) saw some of natures curious works here are mounds of perhaps 40 feet in diameter and 10 feet high composed of a shelly stone in the middle of the mound stands a I know not what to call it it looks like a stump a bout 3 feet high it has a hole in the top full of water roiling and runing over all the time it is this water that makes the mounds the water is blood warm and has a little of the soda taste a mile or so from here are the famous Soda springs...I saw one that was clear. About 2 hundred yards below the soda springs is a boilin spring it boils and foams and runs
over 30 barrels in a day it boils up out of a stone
the hole is a bout as large as a large dinner pot evry
few minutes the water will bounce up 3 or 4 feet high
the water slightly warm.570

Charlotte Stearns Pengra notes that:

**Monday 18th** This morning after traveling about two
miles we strucke the Orregon road, there was an extinct
volcano crater571 about one mile to the South, we could
see its mouth but had not time to visit it- there was a
small apreture to the right of the road near the
junction, and a very large apreture three miles
further, where the Earth has opened her yawning mouth
and the fury of her elements have heaved up in
innumerable hosts of mighty rocks, there are many
places that you can see down many feet, altogether it
impresses the mind, with the idea of the great and
mighty power of God to hold the elements in his
hand...572

HIGH DESERT (COLUMBIA PLATEAU573):

BLACKFOOT (NINE MILES EAST OF FORT HALL)

From the diary of Sarah J. Collins written in 1883:

July 8...Blackfoot is a very nice Town heare we saw
our first Freighters, three large waggons hitched to
gather with six span of mules to them one driver a
twenty gallon barrel for watter on each side they
have just come in over the Desert...

July 9 start a cross a 50 mile Desert this morning 40
miles without watter only as we buy it. we payed one
doller for watter one place they hall it 16 miles the
next place it is brought with pipes from the mountains
two miles.

July 10 good roades but very dusty. a half mile of
Lava Bed that shook us up a little. the rock are burnt
Black and melted runn to gather like burnt glass. and
in some places greate openings in the Rock. a sand
storm this evening drove us in to Camp at a store at
Arcove (Arco) on Lost River they say it is full of
watter some knights and in the morning is gone574
FORT HALL (ON THE SNAKE RIVER)

The diary of Esther Belle Hanna contains the following description:

Saturday 17th...5 miles from Fort Hall...We have another splendid spring near us and the stream near it is full of speckled trout...The wild currant grows here in greatest abundance, red, yellow, and black...We are near being eaten alive with mosquitoes, there are thousands of them buzzing about your ears which makes one almost frantic...

Monday 19th...The ground for several miles around Fort Hall is very marshy and must be unhealthy...

Celinda Hines tells us that their company took a slight detour in this vicinity:

27th Wednesday Pleasant Our road led through a kanyon over the dividing ridge between the waters of Salt lake & those of the Columbia The road to the summit was through a grove of poplar trees & shrubbery...

28th Thursday. Left Ft. Hall about 19 miles to the north thereby saving 16 miles - it is said that the road is better We were in sight of the Three Butes all day They are three mountain peaks rising high above the chain We almost suffered with dust & want of water...We camped about a mile on near a fine spring...

AMERICAN FALLS (LEWIS RIVER)

And further, Hanna tells the reader that on:

Tuesday 20th...This afternoon came to the American falls on Lewis river. and rugged scenery around. The water falls here 40 feet over an irregular mass of rocks, making a roaring noise which can be heard 7 miles distant. The huge and massive rocks around have every appearance of volcanic action at some period. I picked up some cinder & something resembling pieces of broken junk bottles...

Wednesday 21st. We have most awful roads today, steep rocky hills and where it is a little level the sand is over shoe-mouth deep, every step and scorching hot with the hot sun. Have to walk down and up the hills they
Hanna, cont'd...

are so precipitous as to render them very dangerous...Came to Cassia Creek this evening & camped. This is a beautiful place, pretty green sod to pitch our tents, quite a luxury compared with sand and dust a foot deep...

Thursday 22". Travelled 15 miles today over the most tortuous road I ever could have imagined, nothing but rock after rock. The country all along presents the most barren appearance nothing but sage. Hundred and thousands of acres with no vestage of anything but this hateful weed. We did not see water all day until we came to Mirey Creek this evening where we have camped amongst sand and sage. The sun has been oppressively hot all day and I am wearied & suffering from jolting over rocks which has given me a severe headache.

ROCK CREEK (At ABOUT KIMBERLY, IDAHO)

From the diary of Sarah Sutton, 1854, she writes that:

Mon'y July 17 this rock creek was named right as its natural production is rock, and sage. it will produce 200,000 bushels of rocks to the acre some say they cant think what this part of the world was ever made for, but...it is no mystery to me, for I can see God in all around us. he had made this foundation, for the inhabitants of earth to pass from one part of the world, to the other, and he has put on it fine creeks of water...we have never missed A day yet but we have come to a river branch or spring. it is call'd the plains or desert, but we have never failed of having fire enough, to cook our meal...we came about 8 miles this morning and noon'd at rock creek. here is 8 wagons of emegrants, the first we have seen for four days...

Tuesy July 18th left rock creek soon this morning but did not leave all the rocks with it. wish we had traveld nearly all day in sight of snake river we drove on to the bank about 11 oclock took of our teams to take down to water and were obliged to give it out as the bank was too steep and rocky to go down. some said it was more than a mile from the bank down to the water, so we came on nearly smothered in dust until the middle of the afternoon, and found A place where we could water our cattle...
TWIN FALLS\textsuperscript{584} \textit{(BETWEEN KIMBERLY AND BUHL, IDAHO)}

Mary Matilda Surfus notes that on:

July the 21 we are still on snake river. We stop to wash and bake...campt the 20 on snake river. July the 21th. We came to the falls (Twin Falls/Shoshone Falls, Idaho) oh how beautiful nicer than tnything I ever saw in echo canion Weber canion rivers mountains lakes trees flowers gap slide springs all combined cant compare with the water falls nature can & does go far ahead of art. the salman falls are terabley grand but the falls that run down out & over the banks of the snake river is just sublime there is a river running on the right of snake they call blind river which runs under the round part of the time and part along through it as others do & it is higher up than the Snake & makes its way through the ground & rock & runs down the banks of Snake river the banks on that side are 60 or 75 feet high...We came to sage plains or desert tis 20 miles acrost the lain and there is no water till we get through...July 21st. We camped at Edge of sage desart tis 20 miles acrost and no water they tell us till we get through in the middle of the desart is a man By a well & sells water we took dinner on the plain or desert tis dry sandy and sage brush and grease wood is all that growes on it. they both emit a sickening oder it seemed along 20 miles. We came over it in the one day tho it was a hard drive just a dead pull thru the sand the sand makes the hardest wheeleing of any thing else...585

SNAKE RIVER\textsuperscript{586} \textit{(GENERAL DESCRIPTION FROM FORT HALL TO FORT BOISE)}

Entries from the diary of Martha Jane Gray for July 12 to July 15, describe in detail one of the many waterfalls encountered along this part of the landscape. She also reminds the reader of the intense summer climatic conditions endured along the Snake River from approximately Ft. Hall past Twin Falls:

July 12 - Monday

...a very warm day. Have very little water, not till we come to Snake River. Come on farther and camp on good camping ground, plenty of grass in sight of Snake River and some of the most beautiful streams of nature,
Gray, cont'd...

gushing out of the precipice, falling almost perpendicular, forms a sublime sight to behold. Health in camp improving. Had a lot of fish caught this evening. A very warm day. Travel 23 miles...

July 13 - Tuesday

A very warm day. Leave camp at noon, travel 6 miles. Camp on Snake River. Pass 15 falls, some fall 40 ft and disappear. One 1/2 at least are large enough to turn a mill. A grand sight to behold. They are on the river. I think it is volcanic. When so much water comes from I cannot tell but it is grand! majestic.

July 14 - Wednesday

Leave camp early, an excessive warm day...

July 15

Improving fast, that is health. But an oppressive warm day. Cattle nearly perish with the heat but all arrive in camp after traveling 15 miles over a very barron sandy desert. The earth produces nothing but wild sage and green wood. 1000's and 1000's of acres covered with the brush. Camp tonight again on Snake River, a nice place. Grass rather short and things rather in a confusion. Good night for I am very weary.587

FORT BOISE (THIS IS WHERE I JOINED THE WAGON TRAIN ON JUNE 25, 1993)

Hanna describes the fort and reveals her emotions concerning this particular landscape scene:

Thursday 12". Saw Fort Boise this morning on the opposite side of the river, it is situated on Lewis River, on the northern side, one mile below the mouth of Boise River. It is built of the same material & on the same plan as Fort Hall but on a smaller scale. It is two hundred & eighty miles below Fort Hall. The whole of the route in this distance has been one continuous desert with a few patches of grass along the river. No one can imagine the barren and desolate appearance of this part of the country unless he could see it. Have not seen a tree or shrub in all the distance - nothing but sage; grease-wood and wormwood & even these have no greeness or appearance of life being dried up in the sand with the scorching sun...588
Maria Belshaw notes:

August 20th

Good roads cool fine day. Appearance of country the same...We are now at Fort Boise, it is going to ruins fast...The Fur Co. has control of the Fort. No soldiers here...589

From the diary of Sarah Sutton we read:

Thursday aug 3 have come about 12 miles to day and ariv'd at the second crossing of snake river...here is a low sod establishment they call the fort. that is all there is, with 1 covered wagon and 3 cloth tents, and 7 or 8 indian willow wigwams and the poorest dirtyest looking tribe we have yet seen. several are entirely naked...it is now one hundred miles to the grand rounds (Grand Ronde) and 500 & 50 to Salem Oregon. snake river is about half as wide as Illinois river, & runs into Columbia. Boise runs into snake river and is about half as wide, and a much pleasenter river, with its beautiful trees, pretty enough to stand in a Hortecultureal garden, while Snake river has nothing but bunches of small willow...590

Saturday August 5 left fort Boise and snake river soon this morn...come 15 miles without water across the most dust dry and hot bare desert than any person ever travers'd and campt for the night on the creek Malheur...here is a good cold spring, which we seldom see of late. saw some hot springs to day it has been death and distruction on cattle this year but healthy for people.591

The description changes as time passes. Sarah J.

Collins writing in 1883 pairs a rather different picture:

July 19. Camping to knight in Boyes Valley a pretty place fine large shade trees and fine Orchards loaded down with Fruite some fine Buildings Boise Citty the Capital of Idaho is a very nice Place Boise River runns a long the Valley and furnishes the watter for Irrigating purposes...592

The diary of Sarah J. Collins provides an excellent read. She was very detailed in her descriptions and was able to express herself naturally and clearly. She possessed a wonderful sense of humor which is evident
throughout her commentary. She was thirty-eight at the time of her experience, married with no children. Unfortunately her diary never reveals why they migrated west.

BOISE RIVER

From the diary of Sarah Sutton, we read that on:

Sunday, July 30 3 shawnee (Shoshone) indians come to see us before breakfast this morning. we gave them their breakfast and they staid to see us start, as their custom is to look over a camp ground, to pick up the bacon rines, and crumbs and anything we leave... noon'd on Bois River...good grass, and plenty of Balm Gilliad (poplar) trees, about the first trees we have seen in two months...we have balm of Gilead here, but have no need of A physician for our bodyly health, but the physician that cure the sin sick is greatly needed, to give us a quantity of fortitude and patience...

Monday July 31th...we are to noon on the beautiful Boise River, under the balm gilead trees. this river would be call'd A creek in the states, but on this trip all the large creeks are call'd rivers. this river has rocky shores and bottom, and the prettyest banks of white coarse sand we ever saw. we think the 500 miles that we have to go, will be worse than all the way we have come. what team we have left are work out with fatigue, and time will determine what we can do our prospect is gloomy at present...camp't about a half mile from Boise on a branch that runs into it have most XLent grass, which is the most pleasing object with us at present...we have not seen any rain for two months no do we expect to see any soon, and we are nearly smother'd and covered with ashy dust and the sage among it looks as though it would set on fire without help.

Tuesday August 1...they (cattle) die very soon after we notice they are sick and we never heard of one getting well. we have not determined on the cause. it is probably partly being suffocated in the hot alkily dust, and drinking bad water and exausted with the long trip...

Wedn August 2...have noond again on Boise river, under a balm of Gilead tree 2 feet through...this bottom we think would yield common produce well, but it is not probable it ever will be cultivated. it is too far
Sutton, cont'd...

away in an uncivilised land among the savage indians who know no more about work than the grasshoppers and never saw such a thing as a garden vegetable growing here we leave boise to see it no more...593

As a comparison, from the diary of Delila B. (Wait) Saunders written over a decade later, she writes of the same landscape that on:

Sunday August 19th, 1866

This forenoon we passed several homes that were surrounded with evidences of cultivation and civilization...594

NORTHERN ROUTE (GOODALE'S CUT-OFF) FROM FORT HALL TO FORT BOISE:

(BIG) LOST RIVER595

The best description of this landscape comes from the diary of Rachel Taylor:

Oct 14th Road rocky enough to break every wagon to pieces...

Oct 15th Road continue(s) to be very rocky, and besides are very mountainous

Oct 16th...We go on to the Natural Bridge on Lost River...

(It is a natural bridge of rocks, and is under water. Several of us felt some fears about riding over this place, and walked across on a little natural foot bridge, where the water was about six inches deep...596

WOOD RIVER

Maria Belshaw describes the landscape in the vicinity of Wood River as "...roads low wet ground" with "a Supherous putrified smell" and as containing "a great many graves along here."597 While Rachel Taylor notes that her company "crossed this creek which is called in the Guide Book, Wood
River and made better progress than usual, as the roads were smooth and level..."598

OREGON:

The following is a list of places and dates for the Sesquicentennial 1993 Wagon Train in Oregon.

1993 WAGON TRAIN SCHEDULE

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nyssa</td>
<td>June 28</td>
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<td>Vale</td>
<td>June 29</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ontario (2,153 feet)</td>
<td>June 30/31</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farewell Bend State Park (Snake River) (2,104 feet)</td>
<td>July 1</td>
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<td>Weatherby (2,654 feet at Durkee)</td>
<td>July 2</td>
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<td>Pleasant Valley (3,819 feet)</td>
<td>July 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baker City (3,440 feet)</td>
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<td>North Powder</td>
<td>July 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Union (2,717 feet)</td>
<td>July 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Grande (2,784 feet)</td>
<td>July 8/9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring Creek (approx. 4,206 feet at Kamela)</td>
<td>July 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emigrant Springs State Park (3,681 feet at Meacham)</td>
<td>July 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mission</td>
<td>July 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pendleton (1,070 feet)</td>
<td>July 13/14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Echo (approx. 459 feet)</td>
<td>July 15</td>
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<td>Butter Creek</td>
<td>July 16</td>
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<td>Wells Spring</td>
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<td>Cecil</td>
<td>July 18/19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arlington/Condon Highway (224 feet)</td>
<td>July 20</td>
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<td>John Day River</td>
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<td>Wasco</td>
<td>July 22</td>
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<td>Deschutes River (158 feet)</td>
<td>July 23</td>
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<td>The Dalles (98 feet)</td>
<td>July 24</td>
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<td>Dufur</td>
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<td>Tygh Valley 599</td>
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<td>Rock Creek Reservoir</td>
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<tr>
<td>White River (Barlow Pass)</td>
<td>July 28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summit Meadows (4,670 feet)</td>
<td>July 29/30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Welches</td>
<td>July 31</td>
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<td>Sandy</td>
<td>Aug. 1</td>
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<td>Carver</td>
<td>Aug. 2</td>
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<td>Holcomb</td>
<td>Aug. 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oregon City</td>
<td>Aug. 4/5</td>
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(Portland is at elevation 77 feet)
MALHEUR RIVER (NEAR PRESENT-DAY VALE)

Agnes Stewart writes of this part of her journey:

September 8. We parted our company yesterday. The Stevensons and Buckenhams taking the old road, and the Loves and Stewarts taking the new road going south from the old one...We came twelve miles over very dusty roads to the Malheur River again...Camped beside the river, and cooked and ate under the willows. It was a beautiful spot, to me at least. Pack up and go again like a band of gypsies. I feel very lost without the rest of the company.600

Sarah Sutton notes that on:

Friday August 4...go 10 miles to day to Maleur, and some familys are waiting there for us, but we frequently are disappointed in the same way...Friday eve after sundown here is too wagons just landed with us and two more to ferry over. I am tired of this place. here is more noise and confusion, than in the midst of A city, the innumerable indians, and the noise of swimming cattle, and so forth

Saturday August 5 left fort Boise and snake river soon this morn...come 15 miles without water across the most dust dry and hot bare desert than any person ever travers'd and campt for the night on the creek Malheur...here is a good cold spring, which we seldom see of late. saw some hot springs to day it has been death and distruction on cattle this year but healthy for people.601

BURNT RIVER CANYON (NEAR PRESENT-DAY HUNTINGTON, LIME AND DURKEE)

From the diary of Esther Belle Hanna:

Sabbath 15. Mr. H. is very unwell today...Have a pleasant camp on the bank of Burnt river, This river takes it name from the blackened & burnt appearance of the hills and mountains on either side of it, and the frequent burnings on them. They are mostly covered with high bunch grass which at this season is quite dry. This often gets on fire, burning for miles & days together. One of these burnings is in sight of us today...

Monday 16". The fire in the mountains last night was truly grand, it went to the tops of the highest of them spreading far down their sides...The fire extended for several miles burning all night, this morning there is
Hanna, cont'd...

none visible...Sometimes our road was through thickets of brush for dome distance, which was quite romantic and very refreshing after the burning plain we have had for so long...Encamped on a spring branch in a ravine, mountains on either side, had the joyful sight of trees for the first time.602

Mrs. Maria (Parsons) Belshaw comments on this area on:

August 27th

Left Burnt River to-day - to the left our road gets worse, one passage through the hills so narrow and crooked, and the crossing of a creek where it is so narrow and steep banks we can scarcely get along, the country assumed a different look yesterday evening, more pleasant to-day. Where out of the worst hills and narrow passages, the hills again dotted with cedars, good springs...

August 28th

Leave Burnt River for the last time this morning... Struck Emigrant Creek, good camping all the way. Mountainous country again 2 long hills. Narrow valley sidling roads. Came to lone Tree Spring to left of road good water...Quite cold this morning, this evening...603

From the diary of Sarah Sutton:

Tuesday Aug 8th we left snake river for the last time...came to burnt river...the road has been very mountainous and rocky to day...the mountains avery very high over our heads Mr Tipners 4 wagons are campt with us to night, and the widow Waldo with 7 negroes

Aug 9...campt on a branch of burnt river it runs in a narrow valley with very high mountains on each side we have crossd the river 5 times to day. here is considerable small timber on this creek such as Quaken asp, balm of Gilead, Alder, Haws, Larches, birch &c...it is cheering to us to have such beautiful branches of swift running cool water several times every day, and pretty good grass.

Aug 10...met 3 men with...materials for gold diging on burnt river. they had been out here prospecting and we heard they found as much as 10 dollars per day...our boys have prospected some, and found gold...we are trying to get to grand rounds (Grand Ronde) before we leave any (wagons, clothes, etc.)...604
Celinda Hines writes:

30 Tuesday  Warm & dusty  Went over hills to Burnt river...After the first crossing the road led through under a canopy of bushes which would have been delightful had we not been looking out for dangerous places all the time...Camped near the river. it was dark & rainy. Lightning played around the mountain tops which rose several hundred feet on all sides of us.

(August) 31 Wednesday  It was cloudy & cool which very fortunate on account of hilly bad roads...Crossed the river (Burnt) nine times Our road was the most intricate of any day since we started Sometimes crossing the river & then recrossing immediately thence through a beautiful grove of poplars & Balm of Gileads then perhaps over a steep high hill & then to the river & then through a thicket of bushes Sumach...cherry so dense...Have heard birds sing occasionally since we came to the Boise river.

POWDER RIVER (NEAR PRESENT-DAY BAKER CITY AND NORTH POWDER)

One of the best descriptions of the landscape in the vicinity of the Powder River comes in the diary of Sarah Sutton:

Saty  Aug 12 come about 14 miles to day...we are in powder river valey. it is 3 or 4 miles wide, and on our left the mountains are coverd with tall pine trees down to the foot of the, and very rich perraries (prairies) joining and it begins to look a good deal more like getting to some place than we have seen all the way

Sabbath eve,  Aug 13...this valey is much prettyer than it was yesterday and 7 or 8 miles wide. the mountains are high on the left and covered with timber and plenty of snow on the top of the, the river runing through it, and plenty of springs runing down the mountains...here we found Governer Gains of Oregon waiting here for his sons. here are some traders come out from Oregon with provisn to meet the suferring emegrants who have lost nearly all their cattle, and some we know that have spent all their money, and others nearly all...we
Sutton, cont'd...

expect to get to the Grand round tomorrow, and hope to meet with a more pleasing prospect we have very good grass here good water and wood and all well, and have some thing to eat yet, but nearly out.

GRANDE RONDE RIVER VALLEY (NEAR PRESENT-DAY LA GRANDE)

Esther Belle Hanna paints such a vivid picture of the surrounding landscape that one can 'feel' her sense of well being and spiritual serenity here in these two passages:

Friday 20". Travelled 10 miles over a very tortuous road-hilly and rocky. The dividing ridge between Powder and Grand Round is very uneven and stony. The road leading down into the valley of Grand Round is very circuitous & the most rocky and difficult of descent of any we have seen on the route. Came in sight of Grand Round & reached it at our usual camping time. It is certainly one of the loveliest valleys the eye ever rested upon, stretching far & wide, covered with the most luxuriant grass the soil being of the richest kind. A stream passes through the valley which increases the beauty of the scene as it meanders along lined with bushes. The mountains with which this valley is surrounded are covered with the most beautiful yellow pine extending far down into the valley...

Saturday 21"...Have got an excellent camp where we expect to remain till Monday. This appears more like the noise and haste of a city than a remote spot far removed from civilization, wagons are pouring in by dozens & the whole valley appears alive in every direction...We have not had a minute to ourselves today, being visited by men, squaws & papooses. They all come on horseback, if we speak pleasantly to them, they alight, squat down beside us and chatter like so many magpies...608

Sarah Sutton remarks that on:

Monday Aug 14th...we came about noon 8 miles and stopt at a cold spring saw some handsomer situations for farms than I saw in Ill. the land very rich and the side of the mountains covered with pine and fur and beautiful place to build by scattering fur trees and springs. we have stopt for the night within 3 miles of G(rand) round...but we believe it too cold to live here as there is now frost every night.
Sutton, cont'd...

Tuesday Aug 15...came up a very long hill and down the longest and rockiest one we have all the way all the foot of it is the round (Grande Ronde) it resembles our large prairies in Illinois with low mountains all around it covered with pine timber the land rich and dry with a great many cold springs and the land is flat clear up to the mountains...609

Martha Jane Gray writes that on:

Aug 2 - Monday

A cool and pleasant day...come 8 miles over bluffs down into the Grande Round, a most splendid place 8 miles across the valley.

Aug 3 - Tuesday

A splendid morning all enjoying good health...cross Grande Round...Here are Indians which have 1005 of splendid horses and ponies, all fat and hearty looking. A nation of Indians well and intelligent people.

Aug 4 - Wednesday 1852

...There are thousands of acres of land in the Grande Round, all surrounded by mountains, covered with trees of the most splendid kind. It would be a beautiful place to live.610

BLUE MOUNTAINS

Mrs. Maria A. (Parsons) Belshaw notes:

September 2nd

Commenced climbing the Blue Mountains this morning. It has been go up and go down. Such hills as never were viewed by us poor motrals before, or such beautiful tall straight pine trees from one hundred to one hundred and fifty feet high, from 1 to 3 feet thick (Blue Mountains - pictures)...Crossed Grande Rond River, camped on bank the sick better...

September 3rd

Still we are climbing the mountains, but not yesterday one very long and steep coming out of Grande River bottom. I never saw as crooked a road in my life. It was Gee and Haw both at once to keep off of trees. Some of the trees are rubbed one third of the
Beishaw, cont'd...

thickness through by the wagons hubs, heavy tall pine and fir...Camped in opening on Rain Water Creek...Still raining. Commenced on Tuesday...611

Charlotte Stearns Pengra notes that:

**Thursday 25th** Have traveled 18 miles over the mountains and stones, have had the pleasure of excellent shade most of the way as we have had much of the time since striking the mountains, they are finely timbered with Fir Pine and Hemlock, many of the trees would measure from 150 to 160 feet in height...Sis is still sick had much fever and though I kept cold bandages on her I cannot subdue it612

Esther Belle Hanna writes that:

Monday 23". This day we travelled seven miles. From Grand Round the road ascends the blue mountains & for two miles is quite steep stony & precipitous & very difficult to ascend. We had a delightful view from the summit of the Round and all the surrounding country on that side. On the (Blue) mountains there are thick groves of yellow pine, some of these trees are very large & lofty. 'tis delightful to enjoy the cool shade & tread on the rich carpet of Nature's own weaving.

Tuesday 24...The scenery is grand & beautiful in the extreme, and cannot be surpassed anywhere. I saw spruce, pine, balsam, fir, hemlock and laurel...613

From the diary of Agnes Stewart:

September 11...Began to ascend the Burnt River Mountains, or the Blue Mountains, I don't know which, but one thing I do know, they are very serious hills to come up with.614

Martha Jane Gray:

Aug 5 - Thursday

Leave the Grande Rounds. Have a cool and pleasant day. Climb the Blue Mountains, 8 miles and then come down a very bad hill to the Grande Rounde river. There we noon and come up a very bad hill. Come on ascend to another bad hill, come 8 miles farther and camp on top of a hill. One very difficult to get up. Water and grass very scarce but timber plenty of the richest trees.
Gray, cont'd...

Aug 7 - Saturday

A splendid day for traveling, came 15 miles over the Blue mountains, camp on Dry Creek, very good camp. All well. The roads very crooked but pleasant to travel through the shade of such lofty timber.615

Celinda Hines remarks that on:

2nd Friday Pleasant with a cool breeze from the mountains...struck over the hills the first of which was long & steep to the valley of Powder river...When on the hills we first beheld the Blue mountains proper, Although we had been traveling amid spurs of them for several days. These mountains are mostly covered with timber...even more grand...than the Rocky...

3rd Saturday It rained considerable in the night...Mountains looked magnificent Soon were nearly enveloped in dense clouds while around others smaller clouds hovered in all a delightful placidity...delightful scenery & but for the casualty which one week ago deprived me of my only earthly parent, how well might I have enjoyed it...These Kayuse indians seem rather intelligent and often well dressed616

6th Tuesday Pleasant...The road was very hilly. The hills covered with timber Firs Pines & a little spruce...camped in a ravine. Very lonesome...

8 Sept. Thursday Pleasant...Road bad. Very hilly & in some places stony (see photographs of top of Blue Mtns.) Forest more interesting Sometimes the road was very bad winding around trees &c. Camped at night at Lee's Encampment...617

UMATILLA RIVER AGENCY (NEAR PRESENT-DAY PENDLETON618)

Celinda Hines makes note of several different things in her commentary quoted here. She not only describes the landscape but also talks of the climate and dust.

(September) 12th Monday...Road good. Camped for noon 6 miles from starting. Saw at the river a house - The Ind. agency (Umatilla agency) - the first building which looked like civilization since Laramie Country rolling
Hines, cont'd...

13th Tuesday...Road good Scenery pretty...Wind blew very hard all the PM. Dust very oppressive. Sand blew into the tent during supper so as to cover the dishes. Rained at night.

Maria (Parsons) Belshaw comments that on:

September 4th Sabbath Day

Road much better to-day, not so thick, it looks like the thick woods in Michigan. Road more level, not so crooked. Struck Umatilla Hill, it is 3 miles from the top to the bottom then we reached Umatilla Valley. It looks very pleasant...A trading post here, and other places in the valley...

September 5th

Good roads, struck Umatilla River...road winds up a ravine on to the table land. Smooth road until we come to the hill leading down to the river then we come to the timber and small stones quarter of a mile...

September 6th

Some hill to-day but not stony as we have been climbing days before. Beautiful roads as ever I traveled, fertile land...pleasant weather...

September 7th

Quite pleasant still, road more sandy. Passed the Indian Agency this morning near the crossing of the Umatilla, the first frame building we have seen since we left Council Bluffs City...10 miles from here we came to Butter Creek its waters made by springs...Willow wood...

BUTTER CREEK (NEAR PRESENT-DAY HERMISTON)

Maria Belshaw comments concerning Butter Creek:

September 7th

Quite pleasant still, road more sandy. Passed the Indian Agency this morning near the crossing of the Umatilla, the first frame building we have seen since we left Council Bluffs City...10 miles from here we came to Butter Creek its waters made by springs...Willow wood...
JOHN DAY RIVER (CROSSING)

Celinda Hines notes:

(September) 16th Friday...struck over the hills to John Days river. The descent to the river is steep & rocky in some places but smooth most of the way. Dined by the river then crossed & ascended a very bad hill. Very long & rocky much more so than any we had passed before...After ascending the hill we came to two roads one leading to the upper & the other to the lower ferry of the DeShoots river. We took the lower road because the river is sometimes fordable at the lower ferry.

17th Saturday. Rather cold. Road hilly but good...First came in sight of Mount Rainier.

Esther Belle Hanna remarks:

Tuesday 31"...Leaving the creek we ascended the bluffs dividing the Blue & Cascade mountains...

September 1"...brought us to John Day's river...We were all rejoiced to see water once more...Will remain here until tomorrow to rest our cattle & ourselves & conclude on the route we will take. The road forks near this. one takes you to The Dalles the other is a cut-off leading to the Cascade Mountains. Have not decided yet which to take. Got fresh beef today, had roast beef and potatoes for dinner.

Thursday 2"...We ascended one of the most difficult hills we have met on the whole route, one huge rock after another blocked up the road rendering it almost impassable. We were just two hours ascending it, & in the hottest part of the day. After this we travelled about ten miles over a most beautiful rolling prairie & level solid road...623

DESHUTES RIVER

Agnes Stewart comments that on:

September 13th

Came to the Columbia River 5 miles from the Spring. Three miles from here we came to the Deschutes River...Wind blowing hard - not safe to cross till it abates - road from spring to river hilly...this a place of business.624
In the diary of Agnes Stewart, the account has been continued by Mason Warner, her son, as it was told to him by his mother.

Before leaving the Deschutes River they all threw away everything they could possibly get along without. The trip to the summit of the mountains Coast (Cascades) to the head of the Willamette Valley is a story of terrible privation, great courage, and greater determination. Try to imagine coming down the Willamette -- no road whatever, with only a few wornout oxen to bear you along, and those oxen half starved -- wornout women, tired babies -- anxious men. They finally reached what is known as the Pine Openings.625

The reader learns from the diary of Esther Belle Hanna:

Monday 6". Came to the Dalles this forenoon. I was rather disappointed in the apperance of things here, as I expected to see more houses & c...Steambats cannot come above the falls. We concluded to send some our baggage & go over the mountains.626

COLUMBIA RIVER

Esther Belle Hanna continues to describe the landscape along the Columbia River:

Friday 3"...About noon we hailed the Columbia for the first time. It was with varied emotions that I gazed on its broad bosom & almost felt that we were at our journey's end. Little did I think in my school girl days as I traced out this river that ever I should stand upon it's shores, or drink of its clear cool water. But so it is, here I am after months of toil & fatigue permitted to see the noble & far-famed river. There is something grand & sublime in the scenery around it, yet I must say that I was disappointed in the scenery, instead of trees with luxuriant foliage, you see massive rocks, pile upon pile which have stood the wreck of time for centuries. On the shore are huge piles of white & sparkling sand. The only green shrub I saw was a weed resembling our wormwood in the states, only it grows taller & has a richer greener appearance. I also noticed a few little flowers peeping through the sand. The water of this river is certainly the clearest & sweetest of any river water I
Hanna, cont'd...

ever tasted... We have salmon every meal, they are delightful fish. We nooned on the banks of the Columbia & then left for De Shutes river which is 3 miles farther...

Saturday 4"... We had Mt. Hood and the Cascade mountains in full view all day, they seem very near. I can scarcely realize that we are so near our contemplated home.628

THE DALLES

Celinda Hines' diary remarks on a common problem for many of the early emigrants travelling in Oregon and that was the decision each company had to make as to whether to travel over the Cascades on land or down the Columbia by boat629 and the trails associated with the latter:

19th Monday Pleasant... went down the river 3 (miles) to the Dalls. It had been our intention to cross the cascades but uncle J advised us to go by the Dalls630 ... go ourselves down the river and send the cattle & horses down the pack trail which goes along near the river...

(September) 20th Tuesday Very warm... we... repaired on board the steam boat Allan which was already crowded with passengers. It is a poor apology for a boat very small having no cabin & we were obliged to seat ourselves as best we could on the floor or whatever we could find to sit upon. This is the only steam boat which plies between the Dalls & the Cascades. It was brought here last spring from the Sacramento being the first steam boat which ever run on that river...

(September) 21st Wednesday... Few boats except those of the Hudson's Bay Co. run over the Cascades This Co. run over the Cascades losing it is said about one boat in ten...

22nd Thursday... At night the steam boat came in towing the barge on which were our wagons & luggage. All were safe...631
WEST COAST MOUNTAINS

For those migrants opting to travel by land over the Cascade Mountain Range, the Barlow Road was eventually opened. This was a route that more-or-less skirted around the most onerous parts of Mount Hood but still included such physical landscape features as the infamous Laurel Hill where wagons had to be lowered to the valley below on ropes down a 45-degree angle slope. Often times emigrants would send much of their belongings by boat and would then continue themselves to travel overland. Sometimes the decision whether to travel down the Columbia was more an issue of cost and how much money each had managed to save to this particular point in the trek.

By the time the emigrants had reached the Dalles, many had lost a majority of their stock and what stock remained were generally worn out. The thought of traversing Mt. Hood was a daunting task. Also the time of year during which they arrived at The Dalles, would also influence their mode of travel. Often times if they reached The Dalles late in the year, it was nearly impossible to travel down the Columbia due to the cold and excessive headwinds.

MT. HOOD

Esther Belle Hanna gives us a very clear and very descriptive account of her experience with the landscape in the eastern Cascades as her company approaches Mount Hood:

Wednesday 25"...Had a fine view of the Cascade mountains to the west Mt. Hood the loftiest of these was very visible, and being covered with snow, with the
Hanna, cont'd...

sun shining upon it, it looked like a golden cloud in the distance, being 150 miles away. To the north of Mt. Hood is seen Mt. Saint Helens which looks very imposing.

Saturday 4"...We had Mt. Hood and the Cascade mountains in full view all day, they seem very near. I can scarcely realize that we are so near our contemplated home.

Sabbath 5"...do not know whether we will go by the river or over the mountain.

Wednesday 8". Travelled today over fine country, beautiful groves of timber and excellent grass. Have a full view of Mt. Hood, it has had a fresh coat of snow recently which adds much to its beauty as it rises above the lofty pines which cover the mountains at it's base...This evening we descended one of the longest and steepest bluffs that we have had on the route and encamped at the foot of it near a small stream in a grove. We are surrounded on all sides with the most stupendous bluffs several hundred feet in height and between are the most frightful chasms and ravines...

Thursday 9". Came up Indian creek hill, very bad. Came within five miles of what is called the gate or the first ascent of the mountains...Had a fine view of Mount Hood, St. Helens635 and Adams636, all covered with snow and rising to the very clouds...I never wished so much for the skill of an artist as today. What a lovely and grand picture the scenes I have witnessed today would make - but no pencil could do justice to them. We have a perfect village where we have encamped tonight, there are so many here preparing for the mountains. The large fires shining among the tall pines look very beautiful and picturesque.637

Celinda Hines delights the reader with her description of their down the Columbia River gorge:

28th Wednesday Very warm We started for the lower Cascades early...The highway is very bad. We were obliged on that account to go all the way on foot...The walk down was delightful Were it not for our anxiety about the teams it would have been truly enchanting. The scenery is exceedingly wild Mountains towered 100's of feet above us & the river now rolling in terrific madness now as placid as a sleeping infants brow Camped at the Lower Cascade for the night...
Hines, cont'd...

(September 29) Thursday...went on board the steam boat Peytona...went down 30 miles to Sandy (River). The trip was delightful. Rocky islands rear their craggy peaks far above the surface of the water. There is a high rocky precipice called Cape Horn. The scenery is very beautiful here...Camped at the Sandy. Found a Mr. Crosby there who invited us all to his house.

WILLAMETTE VALLEY

From a letter written by Margaret Scott (age 16), younger sister of Abigail Jane Scott (Duniway) to her grandfather from Lafayette, Yamhill County, in the Oregon Territory, April 1st 1853 we read:

I suppose you would like to know we like the country climate, &c &c. Well I like it much more than I did when I first came here, the hills and valleys have been clothed in green for the last two months. The farmers done the most of their plowing, in the month of February. The timber here is mostly fir and pine. The face of the country is hilly and mountainous and from almost any part of the Willamette valley there is two or three ranges of mountains visible. There is indeed some very beautiful country here more beautiful in many instances than I had anticipated. Some of the scenery is truly grand, and sublime. At least it looks so to me but perhaps if you should see it you would think differently and call me a silly romantic girl who needed sadly some silver headed sage to control the whims of my brain...640

CLIMATE:

DUST

Charlotte Stearns Pengra's vivid description of the experience of many of the early emigrants with respect to wind and sand gives the reader some feeling for the hardships endured on the trail:

Sunday 12th...About 4 o'clock we had a little foretaste of the sand storms of the desert. The air suddenly became hot and oppressive, and the sky hazy—soon the
Pengra, cont'd...

Storm of wind and Sand burst upon us- and raged about an hour in wild fury the sand flying in every direc-
tion; Quite a natural phenomenon. We are camped in
sight or nearly oposite Chimney Rock - a great
natural curiosity.641

Sarah Sutton, 1854, notes that on:

Tuesday July 25 laid by here until afternoon and done
a big washing, a beautiful spring branch and soft water
to wash. come on about 8 miles...we were nearly
smotherd in dust. could not see the next wagon to us.
the soil is a kind of ashy sand, and bunches of sage
thick on it, and as clean as though it was hoe'd.642

Esther Belle Hanna notes that on:

Thursday (May) 20...The dust & wind here (Little Blue
River) are very hard on the skin causing a burning and
smarting & making the face & hands very rough and
sore...644

And then again:

Wednesday (June) 30...It is very cold on the mountains,
a fresh breeze blowing all the time, and the dust-how
can I give any idea of it: we are almost blinded by
it, my eyes are very sore. We all have to wear either
veils or goggles, some wear handkerchiefes over their
faces, and with all we are almost choked & blinded: it
trys my patience more than anything else.645

Celinda Hines writes:

(June) 27th Monday Morning pleasant...The wind soon
commenced blowing a perfect gale. Sand blew with such
violence as to be painful even to our hands. We were
almost blinded. The country (Black Hills) was a barren
waste of sand hills covered with short stunted grass.
Towards night passed the Labonte Were much refreshed
at the sight of trees & water Went 4 miles & camped
near a beautiful stream skirted by trees.646

Viola Springer, writing in 1885 describes her
experience on the trail. This author was twenty years old
at the time of her migration.

Though her prose is at times clumsy and the narrative
rather matter-of-fact, Viola includes many small
Springer, cont'd...

details regarding the daily routine and difficulties encountered. She comments on the personalities and disagreements of her fellow travellers, usually with good cheer in the face of an arduous trip.\textsuperscript{647}

She notes that on:

August 20, 1885. Thursday. We had a big dust storm last night, blew the wagons full, blew the sand and gravel on the wagon sheet, sounded like it was hailing. We had a terrible time this morning had everything to wash before we could get breakfast.\textsuperscript{648}

**WIND**

There were numerous diary notations concerning the wind factor, especially in the Great Plains region. From the diary of Martha Missouri Moore, 1860, we read that on:

Tuesday 29th Morning cloudy & cool. Of all the nights I ever spent last night was the worst. The wind rocked my wagon so much there was danger of tilting it over. In vain I wooed the goddess sleep she would sit lightly on my eyelids for a few minutes when a sudden jerk would make one as wide awake as ever...\textsuperscript{649}

**TEMPERATURE**

Esther Belle Hanna describes in repetitive detail, the typical Idaho summer temperature while crossing the Snake River Plain between American Falls and Glenns Ferry starting on Wednesday (July) 21 through to Sunday (August) 1:

Wednesday 21". We have the most awful roads today, steep rocky hills and where it is a little level the sand is over shoe-mouth deep, every step and scorching hot with the hot sun. Have to walk down and up the hills they are so precipitous as to render them very dangerous...

Thursday 22"...The sun has been oppressively hot all day...

Saturday 24"...This day is excessively hot, almost melting, & the dust blinding...expect to start at three in the morning...
Hanna, cont'd...

Tuesday 27". Travelled over an awful road today, the sun scorching hot, the dust rising in volumes, and came to water but once...

Wednesday 28"...The sun is melting and not a bush or shrub far as the eye can reach to rest or shade our tired and burning limbs. The ground here does not look as if there had been any rain this summer - dry...

Thursday 29"...This has been one of the hottest days I ever experienced...The thermometer has been up to 90 & 100 in the shade for 3 days past...

Friday 30"...This day is the warmest yet, the thermometer being one hundred & four. Felt today like giving up in despair, the intolerable heat and dust...

Saturday 31"...Evening...One of our mules appeared near giving out, so I started on foot, the sun burning hot, the sand in many places ankle deep and almost scorching, my feet were almost blistered. I gave out once got into the carriage & rested awhile then got out and went on...But with all this I was not cast down or discouraged...650

PRECIPITATION (HAIL/RAIN/SNOW)

Elizabeth Dixon Smith's diary "is one of the classics of western history."651 The following excerpts from her writings reveal not only the climatic conditions she experienced relative the time of year at which they were travelling but also bespeaks of her amazing stamina and courage in dealing with the death of her husband. This part of her diary must be read almost in its entirety in order to gain a proper perspective on her situation.

She describes herself at the beginning of her diary as having a limited "e(d)ucation"652 but her descriptive and
poignant storytelling capabilities more than make up for any perceived or real lack of education.

Nov. 8 ...cold weather my hands are so numb that I can scarcely write...

Nov 18 my husband is sick it rains and snows we start this morning round the falls (Dalles) with our waggons...I carry my babe and lead or rather carry another through snow and mud and water almost to my knees...I went a head with my children and I was afraid to look behind me for fear of seeing the wagon turn over in to the mud and water with evry thing in them my children give out with cold and fatigue...I was so cold and numb that I could not tell by feeling that I had any feet at all...there was not one dry thread on one of us not even my babe I had carried my babe and I was so fatigued that I could scarcely speak or step when I got here I found my husband lying in Welches wagon very sick...I have not told half we suffered. I am inadquate to the task...

Nov 20...it is allmost an imposibility to cook...I froze or chilled my feet so that I cannot wear a shoe so I have to go round in the cold water bearfooted.

Nov 21 (Sunday)...the whole care of evry thing now falls upon my shoulders I cannot write any more at present.

Nov 30 raining this morning I ran about trying to get a house to get into with my sick husband at last I found a small leeky concern with 2 families already in it...me and my children carried up a bed the distance was nearly a quarter of a mile made it down on the floor in the mud I got some men to carry my husband up through the rain and lay him on it and he never was out of that shed untill he was carried out in his coffin...I cannot write any more at present...

jan 31...if I could tell you how we suffer you would not believe it...I have diped as much as 6 pails of water off of our dirt hirth in one night here I sit up night after night with my poor sick husband all a lone and expecting him evry day to dye...he has not been moved off his bed for 6 weeks only by lifting him by each corner of the sheet and I had hard work to get help enough for that let alone watchers I have not undressed to lie down for 6 weeks besides all our sickness I had a cross little babe to take care of...
Smith, cont'd...

feb 1 (Tuesday) rain all day this day my Dear husband my last remaining friend died.653

The following comments were written in a letter two years later, and reflect a substantial change in her situation. This diary goes a very long way in establishing credibility for the theory that women crossing the Oregon Trail in nineteenth century America were hardworking and strong both in a physical sense and in their emotional nature, before they embarked on their journey and even more so upon their arrival in the promised land:

Well after the boys was gone (to the California gold mines) it is true I had plenty of cows and hogs and plenty of wheat to feed them on and to make my bread in deed I was well off if I had only knew it but I lived in a remote place where my strength was of little use to me I could get nothing to do and you know I could not live without work I imployed myself in teaching my children yet that did not fill my mind I became as poor as a snake yet I was in good health and never was so nimble since I was a child I could run a half a mile without stopping to breath (at 42) well I thought perhaps I had better try my fortune again so on the 24 of June 1849 I was married to a Mr. Joseph Geer 14 years older than myself though young enough for me...he is a yankee from Connecticut and he is a yankee in evry sense of the word as I told you he would be if it ever proved my lot to marry a gain though I did not get all, I did not marry rich but my husband is very industrious and is as kind to me as I can ask indeed he sometimes provokes me for trying to humor me so much he is a stout health man for one of his age.654

Charlotte Emily Stearns Pengra writes in 1853 that on:

Wednesday April 15th...though the night was very rainy and disagreeable, our tent was completely drenched and some of us things that were inside, such as bedding, folks and so forth, you who have never experienced the pleasure of being awakened sundry times during the night by the fally of pearly drops into their faces, can scarsely imagine the exquisite pleasure, such as awakening affords, especially when it brings the
Pengra, cont'd...

contiousness of a hard thunder Storm rageing without and the certainty that there is nothing but the thickness of cotton cloth to shelter us from the pelting rain... We made eleven miles, and Slept in our waggons Oh; what a bed a thin cotton matrass laid on not the most evenly laid boards, in a space three feet wide, for three of us, not room enough for one of us, and raining in torrents so that the sides of the waggon cover was very wet. 655

Although not as dramatic as the entry of Smith, Charlotte gives the reader a good feeling for the discomfort endured by many of the emigrants as they crossed the American landscape in relation to the frequent summer thunderstorms native to the Great Plains region.

Pengra writes that almost two months days later on:

Wednesday 1 of June We had a hard night- three tremendous storms of rain, hail and wind with thunder and lightening followed each other in quick succession, our tent was flooded- our bed wet through above and below- and the howling of the wolves which made bold to come close to our camp, together with the war of elements- presented a scene which baffles discription... 656

And for Agnes Stewart writing in 1853, she notes in her journal that on:

Monday, (June) 13th....I scarce ever saw such a storm. All the fellows had to turn out and herd the cattle for they ran from the hail. They all got good and wet. Proceeding on our journey today as gaily as ever... 657

proving that even though circumstances were not always the best, that the effect was not always one of gloom and discomfort.

Viola Springer notes a common climatic summertime occurrence on the Great Plains:

June 12, 1885. Friday...Today is a very warm day... It rained and hailed this evening. Hailed awful hard.
Springer, cont'd...

After the hail pa took a cup and got two cups full of hail. The hail laid on the ground quite a while before it melted.658

SHADE

The majority of women's diaries speak often of the shade trees including Balm of Gilead and poplar, found especially along the river banks and also of the shade afforded in the thickly-forested mountain regions. Shade was in short supply on the Oregon Trail and whenever shade trees were available, the spirits of the women were most often lifted.

Charlotte E.S. Pengra notes that on:

**Thursday 25th** Have traveled 18 miles over the (Blue) mountains and stones659, have had the pleasure of excellent shade most of the way as we have had much of the time since striking the mountains, they are finely timbered with Fir Pine and Hemlock, many of the trees would measure from 150 to 160 feet in height.

From the diary of Celinda Hines, we read that on:

(August) 21st Sunday...The river is skirted most of the way with Balm of Gilead Poplar & (unreadable) trees...We were truly refreshed by the sight of a grove of trees again...On camping we moved our cooking utensils, victuals &c to an adjacent grove where were plenty of wood & water & withal a delightful shade which none know better how to appreciate than those who have traveled in dust and sage...O we enjoyed this beautiful retreat. Taking grass, wood, water & everything into consideration I think we have never had a more pleasant camp...661

HARDSHIPS RELATED TO THE MIGRATION EXPERIENCE:

One of the most oft-cited hardships of the nineteenth century migration experience was the distance travelled on any particular day. Distances varied from wagon train to
wagon train and relative to location, time of year and climate conditions but a classic and telling journal entry appears in the diary of Lucy A. Ide, writing in 1878, where she comments that on:

July 13...and now we take the hardest trip we have yet had travelled all night came to Bitter Creek a poison stream we dared not stop...so on we go the whole night long a beautiful moonlight night but a gloomy mountain road with large rocks standing guard through deep passes and over little valleys but nothing to be seen but the great beds of alkali—it gives one food for thought I can assure you. We stop at 12 oclock midnight and rest the weary horses and eat a lunch...some looking very sad some quite merry I can say it is a scene that once seen will never be forgotten...

July 14 at 7 oclock...took a nap all are very tired so are teams it is Sunday we came yesterday afternoon and night over 50 miles this what tries mens souls & womens too...662

Her latter comment may be viewed as support for the notion that women viewed their experience as distinct and separate from that of the men.

WALKING663

From the diary of Sallie Hester, written in 1849 she notes that on:

May 21, Sunday...Our family all in good health. When we left St. Joe my mother had to be lifted in and out of our wagons; now she walks a mile or two without stopping, and gets in and out of the wagons as spry as a young girl. She is perfectly well...664

This notation speaks of the curative effects of the migration experience and also lends support to the idea of the often dramatic changes wrought upon women as a direct result of their physical participation665.
Abigail Jane Scott (Duniway) reveals in her diary written in 1852 that:

I well remember a July day's travel that extended far into the night. The women were jolting along in the wagons (the custom in daylight was to walk over the roughest parts of the road) in that semisomnolent state which renders humanity, even under the most favorable circumstances, ill-natured when required to make any exertion...At length we came to a steep hill, down whose uneven declivity the road sidled off into darkness. Two men were pushed forward to reconnoiter, and, returning after a time, reported water and a camping place at the base of the hill, which one Jehu declared to be 'all fired steep.' It was deemed prudent for the women and children to get out of the wagons and make their way to the camping place on foot, and the night air was burdened with many plaints of somnolent wretchedness, as the order to that effect was obeyed. The fat woman in our company was especially energetic in resisting the order of her husband to 'come out,' given, it must be confessed, without any attempt at the cooing and the gentleness of tone that presumably characterized the days of his courtship...666

This journal entry not only speaks of the hardships related to walking the Trail but also to husband/wife relationships and the difficulty associated with finding adequate camping sites.

From the diary of Goodell and Austin, 1854:

(Austin) Wednesday, (August) 23rd (second entry.)...we had traveled along the bottom all the morning. We came as far as the road went, where the old ford was, but as it was not a good crossing, the wagons were taken back about one mile, where they could get up the hill. The women all climbed the hill where the wagons stopped. We traveled a few miles and descended the hill again...667
From the diary of Rachel Taylor we read:

Aug 12 Again had very mountainous road I feel almost too weary to night to write having walked several miles.668

And again:

Aug 20th Had very bad roads, and the ladies will have another opportunity for exercise...669

And six days later, Rachel writes:

...Broke the wagon tongue and we will have to walk, but we are accustomed to that670

Martha Jane Gray writes that on:

June 29 - Tuesday

A cool morning but warm at noon though pleasant...travel up mountain for 3 miles and then as far down, which was my morning walk...671

RIDING A HORSE

Over one half of the diaries examined record that their authors' rode on horseback for some portion of the journey and that age was not a motivating factor.

Tabitha Brown notes that:

We saddled our horses and set off, not knowing that we should ever see each other again...I was obliged to ride ahead as a pilot, hoping to overtake four or five wagons that left camp the day before.672

Charlotte Emily Stearns Pengra tells the reader that:

Fryday 19th...This evening word came to the camp that a lady encamped some two miles back was sick and needed aid. Accordingly Mr Allison and I hunted up our husbands got them to saddle two horses and started -- had a very pleasant ride, found the lady quite comfortable in bed in a waggon with a little daughter -- perhaps an hour old. Gave it a name (Sarah Emily Bondfield) wished her success and rode back -- reach our camp about dark, well pleased with our expedition.673
Esther Belle Hanna comments that on:

Monday 10. Travelled for 13 miles today over a most beautiful rolling prairie...Rode some on horseback for the first time today, find it very pleasant to have a change from the carriage and I have a much finer view of the country.674

Celinda Hines records:

June 1st Wednesday...It rained in the night I rode on horseback all the A M. like it much...676

It appears from Celinda's diary that she was an accomplished horse rider but that was not the case with her father and she relates the story of how her father was killed the first time he attempted to ride.

26th Friday Pleasant...Pa who rode a horse, as he had not done before...By some cause or other he went too far down the river his horse reared with him &...got off. He endeavored to get hold of the horse...but being on the lower side of the current took him down & the horse swam out of his reach...He soon sank...I will not attempt to describe our distress & sorrow for our great Bereavement But I know that our loss is his gain...he loves...watch over me & continue to guide me...with hearts overflowing with sorrow were under the necessity of pursuing our journey immediately as there was no grass for the cattle where we were...It seems that Pa had a presentment that something was to happen as he had often spoken of his dread of crossing at this crossing Wolves howled

(August) 27th Saturday Took water with us & went about 15 miles to Malheur river & camped...Our camp was in a very pretty place but all was sadness to me677

A comical entry appears in the diary of Mary Riddle written in 1878:

May 10th...We have traveled all day through such a lot of beautiful farms...Ada took the first ride on Nelly but she turned the sadle off and Ada too then Maggie tried to ride her-she turned the sadle with her too. Then I tried to ride her-she laid down and roled me off then she was rid of us all for the day...678

RIDING IN THE WAGONS
Phoebe Stanton, 1847 was pregnant during the journey. Part of her reason for writing back east was to convince her brothers and sisters to come to Oregon. It should also be noted that women took advantage of whatever time and whatever place was available to write.

...nothing more of interest now as I have to close my letter before we start and the cattle coming now my opportunity for writing is poor as I have to write on a small box in the waggon with every kind of noise around me...forgive my scribling for I have written the most of it with oxen hiched to the wagon I am now writing so I hope you will get ready bye next spring and come...I want some of you to write to Oregon city perhaps we may get it I want to hear from home verry bad...679

...then we traveled 25 miles of the worst road I ever traveled in my life sometimes the whels rolled on the ground sometimes the wagon stood on 2 wheels some times on one end and we overtook 5 more wagons and after 25 waggons passed I cannot compare it to any thing yove ever saw finally we are over the last branch and what's a head I cant tell Now dark again680

Patty Sessions was a nineteenth-century midwifery and "She is reputed over a career of many years to have delivered 3,977 babies and to have lost very few of them."681

She and her family started west in June 1847 (she was 52 at the time of the crossing) aiming for the Mormon Promised Land, Salt Lake City.682

"She drove a four-ox team herself most of the way. She mended wagon covers. She delivered babies. She also thanked God over and over for being so good to her. Leonard J. Arrington has classified her as "a remarkable blend of things temporal and spiritual.""683 Patty relates that on:
Tuesday 27...I drove into a mudhole got stuck put on more team came out camp near the river kill a rattlesnake close to the waggon thunders and lightens hard rains some

Charlotte E.S. Pengra also worked as a teamster:

Sunday 28th We again took up our line of march for a seventeen miles drive. I told them I did not feel able to drive and Bynon Said he would be teamster though he had not set up any till about time for starting. He drove several when he was obliged to lay down I then took my turn and drove until I was quite outdone and at last I called upon Wm who was teamster the rest of the day. Bynon is very sick. We have packed him and bandaged his thoroughly he is relieved of much of his pain but is very weak. Sis is still feeble and I am all used up. dark times for we folks.

Further on she comments that on:

Monday 11th Rather too warm for comfort...I have drove down some steep decents (in the vicinity of Green River) that would make you folks in the States turn pale...

Esther Belle Hanna discusses some of the physical discomforts related to such a long journey by wagon train:

Thursday (July) 22". Travelled 15 miles today over the most tortuous road I ever could have imagined, nothing but rock after rock...The sun has been oppressively hot all day and I am wearied & suffering from jolting over rocks which has given me a severe headache.

Laura Wright, travelling across the Oregon Trail in 1879 notes that on Thursday, June 5th:

we have been going over hills to day the rodes are getting awfull ruff we came down a hill to a depot Granet (Granite) Canon (Canyon, Wyoming)...then went out up a hill one of our teams Stoped on the hill I was awful Scart Nellie was driving She put on the brake as Soon as She could and got them Stoped...crossed the rail rode Sevral times...after Supper we
Wright, cont'd...

took a walk up on the (Rocky) Mountains and had good time I had to get down and crawl in Some places I was So afraid of falling the rocks are a red gravil...it is a ruff looking place688

Viola Springer discusses her teamster duties:

June 5, 1885. Friday. John Seaweard was feeling pretty bad this morning...This forenoon Harrison had the headache so bad he couldn't drive. I went and drove for him...689

CROWDS ON THE TRAIL

Many of the womens' writings examined speak often of the crowds of people lining the Oregon Trail right from the start of the migration process in the east and continuing to the Pacific Coast. In the early years of travel along the trail, settlement on the landscape was dispersed and most times nonexistent, but the feeling of being separated from society and civilization was ameliorated by the fact that there was a continual line of travelling communities, providing much needed relief in many instances, but for many women, became a constant source of irritation. After all, was not one of the reasons for performing the trek to escape all that hustle and bustle, sickness and overcrowding? In addition to those travelling east to west, there were those returning to the east to add to the numbers vying for fuel, food and water resources.

Sarah Sutton reveals that on:

May 12th we have staid here all day and it is one long to be remembered it has been a windy cold rainy day, and cant get wood enough to make a good fire Mr. Cook joind us here with 5 wagons there is about
Sutton, cont'd...

10 thousand head of cattle campt near us, and 100 wagons mostly bound for California our cattle mix together, and makes a great deal of trouble, we hear more noise than if we were in the bustle of town, the men hoy hoy hoying, and the cattle bawling, and the bells rattling oh what A time.

And again:

Monday June 19 have laid by to day on sweet water to rest our stock and wash some...there was as many as 60 wagons passd us a great crowd passing all the time it has been A cold windy showery day

Tuesday June 20th began to climb the mountains soon after we started, and they were the rockyest ones we have seen yet. the road is crowded as far as we can see both ways...we have met 30 or 40 pack mules loaded with men women and children, and provisions returning back from Oregon. They said the winters was so cold, and it was so sickly, and money so scarce that they wanted to found getting away. we have been nearly smother'd in dust to day, and it seems very good to get out of the croud...plenty of snow on the bank of the creek 4 feet deep and great peaks of mountains of snow just before us. the youngsters are threatening snow balling each other. no wonder we have been early freesing to day.

Martha Jane Gray writes on:

July 10 - Saturday. Leave our camp on Snake. Travel 25 miles...Have taken in 3 more wagons into our train making in all 21 in no. and about 75 persons, large and small.

Sarah Sutton notes that on:

April 30th Sun. how calm comes on this holy day although we are traveling. there is a sensation in the looks and appearance of things, makes it seem different from another day to the reflecting mind...here is high roling rich land as was ever seen, with A strip of timber along the creek...we are now 100 miles from St. Joseph and the bridge keeper tells us that there is 10,000 head of cattle before us, and 100 and 18 wagons.

Mrs. Maria A. (Parsons) Belshaw, writing in 1853 notes that on:
May 19th  We are now across the Elk Horn...How many anxious people - standing on shore impatient on account of so many delays in traveling. The ferry man said there had been fifteen hundred wagons, fifteen thousand horses and cattle crossed their ferry this Spring...

From the diary of Amelia Knight, writing in 1853:

12th (May, 1853) Thursday noon, beautiful weather, but very dusty, we are camt on the bank of Loop (Loup) fork waiting our turn to cross...a number of wagons ahead of us, all waiting to cross...we hear there are seven hundred teams on the road ahead of us...

SANITATION/PERSONAL HYGIENE

An interesting fact comes to light in the diary of Abigail Jane Scott (Duniway) written during her migration experience of 1852. She comments that "One day our Salon Wagon, as we called the wagon that served as a parlor, overturned..." with her sister trapped inside.

From the diary of Charlotte E.S. Pengra, 1853 we read that near the beginning of her journey on:

Thursday (April) 16th...in the subberbs of Tiptop a smal village of no great importants; had several calls from the ladies in town soon after we got into our house felt quite happy in showing them the conveniences we have on the road, for though we have inconveniences to encounter, we are in many respects more comfortably fixed than people generally suppose.

Saturday 11th...Mrs. Allison and myself took a bath in the river- and were very much refreshed.

and again on:

Sunday 14th  Have done but little today excepting lounge round have felt more unwell and more discouraged than at any previous time our tents stands in what we
Pengra, cont'd...

should style a barn yard at home and I am sure if I were there I should as Soon think of setting the table there as in such a place the stench is sometimes almost unendurable, it arises from a ravine that is resorted to for special purposes by all the Migration, but such things we must put up with. What most discourages me is the prospect of having to go the old road and cross the mountains makeing our journey two hundred miles farther than if we could take the cutt off but no one has taken that Route and though we have every reason to believe it is finised and Staked out all are afraid to try it.698

From the Diary of Goodell and Austin, 1854:

(Austin) Saturday, August 5th - ...camped by a beautiful creek...I went in swimming.699

Celinda Hines writing in 1853 tells us that:

(August) 24 Wednesday...Crossed the (Boise) River after dinner & went down about 6 miles and camped on the north bank (north west) in a very pretty place. It seems so delightful to be among grass & near trees & bushes. Had a fine bath in the river700

The diaries and letters from later years of travel along the Oregon Trail often speak of 'bath rooms'701 which were constructed at several of the hot springs locations in the Rocky Mountain region. Women speak of going to view them but not one spoke of actually taking advantage of them.

CAMPSITE LOCATIONS

Finding suitable campsite locations was an ever-present problem on the Oregon Trail. There were physical landscape features to take into account, in addition to the crowding on the trail which specifically led to such problems as overgrazing and contaminated ground and water. All of these issues added to inconvenience and discomfort for the migrants.
From the diary of Sallie Hester, 1849, she writes that on:

Thursday, September 14...We crossed the summit of the Sierra Nevada. It was night when we reached the top, and never shall I forget our descent to the place where we are now encamped - our tedious march with pine knots blazing in the darkness and the tall, majestic pines towering above our heads. The scene was grand and gloomy beyond description. We could not ride - roads too narrow and rocky - so we trudged along, keeping pace with the wagons as best we could. This is another picture engraven upon the tablets of memory. It was a footsore and weary crowd that reached that night our present camping place.702

Esther Belle Hanna informs the reader on:

Saturday (May) 22... Encamped early this evening on the banks of the Blue, a most beautiful place, such a wild romantic spot...The sun went down without a cloud this evening & all is calm & still... 703

But by Friday, August 6th, she notes that as they are fast approaching Fort Boise on the Snake River Plain, her company camps "on a small stream" with "very little grass and a great many dead oxen lying around making this a very disagreeable camp."704

Have travelled since 4 o'clock this morning till nearly dark this evening as we were unable to find a good camping place...do not expect to get any more wood for 60 miles.705

According to Celinda Hines we read about a strange circumstance for most of the early emigrants relative to campsite locations and crowding on the trail:

21st Thursday Warm & pleasant...Road very hilly but not as bad as yesterday Near night we had a long hill to ascend & then to descend...the descent was so bad in one place that they had to find a road for themselves We went a short distance & camped by the (Bear) river We were annoyed very much by mosquitoes which were the
Hines, cont'd...

largest I had ever seen. I do not remember where we have camped before when other camps were not in sight.

And again from the diary of Celinda, she notes that on:

(August) 21st Sunday...The river is skirted most of the way with Balm of Gilead Poplar & unreadable trees...We were truly refreshed by the sight of a grove of trees again...On camping we moved our cooking utensils, victuals &c to an adjacent grove where were plenty of wood & water & withal a delightful shade which none know better how to appreciate than those who have traveled in dust and sage...0 we enjoyed this beautiful retreat. Taking grass, wood, water & everything into consideration I think we have never had a more pleasant camp...

Further along in her diary we read about an unusual campsite location compared to others. In describing this particular evening's events, she seems to have returned to her old self emotionally, as her father had died (on August 26th) and for many days her grief was reflected in her writing:

(September) 20th Tuesday Very warm. The men had engaged a barge to take us to the Cascades... Accordingly we took what provision & clothing was necessary & repaired on board the steam boat Allan... This is the only steam boat which plies between the Dalls & the Cascades...Were about 7 hours running down (50 miles) The scenery was very romantic indeed...the waters of the Columbia are clear & pure...We had brought our beds but had no tents so we made our beds under the star-spangled arch of heaven & thought no one could wish a more magnificent canopy.

CLOTHING/LAUNDRY

An interest comment regarding some types of clothing worn by some individual women on the Trail comes from a letter written by Julia Ann Archibald (Holmes) from Fort Union, New Mexico, in January of 1859 to her sister where
she state that she is "...perhaps the first woman who has worn the "American Costume" across the prairie sea which divides the great frontier of the states from the Rocky Mountains. In company with my husband, James H. Holmes, and my brother, I traveled in an ox wagon and on foot upwards of eleven hundred miles during the last three summer months." She goes on to say that at their camp on June 5th, 1858:

Finding that we were to have all day to rest, we took our cooking stove out of the wagon and cooked up provision for two or three days. Nearly all the men were entire strangers to me, and as I was cooking our dinner some of them crowded around our wagon, gazing sometimes at the stove, which, with its smoke pipe, looked quite as much out of place as will perhaps the first engine which travels as far away from civilization; but oftener on my dress, which did not surprise me, for, I presume, some of them had never seen just such a costume before. I wore a calico dress, reaching a little below the knee, pants of the same, Indian moccasins for my feet, and on my head a hat. However much it lacked in taste I found it to be beyond value in comfort and convenience, as it gave me freedom to roam at pleasure in search of flowers and other curiosities...

And she follows on to make another interesting statement about a fellow female traveller:

I was much pleased to learn, on my arrival, that the company contained a lady, and rejoiced at the prospect of having a female companion on such a long journey. But my hopes were disappointed. I soon found that there could be no congeniality between us. She proved to be a woman unable to appreciate freedom or reform, affected that her sphere denied her the liberty to rove at pleasure, and confined hereself the long days to feminine impotence in the hot covered wagon. After we had become somewhat acquainted, she in great kindness
Archibald, cont'd...

gave me her advice. "If you have a long dress with you, do put it on for the rest of the trip. the men talk so much about you." "What do they say?" I inquired. "O nothing, only you look so queer with that dress on." "I cannot afford to dress to please their taste," I replied; "I could not positively enjoy a moment's happiness with a long skirt on to confine to the wagon." I then endeavored to explain to her the many advantages which the reform dress possesses over the fashionable one but failed to make her appreciate my views. She had never found her dress to be the least inconvenient, she said; she could walk as much in her dress as she wanted to, or as was proper for a woman among so many men. I rejoiced that I was independent of such little views of propriety, and felt that I possessed an ownership in all that good or beautiful in nature, and an interest in any curiosities we might find on the journey as much as if I had been one of the favored lords of creation.712

Julia's letter is the best evidence to support the theory of the unique and individual nature of the migration experience and to also lend support to the theory that women on the Oregon Trail in the nineteenth century were well imbued with strong, independent personalities prior to the journey.

Esther Belle Hanna comments on Saturday 29 that:

...have stopped early to wash & bake. We have not washed any since we left...have an excellent spring of clear cold water which is quite a luxury...Evening. Feel tired - have baked pies & bread, and washed Mr. Hanna assisting me713; have to wash without either tub or board, but get along very well with a large bucket and pan set on an ox yoke, still required as to stoop considerably. All our work here requires stooping not having tables chairs or anything, it is very hard on the back.714

Elizabeth Dixon Smith who travelled "the long road to Oregon in 1847 with eight children...found time to write something in her journal nearly every day"715 and here she writes:
August 12...here we have a good time for washing which we women deem a great privilege.716

Martha Missouri Moore comments on:

Thursday 24th...Mag & I did up our washing. I blistered my hands & arms so much for my first experience. The sun shone intensely hot and the wind so very high it was impossible to get about. Walked two miles for a drink of water.717

An interesting notation appears early in the diary of Lucy A. Ide, writing in 1878 where she remarks that:

May 3rd...We carp on the fair grounds and make quite a display. some of our company show the white feather by going to a hotel but not I I have no idea of stopping at hotels all the way through...718

Viola Springer's journal entry for June 16, 1885 indicates that as in other instances, the line between women's work and men's was sometimes blurred on the trail and on:

June 16, 1885. Tuesday. Camped today noon on a stream three miles from North Platte City...We washed this afternoon, had a big washing. John Ball took his clothes to the creek and washed them in cold water without any soap or wash board. Martha done their washing and Ma & I done the washing for the rest.719

FINANCIAL

The following excerpt from the diary of Charlotte Emily Stearns Pengra makes note of the fact that when financially, as well as locationally possible, some of the early migrants
took advantage of some of the more modern conveniences of the time:

Thursday 21st...are part of us sheltered in a log tavern in a little muddy town called Montasuma, have seen some beautiful country unoccupied today- mostly Prairie...I hope to have the pleasure of sleeping in a good bed on a bedstead, what a treat. I am sure I shall enjoy it.720

Friday 22nd rained hard all night; but thanks to money and a disposition to use it I with the rest of our family was well sheltered and enjoyed a good nights rest in "mine Inn."...721

She reveals further on that by:

Wednesday 10th All was hurry and bustly this morning till about noon prepareing to start for the river, washing the Waggon an packing, cooking, ironing and doctring one of our steers feet kept us all busy...Our expenses here (Council Bluffs), and fitting out for the rest of our journey has cost us nearly 75 dollars, -- persons starting this journey should have at least 150 dollars.722

When others in the company experienced difficulties, Mary Matilda Park Surfus, 1883, comments that others pitched in to help:

July the 25th We stop to rest Abes horses...We are by snake river in sage or alkilie desert no grass for our horses now way to get hay & some of company short of provesian & money...the rest of us are helping them thru.723

An interesting notation appears early in the diary of Lucy A. Ide, writing in 1878 where she comments that:

May 3rd...We camp on the fair grounds and make quite a display. some of our company show the white feather by going to a hotel but not I I have no idea of stopping at hotels all the way through...724
FOOD AND WATER

Finding a sufficient supply of clean, usable water was almost impossible and, although food for the migrants could be purchased enroute, feed for the stock was always in very limited supply, individual companies having to travel in excess of 50 miles in a day just to find some scrub.

Betsey Bayley writing in 1845, notes that:

We had splendid times until we took what is called "Meek's cut off". You have no doubt heard of the terrible suffering the people endured on that road...
We had men out in every direction in search of water. They traveled forty or fifty miles in search of water, but found none. You cannot imagine how we all felt. Go Back we could not, and we knew not what was before us...There was sorrow and dismay depicted on every countenance.725

From the diary of Patty Sessions, 1847:

Wednesday 14...find a guide board with a letter in it stating it to be 3-60 (360) miles from winter quarters we call it 284 it is very warm...726

In a letter dated December 1849 and written from California, eight months after arriving, the author, Louisiana Strentzel, describes how the constant search for a sufficient and healthy water supply was accomplished:

May 16th...From this spring the next water was 25 miles and was strong sulphur and salt...After leaving this water we struck a level plain and traveled 70 miles without water...a great many of the company believe if we had traveled more south we would have found water plenty, but I don't know, for we sent water hunters many miles in every direction...727

Although not strictly concerned with the Oregon Trail (although they did travel along it for a portion of their journey to California), letters written by members of the famous and ill-fated Donner Party reveal much about
privation on the wearisome journey. Portions of those letters are included here for interested readers.

The following are excerpts from the letter written by Virginia E. B. Reed (she was thirteen years old at the time of the overland journey\textsuperscript{728}) from Napa Valley California, May 16th 1847 to her 'Cousan' back east:

...pa caried Thomos and all the rest of us walk...we laid down on the ground we spred one shawl down we laid doun on it and spred another over us...then put the dogs on top it was the couldes night you most ever saw the wind blew and if it haden bin for the dogs we would have Frosen...

...it was a raing then in the Vallies and snowing on the montains so we went on that way 3 or 4 days tell we come to...the Callifornia Mountain the snow then was...3 feet deep...the farther we went up the deeper the snow got so the wagons could not go so thay packed thare oxons and started with us carring a child a piece and driving oxons in snow up to thare wast...well the Woman were all so tirder caring there Children that they could not go over that night...

I was a goeing with them & I took sick & could not go - thare was 15 started & thare was 7 got throw 5 Weman & 2 men it come a storme and thay lost the road & got out of provisions & the ones that got throwe had to eat them that Died...\textsuperscript{729}

Thare was 3 died and the rest eat them thay was 10 days without any thing to eat but the Dead...\textsuperscript{730}

...not long after thay started we got out of provisions...I dried up what littel meat we had and started to see if we could get across & had to leve the childrin\textsuperscript{731} O Mary you may think that hard to leve theme with strangers & did not now wether we would see them again or not we could harle get a way from them but we told theme we would bring them Bread & then thay was willing to stay...

...could not find the road & we had to turn back I could go on verry well while i thout we wer giting along but as soone as we had to turn back i could hadley git along but we got to the cabins that night
Reed, cont'd...

...& we had to kill littel cash the dog & eat him we ate his head and feet & hide & evry thing about him...

O Mary I have not wrote you half of the truble we have had but I hav Wrote you anuf to let you now that you dont now whattruble is but thank the Good god we have all got throw and the onely family that did not eat human flesh we have left every thing but i dont cair for that we have got through but Dont let this letter dishaten anybody and never take no cutofs and hury along as fast as you can.732

FUEL/WOOD

For a majority of the early migrants' journey along the Oregon Trail, they were in constant search for sufficient wood to burn for cooking and to stay warm. In many instances they were forced to burn sage, or animal manure and from the diary of Goodell and Austin, Elizabeth Austin comments that on "Monday, August 28th - ...camped near Burnt River...We burned a wagon for wood."733

Other in revealing entries include those of:

(i) Esther Belle Hanna:

Wednesday (June) 9...We have been obliged to live on hard bread for 2 or 3 days as we have no wood to bake; we have not seen wood since we left Ash Hollow a distance of 100 miles...734

and,

(ii) Sarah Sutton humourously notes that on:

May 16th...here it is flat prairie clear in too the river and not a stick (of wood) on this side there is very plenty on the other side, and it looks well pleased to think we cant gt to it. it stands close to the shore dressed in a brown petticoat, and green sack and vail with uplifted arms, and looks very pleasent, and is continualy noding to us be cant come
Sutton, cont'd...

over. our men go up to the shore and pull of their hat, and scrach their head, and wish it was over here...yet fording the river we can always fetch over enough to do us.

May 21st Sunday morn comes on very pleasant and serene...campt again on north plat, and not A stick of timber in sight on neither side of the river...but as the old saying is misery loves company, we discover that we are far from being alone for the other side of the river is stuck full of wagons and stock, and they are in the same situation, but we all keep up good cheer, and trust to provedence for plenty of wood soon.

JUSTICE ON THE TRAIL

According to the diary kept by Mrs. Maria A. (Parsons) Belshaw (21 years old) writing in 1853, the conditions she found in Kanesville (Council Bluffs, Iowa) upon her arrival in that city point to a specific type of law and order:

May 14th...All kinds of wickedness going on. Card playing and fighting and robbing...Last night a man was murderer by a man that he had hired to drive cattle - his head split open - throat cut - the murdered was caught - had a trial - the officers delivered him to the emigrants - they hanged him this afternoon.

MEDICAL/DEATH/BIRTH

Several of the womens' diaries reveal that they had a general working knowledge of homeopathic/naturopathic remedies and in the case of Patty Sessions, midwifery.

From the diary of Elizabeth Dixon Smith, she comments:

June 3...laid in...medicine for no one should travle this road without medicine for they are al most sure to have the summer complaint each family should have a box of phisic pills and a quart of caster oil a quart of the best rum and a large vial of peppermint essence.
Charlotte Emily Stearns Pengra writes that on:

**Thursday 28th**...had a call to visit a lady suffering with cramp Colic went with two or three others, found her very sick, indeed for sometime I thought her case almost hopeless but after applying numerous remedies we succeeded in relieving her, and left about nine in the evening for our tents.739

Further proof of her doctoring abilities comes on Wednesday, July 1st and then again on July 3rd when she comments:

...I have not done much else. William is quite unwell- was taken with a pain in his back and bowels, have given him physic and warm teas740, but he is not relieved. The rest are well.741

and,

...I rode with Mrs. Fordham this forenoon and assisted her in taking care of her little girl. We bathed and packed and kept wet bandages on her all day, her fever was very high, but she is much better tonight. Her sister Abbe was taken sick this forenoon- and tonight we packed her. Hemen and myself have converted the whole company to water cure.742

From the diary of Martha Jane Gray, she notes that on "Aug 8 - Friday remain in camp all day. Rains in the morning and again in the evening...Caleb Gray had an heir today. Things go on fine. We have had death, birth and marriages743 in our train since we left St. Joseph, Mo."744

Of all the historical journals examined for this study, the most prolific commentator on medical concerns is that of Mary Louisa Black written in 1864. "Among the supplies that Mary Louisa carried with her was a collection of drugs from a list given to her by their family doctor, complete with instructions for their use. In the diary she frequently
mentions taking these drugs for various illnesses experienced by members of the overland party."745

Viola Springer remarks that on:

August 2, 1885. Sunday. While I was getting breakfast this morning I set the frying pan on the irons and was fixing the coffee pot when I seen the pan turning over and the sage hen spilling out. I went to catch them and the hot greese went all over the top of my fingers...It wasent but a little bit untill Martha went to take hold of her coffee pot bale and burnt her hand inside. My hand was burnt so I could not wash dishes.746

and a similar event occurred a few days later:

August 10, 1885. Monday. I have got such a cold I am nearly down sick. I burnt my fingers this morning nearly in a crisp. I took the oven lid off of the hot fire.747

Lucy Ide, writing in 1878, writes an interesting and very touching passage concerning the death of a woman enroute:

July 18...this day closed sadly for us we came in company two teams they were from Utah travelling for the Lady's health father brother & husband & little boy going to Colorado but as she came up the mountain she began to fail and as we met them advised them to get her back home if possible as she was scarcely able to breathe the light air of the mts so today at noon they overtook us on their return748 they crossing Green River we camping the east side as we wanted to get supplied before going on they had crossed just turned the horses loose when they perceived the lady was dying she only breathed a few times & was gone they came over telling us she was dead we advised them to hitch up their wagon come over to us & we would do all we could for them they did so she had no Lady friend with her but her friends did all they could & seemed almost heart broken the little child was only 8 months old but the men cared for it as nicely as a woman it was afraid of us so we could not do much for it Lucinda & Mrs H Hunter washed & dressed the corpse she was a nice looking lady very poor and looked as though
she had been sick a long time—I went to her trunks and got out her clothes she had everything very nice had suit after suit of underclothing & one suit beautifully made & laid by itself I thought especially for just this occasion it so impressed that I took it we put it on her & the men went to town and got a coffin we put her in you can scarcely imagine how sad we felt as we lay camped there by the river with this strange lady lying dead dressed for burial in a covered wagon a few steps away Lucinda Lena & Nellie Eager sat up by the wagon (occasionally wetting her face) all night

July 19 staid here with these people to help them bury their dead a good many come from town we buried in the cemetery which lies at the base of the Mts the Green River rushing by in the distance.749

Agnes Stewart tells us that on:

May 24. What a long day's travel we had yesterday, passed three graves, and two buried in one grave. Come to the Little Blue (River), a beautiful stream with timber along the banks which makes it look cool and inviting. I do not repent starting yet. The earth is very sandy here...It is so warm...It is raining today and we cannot go on. I am very sick today with the pain in my breast. It is not any better. I wish it was daylight. We camped at a place on the Blue River where a woman had been buried and the wolves had dug her up. Her hair was there with a comb in it still. She had been buried too shallow. It seems a dreadful fate, but what is the difference? One cannot feel after the spirit is flown. I would as soon not be buried at all as to be dug out of my grave.750

RELATIONSHIPS WITH TRAVELLING COMPANIONS (IMMEDIATE FAMILY AND FRIENDS)

An interesting comment is made by Keturah Belknap in her journal written during their trip of 1848. She notes that after approximately five weeks on the trail "We will now form a company and make some laws so all will have their part."751

Laura Wright travelling and writing in 1879 makes a similar comment which lends support to the theory that the
nature of the Oregon Trail experience encouraged communities to form enroute.

Saturday, June 14th 1879 It is very wet and muddy this morning. Some of the company want to lay over to day. So they took a vote on it and they are going on. We would around over the Mts. and just before noon we crossed the divided of the continent (continental divide) and was up very high...

From the diary of Sarah Sutton written in 1854 we learn that:

July Thursday 6 came on to the (soda) springs called and took a look at them. There was some of the mistery about them. Here was a blacksmiths shop... whiskey was 2 dollar and a half a pint... We did not spend a dime with, nor hardly ever do. Good looking whites, living with the indians, should not be noticed... We came about 3 miles from the springs and here the road turned off for California, and we were happily released from a great crowd that have hindered us from many a mile, crowding along before and behind here we had to part with two good hands... We were all loath to part with each other but the best of friends must part, such is life... There is but few going to Oregon.

Rachel Taylor was 15 years old at the time of her journey along the Oregon Trail. She travelled with her family and her "diary often tells of her close friendship with Mary Elizabeth Royal," daughter of Rev. William Royal whose family also joined the Taylors in 1853:

July 7th Very hilly roads. Mary and I undertook to climb one of the highest and steepest mountains that we could see. This we finally achieved and as we looked at the teams and wagons, as they wound along the road far below us, they looked very diminutive and "beneath our notice." The hillside is covered with evergreens intermingled with flowers of different kinds. A beautiful place, and we would love to stay longer but the advancing train reminds us that we must be hurrying forward...
Taylor, cont'd...

July 9th Had good roads & no accidents. Hubert and George moved by a spirit of adventure and curiosity went onto the mountains with their guns...

July 12th...This region abounds in curiosities and we find many on our frequent rambles.755

As much as Rachel and Mary are inseparable, others in the company had problems:

July 24th...Again the peace of our company has been disturbed by family troubles. George Ebey and Will Sells have become dissatisfied by either real or fancied ill usage, and threaten strongly of leaving on account of some circumstances of a peculiar nature. Mr Royal and his wife wish them to leave the company entirely, but this is not their intention, they like the company, and only want to find some other place in it. Phil too - who every day gives some evidence of his weak mind, thinks he will leave if they do. We know no cause for this resolution.

July 25th The boys - George and Will - concluded to put their oxen onto Mr Burts wagon, bestow their share of the provisions therin and thus proceed. But after their things out of Mr Royals wagon, and having a general overhauling of all the bad deeds of which they had been guilty, and some besides, they made a treaty of peace, and concluded for the present at least to remain where they were. All this delayed us somewhat, but we traveled steadily all day to atone for it.756

Martha Missouri Moore writing in 1860 speaks of parting with the Platte River as one would with "an old friend" after "having traveled up it 1 month & 11 days."757

Lucy A. Ide makes a journal entry on June 6th, 1878 where she comments that "...some of our company are talking about looking land up in the Loup river valley (Nebraska) I hope they will not stop for we have been so long together (one month after leaving Council Bluffs, Iowa) it will be hard parting with anyone of our train."758
A wonderful example of how time was often spent on the Oregon Trail with close friends and 'lovers' (Mary Burrell, the author and Wesley Tonner were engaged to be married):

(May) 25 Did not travel in the forenoon but spent the time in rambling among the ruins, rocks, prickly pears, &c. Isaac, Wesley, Frank, Ed & wife & myself all on horseback; rode around the mountains nearly all the forenoon. Some timber, red cedar growing in the rocks. The trees are very much twisted. Swallows in abundance living in the rocks; owls & hawks. (& an hour come gone so I guess) Traveled nearly 21 miles.759

Viola Springer tells the reader that on:

September 8, 1885. Tuesday...We camped today noon by a blacksmith shop....We did not go but a little ways after dinner till Uncle Frank and John Seaweed took the right hand road and we all stopped long enough to say good-bye and a few other words...I hated to see John leave the crowd. He was so lively...760

RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

The majority of women migrating west along the Oregon Trail in the nineteenth century had a firm belief in God and believed that God was, for the most part, guiding their paths on a daily basis. As well as taking care of the travellers, God was responsible for having created the landscape over which they women journeyed.

Charlotte Emily Stearns Pengra writes:

Monday 18th This morning after traveling about two miles we struck the Orregon road, there was an extinct volcano crater about one mile to the South, we could see its mouth but had not time to visit it - there was a small aperture to the right of the road near the junction, and a very large aperture three miles further, where the Earth has opened her yawning mouth and the fury of her elements have heaved up in
Pengra, cont'd...

innumerable hosts of mighty rocks, there are many places that you can see down many feet, altogether it impresses the mind, with the idea of the great and mighty power of God to hold the elements in his hand...761

From the diary of Sarah Sutton, we read:

May 1 th...providence has formed this country delightful for the weary traveler. here it has the appearance of never ending prairie...there is about 1000 head of cattle in sight of us at this time...762

Tabitha Brown, 1846, tells the reader to:

Pause for a moment and consider my situation - worse than alone; in a strange wilderness; without food, without fire; cold and shivering; wolves fighting and howling all around me; darkness of night forbade the stars to shine upon me; solitary - all was solitary as death - but the same kind Providence that ever has been was watching over me still. I committed my all to Him and felt no fear.763

From the diary of Sarah Sutton:

Mon'y July 17 this rock creek was named right as its natural production is rock, and sage. it will produce 200,000 bushels of rocks to the acre some say they cant think what this part of the world was ever made for, but...it is no mystery to me, for I can see God in all around us. he had made this foundation, for the inhabitants of earth to pass from one part of the world, to the other, and he has put on it fine creeks of water...we have never missed A day yet but we have come to a river branch or spring. it is call'd the plains or desert, but we have never failed of having fire enough, to cook our meal...we came about 8 miles this morning and noon'd at rock creek. here is 8 wagons of emigrants, the first we have seen for four days...764

From the diary of Hannah Tapfield King written in 1853 we read a lively account of her faith in a supreme power:

28th August - Sunday - I have not journalized for some days - Much has transpired & I have intended every day to write - but something has always prevented me or we have been late in Camp. - Though as usual has been
King, cont'd...

busy with me & I have felt weary & worn both in body & mind - Tom O. has been exceedingly ill - but faith has saved him - and he is better Thank God! - I have many thoughts about many things but God is all-sufficient & I will leave all my affairs in His Hands - Who knows what is best for me - Oh! may His will be revealed to me - and may I be obedient to it - We have been some days passing the "Rocky Mountains" they are rather more wonderful than beautiful - yet they are certainly Sublime - it seems something marvellous & mysterious that our Cavalcade should pass along breaking the Eternal Silence of these wild places - my feelings are undefinable but there is a degree of awe & sadness about them to me...765

MEN/WOMEN RELATIONSHIPS IN GENERAL

Commentary concerning the relationships between men and women on the Oregon Trail in the nineteenth century range from the standard fare of women being engaged in female duties and men engaged in male duties to the opposite end of the spectrum where the roles were reversed.

From the Diary of Keturah Belknap we read that:

For want of space I must cut these notes down; will pass over some interesting things. Watt and the sheep pulled out and fell behind. I got the blame for the split. The old Mother Watts said after they got thru "Yes, Geo. Belknaps' wife is a little woman but she wore the pants on that train" so I came into noteriety before I knew it...766

Charlotte Emily Stearns Pengra gives the reader a clear account of the types of activities performed by women, men and children on the trail:

Monday 25th left our quagmire bright and early reached the creek at about seven o'clock unhitched and unyoked and the men drewed two waggon's over by hand, and the women all crossed in safety when the news came that the bridge had given way. And then commenced the hurry and bustle of repairing all were at work even the women
and children, gathering brush and dry grass to mend and make firm the rough structure. All was at last completed the cattle and wagons drawn across and we emigrants once more on our "winding way" rejoicing, that the Rubicon was passed. We camped early on high timber land a clean beautiful spot and all were busy in preparing tea and doing other things preparatory for the morrow. I baked a cracker pudding warm biscuits and made tea, and after supper stewed two pans of dried apples and made two loaves of bread, got my work done up beds made and child asleep and have written in my journal pretty tired of course...

Tuesday 26th... All hands have been busy washing and baking the men repairing and waiting on the women. I have done a washing stewed apples, made pies and baked a rice pudding and mended our wagon cover rather tired...

Later on she writes that on:

Sunday 14th Rather late this morning when I rose... Got Mr. Bullfinch to take out the stove and help build a fire. I then made griddle cakes fried meat-and made coffee for breakfast, washed and dressed Stella, and after we had eaten gathered up the dishes, and packed them dirty for the first time since I started and as soon as possible we were on our way to the Ferry-which was about a mile distance.

Sarah Sutton, 1854, writes that on:

May 16 have had a dreadful storm during the night of thunder wind and rain. The wind blew the tents down in the night, and have had to lay by to day. It is storming so this morn, that the woman can't come out and the men have had a great time getting breakfast, and was good enough to bring us some to the wagon. We thought our wagons would blow away...

From the diary of Austin and Goodell, we read that:

(Goodell) May 29th. Today most everything is going on. Most of them are washing and baking. Mary is washing and Lib and Lucretia are baking. Some of the men in the camp are shooting, some swearing, some playing on the fiddle and some on the accordion and flute. There is a little of every thing...
Celinda Hines remarks that on:

(August) 15 Monday...Several trains traveled near us in one was a lady who was recently married. her husband had near Pacific springs I hear set her out of the (wagon) giving her her (things) Another Co took her in & like her very much The husband says she was ugly to his children she being his second wife...771

See the footnote in the subsection titled Medical/Death/Birth related to the diary entry of Lucy Ide writing in 1878 concerning the decision of a company to return east due to the failing health of its primary female member. Other diaries make note of similar circumstances.

From the diary of Amelia Knight, 1853:

21st (June) Tuesday evening, we have traveled over a very rough rocky road to day, over mountains, close to banks of snow. -- had plenty of snow water to drink, husband brought me a large bunch of flowers, which he said was growing close to the snow...772

ROMANCE

Viola Springer is one of the few women diarists to speak of romance on the trail.

September 8, 1885. Tuesday...We camped today noon by a blacksmith shop. George773 took dinner with us. He drove for me this forenoon. He left us there, went on to catch up with the outfit he is a cowboy...774

George catchs up with Viola's wagon train again about a week later "...He came to our wagons and talked a while and then said he would come to our camp..."775

This is close to the last entry in Viola's diary and we learn at the end that she takes up a ranch quite close to one already established by George Marshall1776 and eventually they were married.
Mary Burrell (19 years old) travelled with her family from Council Bluffs to California in the year 1854. She kept a diary and it is useful to examine it here in light of the fact that she was engaged to be married at the time of her migration. A close friend of her, Lucy Foster Sexton, writing many years later about Mary comments that:

Her engagement to Wesley Tonner was announced before they started westward. The neighbors wagged their heads wisely, and declared no engagement would stand the strain of so much hard work and worry under disillusioning circumstances. But they were mistaken; the young people were more deeply in love at the end of the journey than they were at the beginning, and the wedding followed their arrival in California.777

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Keturah Belknap, 1848, is one of the few women who makes note of a specific act of family violence on the trail. It would not have been something that would have been discussed in most circles.

...so I'm writing a scratch to a lady friend. While I'm writing I have an exciting experience. George is out on guard and in the next wagon behind ours a man and woman are quarreling. She wants to turn back and he wont go so she says she will go and leave him with the children and he will have a good time with that crying baby, then he used some very bad words and said he would put it out of the way. Just then I heard a muffled cry and a heavy thud as tho something was thrown against the wagon box and she said, "Oh you've killed it" and he swore some more and told her to keep her mouth shut or he would give her some of the same. Just then the word came, change guards. George came in and Mr. Kitridge went out so he and his wife were parted for the night. The baby was not killed.778
DRUNKENNESS AND PROSTITUTION

The primary material examined for this study talk often of the problems related to alcohol consumption and prostitution. The discussion of these subjects is always with respect to men, but this author assumes that some women would also have had problems specifically related to the consumption of alcohol, especially as it was a common remedy for much of what ailed the early pioneers.

In the diary of Charlotte E.S. Pengra, she writes that:

Sunday 14th... ---On reaching the river- found a great many teams ahead of us and of course we were detained several hours. The scene presented at the crossing was rather novel. Aside from the many tents belonging to the Emigrants, there were three large ones used as temporary residences during the season of migration, one was a grocery or liquor shop, and the other two refresment rooms, there were three or four women belonging to them...779

Mrs. Maria A. (Parsons) Belshaw writes concerning conditions in Kanesville (Council Bluffs, Iowa) in 1853:

May 13th...There are hundreds of people here waiting to cross (the Missouri). Oh what a wicked place. Swearing - fighting and drunkenness...780

and again she notes a death due to drunkenness:

June 4th...There was a man drowned the 2nd of June in Buffalo Creek, he was intoxicated - drove in where the banks were full and horses and wagon and man went down...He being drunk had no fear of water...His circumstances and affairs I know not but one thing we do know. He has gone to try the realities of another world.781

Sarah J. Collins writing in 1883 remarks that:

May 4...Burlington (on present-day US 75) the County Seat (Coffey, Neb.) is a Beautiful place situated on
Collins, cont'd...

the west side of the Neosho River. from the appearance of the Place I think they Enforce the Temperance Law. we traveled a bout five miles from Burlington Camped in a lane the Boyes made a Big Camp Fire and three men visited our Camp they was verey much opposed to St John and Temperance and of Cours every other good Law, and said Preachers and there Families was the worst people in the Neighborhood...782

She goes on to relate that just up the road at Emporia, Nebraska "they drink Beear hear and Sprinkle the Watter on thereir streets..."783

And again in the vicinity of Boise, Idaho Sarah notes that on "July 21...(they are) working on the Rail roade we see a good many Saloones a long the roade in Tents..."784

Mary Riddle writes in 1878 from Council Bluffs, Iowa that on:

May 12th. Sunday. We are all in the same camp-we have more or less fixing to do-everyone has something to do. I had to take off both our wagon covers and mend them-...-Johnny Gilbreath helped me mend them-he and Maggie are still with us putting off the going back from day to day-dreading the parting. Nearly the whole day we have heard a fine band of music back in the grove and after we all got our camp work done we went to see what it was ment for. We come out into a Dutch Beer garden all drinking and dancing for dear life. This evening Louie Dewolf come into our camp. Mr Smith come and staid all night in camp-these are some of the old home friends still hanging on to us yet-Maggie and Johnny have been with us all the way from home having a good time every hour.785

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Collins, cont'd...

Camped in a lane the Boyes made a Big Camp Fire and three men visited our Camp they was very much opposed to St John and Temperance and of Cours every other good Law, and said Preachers and their Families was the worst people in the Neighborhood... 786

She goes on to related that just up the road at Emporia, Nebraska "they drink Bear hear and Sprinkle the Watter on their streets..." 787

Mary Burrell writes in 1854 upon arrival in California near Ulatis Creek in Solano County:

(August) 23 Still rattling over rocks, up & down hills, some very steep, very thick timber. Pine & Balsom. No feed scarcely. Encamped at Tragedy Springs, among a drunken gang. Saw the effects of Liquor to our hearts content. Frosty. 788

COMMUNITIES

There is not very much discussion about relationships between the women travelling through particular settlements along the way and members of those individual places but one exception can be found in the diary of Charlotte Emily Starns Pengra, 1853, where she comments:

Thursday 16th...in the subberbs of Tipton (Iowa) a small village (just west of the the Mississippi on US 130789) of no great importants; had several calls from the ladies in town soon after we got into our house felt quite happy in showing them the conveniences we have on the road, for though we have inconveniences to encounter, we are in many respects more comfortably fixed than people generally suppose. 790

RAILROAD

The railroad was especially significant to overland travellers in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. People travelling from east to west were
eventually able to obtain their water and wood supplies from the railroad companies making the journey much less stressfull for those in the late nineteenth century. Viola Springer talks often in her diary about her relationship with the railroad:

June 28, 1885...We crossed Pole Creek...We are camped close by the bluffs, the railroad is between us and the bluffs791...Martha, Ma and I took Daisy and went on top of them. They are the nicest scenery we have had...While we was on top of the bluffs, there was a train went by and just as we go to the wagons...there was another passenger train went by a waving their hands at us. I enjoy looking at the bluffs; they put me in the mind of the mountains.792

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FIRST NATIONS' TRIBES

Broadly speaking, the majority of womens' diaries speak in glowing terms concerning their relationships with the First Nations' encountered along the Oregon Trail, as well as noting interesting events as exampled by the diary of Sarah Sutton:

May 28...afternoon got against chimney rock...here is a french traders tent, and an indian wigwam with a good looking white man, and an ugly black squaw for a wife and two children. she wore an old blue callico dress, and her old blue blanket wrapt around her like another indians...

May 29 have drove a mile and A half off the road and campt up in a wall'd in hollow, with the most curious bluffs clay built (Scotts bluffs) and towers and peaks with their sides covered with cedar. here we had A severe hail storm...and here we found a dead Indian, reared up on a scaffold, as far towards heaven as they could get him on a scaffold793

Sarah notes again almost two months later that:

Thursday July 20th...came on 5 miles to the ferry have to pay 4 dollars per wagon, and swim over the
Sutton, cont'd...

cattle...the indians swam the river several times, taking with them horses and cattle we all got safe over about 2 o'clock...grass is X.L.NT and our stock is well pleased. they have a change of diet, while we have not...Just at dark there was 6 (indians) come, and one squaw and unsaddled their horses, and turned them out on the grass, and staid all night with us. we did not wish to insult them, and we got along fine. I suppose it was a visit of friendship as the(y) never fail of visiting the emigrants and are a great deal more enlighten'd & civilised than they formerly have been by seeing so many whites and the most of them have a shirt on or some thing the emigrant has give them, and they are not as dangerous, but think more of the whites than in times past.

Martha Jane Gray remarks that on:

Aug 3 - Tuesday A splendid morning all enjoying good health...cross Grande Round...Here are Indians which have 1005 of splendid horses and ponies, all fat and hearty looking. A nation of Indians well and intelligent people.

Sarah Sutton comments that on:

April saty 22 came into town this morn early, to cross the river with about 100 head of loose cattle, nine wagons and 10 head of horses, and 36 souls...we felt a little doubtful that night, it being the first we spent in the indian nation, and so many strangers was tented near us...

From the diary of Charlotte E.S. Pengra, 1853 she writes that on:

Saturday 13th Started early this morning- came to a little creek about 9 o clock bridged by the Indians, and there we had to pay toll-two shillings per waggon--a very intelligent Indian received the money - he could talk good english, said he had been to Washington...

Later on in her diary she notes that:

Sunday 31st...the men then went back leaveing Sis and I alone, we had not been there long before five Indians came up and fairly surrounded the waggon. They appeared very curious to know what was on board but I did not give them a chance to steal, after a while the other waggon was brought over when Mr. Pengra and I
Pengra, cont'd...

and the sick man remained alone till nearly dark, the water being too rough to swim the cattle. I said alone, I meant without white company we had some 15 or twenty Indians round all day begging for tea cup meaning bread a little before dark, the cattle were swum over...

**Monday August 1st.** We had an all night serenade by the Indians who have a shade a few rods up the river. They sang or chanted and gambled for Mockingsons leggens and such things all night keeping us awake much of the time. Their music and manner of singeing is certainly curious and laughable. They keep time with the body from the hips up making their Shoulders and arms move, Sometimes rapidly and sometimes slowly...798

Esther Belle Hanna, writing in 1852, writes that on:

Saturday (August) 21"...Have got an excellent camp (Grande Ronde) where we expect to remain till Monday. This appears more like the noise and haste of a city than a remote spot far removed from civilization, wagons are pouring in by dozens & the whole valley appears alive in every direction. This appears to be a gala day with them, they have on their richest dresses literally covered with beads & gewgaws. We have not had a minute to ourselves today, being visited by men, squaws & papooses. They all come on horseback, if we speak pleasantly to them, they alight, squat down beside us and chatter like so many magpies... (NezPerce and Kioose Indians) They have hundreds of horses in this valley & a number of cattle, they will give a pony for two cows as they hold the cow in very high estimation.799

Celinda Hines, writing in 1853, notes that on:

(June) 16th Thursday...We soon came in sight of Courthouse Rock...We soon after came near a Sioux village. It consisted of 25 Lodges made of buffalo hides with poles projecting at the top. Many of the inhabitants came out to see us. Most of the males had no clothing but a sort of apron. They are the most pleasant agreeable looking indians I have ever seen. They can not talk with us...800

Celinda Hines relates an experience concerning the First Nations in the vicinity of Boise, Idaho:

(August) 24 Wednesday...In the morning a great many indians came to camp with fish which they wished to
Hines, cont'd...

exchange for clothing. We bought a number...The
indians (the Diggers) cannot understand the Eng.
language. They understand & use the words swap & no
swap, which words they make use of in trading. We
occasionally meet one with whom Uncle G & his family
can converse in the Chinook dialect & jargon used by
the indians of western Oregon. These indians are
dressed in any old clothing they can (from) the
emigrants...They seem most anxious to get shirts &
socks. They seem to be better clad than the
Sioux...801

FRIENDS/FAMILY BACK HOME

The majority of the diaries examined for this study
contain numerous reminiscences about friends and family that
have been left behind. In most cases, the reader can gain a
true sense of the depth of emotion and feeling which these
women are left to cope with in the wake of their decision to
migrate west.

Charlotte E.S. Pengra (1853) writes:

Tuesday (June) 7...We find beautiful flowers all along
the road and I have wished many times that my friends
could see what beautiful bouquets we gather every
few hours.802

Esther Belle Hanna notes that:

Sabbath 9. This is a beautiful morn, I think of home
and the dear ones there: each day I am getting farther
from them. I feel a sadness steal over me at times
when I think that I shall see them no more on earth...I
feel that I can rejoice in this undertaking, I have
every comfort that it is possible to have on the way,
and one of the kindest and best of husbands to care for
me...803

CELEBRATIONS ON THE TRAIL

The diaries are sprinkled with commentary about
festivities that take place along the trail. All of them
speak of celebrating the fourth of July somewhere enroute
and many of the individual companies have music and dancing as a regular occurrence.

From the diary of Sallie Hester writing in 1849, she reveals that at:

(Steamboat) Hot Springs, August 18...This week some of our company left us, all young men. They were jolly, merry fellows and gave life to our lonely evenings. We all miss them very much. Some had violins, others guitars, and some had fine voices, and they always had a good audience.804

An interesting story appears in the diary of Lucy A. Ide concerning a chance meeting between their party and some students from New Jersey while travelling through the Wind River Range of the Rocky Mountains:

July 14...Near us are camped a company of Princeton N Jersey college students hunting minerals & fossil petrified woods &c and having a good time generally we are going down to see their collection this afternoon...they seem very nice refined young men they have some very nice petrified woods & other specimens of the bones of animal that are now extinct...they related some their adventures to us and we told them of some of our hardships altogether it passed the day quite pleasantly and seemed so strange to meet refined & cultured people here hundreds of miles in the wildness of the Rockies and likely shall never meet them again but shall always remember the day passed in the mountain on the Bitter Creek I think Sabbath evening the student(s) came up to H Hunter tent it being the largest and had a sing they singing their old college songs & all joined in singing some of the song sung by Sankey & Moody and I thought it would probably never happen that so large a company of good singers would make the Rocky Mts echo the music of Sankey & Moody songs hundreds of miles from any human habitation805

Agnes Stewart comments:

We had bad roads today,—to say bad, camping in sight of the terrible Black Hills. I am sitting on a little
Stewart, cont'd...

hill alone above the camp. They are playing the fiddle and dancing, and I can shut my eyes and think I am at some kind of gathering of some description just like I used to be. It recalls old times to me.806

FULFILLMENT/REGRETS

Few of the journals included in this study do not give the reader any indication as to what happened to these women upon their arrival in the Oregon Territory. But most of them do speak of the women's lives after the trail, either directly in their own words, or indirectly in notes included by surviving family members.

Sarah Sutton remarks:

...leaving our old residence the 21st day of March 1854, bound for Oregon on the western shores of America. We much regret leaving behind us our good neighbours and kind friends to see their faces no more on earth. but we were bound to search for a healthier and milder clime, than Illinois to spend the remainder of our days...I do not in the least regret leaving the sickness and cold, sand piles and lakes of that region behind, and are looking forward for the time to arrive when we may all get settled safe at our place of destination.807

Betsey Bayley's description of Oregon in a letter written in 1849 tells the reader:

We left Missouri on the 22d of April and arrived in Chehalem Valley on the 13th of December, all well and hearty, and have been so ever since. Oregon is the healthiest country I ever lived in; there is no prevailing disease, and many people come here for their health. The climate is mild and pleasant, and the air pure and bracing...The country abounds in almost all kinds of vegetation. It is one of the best wheat countries in the world...Vegetables do well; cabbage will grow all winter...The country produces almost all kinds of fruit...Men can work in thin shirt sleeves
Bayley, cont'd...

all winter. Oregon is settling very rapidly. People are flocking here from all parts of the world. The population...is about 9000. We live in a very pleasant part of the country, and are now doing better than at any time during our lives.808

Anna Maria King writing in 1846 remarks:

...as for myself I was never heartier in my life since I left Missouri. I have not had even one sick day.809

Tabitha Brown (66 years old) in 1846 comments:

For two or three weeks of my journey down the Willamette I'd something in the end of my glove finger which I supposed to be a button. On examination at my new home in Salem I found it to be a six and one-fourth cent piece; this was the whole of my cash capital to commence business in Oregon. With it I purchased three needles; traded off some of my old clothes to the squaws for Buckskin; worked it into gloves for the Oregon Ladies and Gentleman; which cleared me upwards of $30.00 extra of boarding.810

Rachel Fisher traveled to Oregon in 1847 and her letters lend support to the prevalent idea that women found the journey one full of regret and despair through personal circumstances. Her letters written the next year after having settled in Oregon indicate that although she has some good things to report, she seems not to have emotionally, spiritually or physically recovered from the ordeal of her migration experience.

One must take into account the facts of her life preceeding travel along the Oregon Trail. Here was a girl who was married in 1841 at nineteen years of age. She had 4 children over the next four years; one born in 1841, the second born in 1843, but both dying on April 14, 1844. Twin
girls were born on February 5, 1845 and one died on December 7, 1846. So when she left for Oregon, she had been married for 6 years and had lost three of her four children. Her husband died enroute in June of 1847 and later her last remaining child died somewhere in Idaho. Rachel was now twenty-five years old.

She went on to Oregon, and married William A. Mills in March of 1848. She bore him a daughter, Rachel, who died in September of 1851 at the young age of 2 1/2 years. Rachel then had another child, a boy born February 18, 1851. So now at age twenty-nine she had been married twice, lost her first five children and first husband. She had 4 more children (1853, 1854, 1856 and 1861, respectively and she was now thirty-nine years old). Her remaining 5 children lived long lives but Rachel herself died in December of 1869 at the young age of forty-seven.

Martha Missouri Moore, writing in 1860, remarks:

Saturday 9th A dismal morning the weather cold & chilly...Made part of my dress, found poor Mag crying to go home. Had rather a pleasant time while camped there, but I can enjoy my self any where what would make any one else fret & scold I am content with.

Her comment attests to her personality and suggests that she was a woman who saw the glass half full rather than one who saw the glass half empty.

The diary of Lucy A. Ide, 1878 begins with an observation that on "May 2nd Commenced my journey to the far far west. The hardest of all is bidding farewell to my near & dear friends many of whom I fear I have seen for the
last time on earth...It is almost more than I can bear..."813

An interesting note appears in the diary of Viola Springer written in 1885 on August 23rd, Sunday where she comments that "...John Ball said this morning to write down that he was homesick."814 Homesickness and regret was not the exclusive domain of women.

Viola remarks at the end of her diary, once she is close to her final destination in Oregon that:

...We are camped tonight in a small canyon close by Harney Valley815...We could see the Valley when we was on top of the hills before we camped. As soon as we went to going down grade I told Morna to get in and ride with me for we wanted to ride together in to Harney Valley...After we camped Morna and I went over the hill here in to the Valley. We said we wanted to be the first ones in the Valley. We went down to where there was a board fence. We wrote our names on the fence...This is a new settled Valley. Not been opened for settlements more than three years. Used to be and Indian reservation. If they all take them ranches in here I am a going to take a ranch to...816

September 17, 1885. Thursday...Day before yesterday when we first got in sight of the Valley I was a driving by myself and I said right out loud my lord is that Harney Valley...817

A different kind of regret is that expressed by Tabitha Brown in a letter she wrote dated August, 1854 some 8 years after crossing the Oregon Trail. She described a familiar scene in that often the early emigrants fell prey to misinformation followed at the risk of paying a very dear price in the end.

The novelty of our journey...was pleasing and prosperous until after we passed Fort Hall; then
we were within 800 miles of Oregon City. If we had kept the old road down the Columbia River—but three of four trains of emigrants were decoyed off by a rascally fellow... assuring us that he had found a near cut-off; that if we would follow him we would be in the settlement long before those who had gone down the Columbia. This was in August. The idea of shortening a long journey caused us to yield to his advice... he robbed us of what he could by lying; and left us to the depredations of Indians, wild beasts, and starvation—but God was with us... We were carried south of Oregon hundreds of miles... I rode through (the Umpqua mountain') in three days at the risk of my life, having lost my wagon, and all I had but the horse I was on.

Rachel Fisher:

In Letter 1 written to her parents "sixty miles from Fort Larima 7th mo 2th 1847":

Dear parents I will again endeavor to prepare a letter for you not withstanding the anguish and bitter mourning it exites when I recall the past think of the present and imagine the future.

She writes of her arrival in Portland, Oregon:

I arived at Portland on the willamet river 13 miles below Oregon City about the 15 of 11 mo. making 7 mo. from the time I started untill I arived at A place to stop, near two months of which I spent getting down the Columbia river. you may imagine some thing of my feeling since I left you, but you can only imagine. you may think I had seen trouble before but my trouble in Iowa was nothing to what I have experienced since I left there being deprived of one of the two objects which I held more dear then any other earthly object, on the Plat river I then thought that little Angeline was more dear to me then any thing ever had been she being the last one of my family. but alas the day was soon to come when I should see her laid in her silent grave.

From a letter written approximately one year later in March, 1848:

Health appears to be good on the plains people look well and there appears to be but little use for grave yard...
Fisher, cont'd...

...I cannot say much whether I like it (the country) or not for I have not seen much of it as far as I have seen the face of the country does not look as beautiful as Iowa, but perhaps the health & mild climate make amend for the want of beauty of the country & perhaps when I see more of it I will be better pleased.821

From the diary of Charlotte Emily Stearns Pengra, 1853, we read a note written as she and her family are about to embark from Council Bluffs:

Wednesday 10th All was hurry and bustly this morning till about noon preparing to start for the river, washing the Waggon and packing, cooking, ironing and doctring one of our steers feet kept us all busy till we started then I felt that indeed I had left all my friends save my husband and his brother, to journey over the dreaded plains, without one female acquaintance even for a companion.—of course I wept and grieved about it but to no purpose...822

The following is a very telling quote taken from a letter written by Jean Rio Baker eighteen years after her westward migration along the Oregon Trail in 1851 which she did as a single parent with seven children, one dying enroute from Scotland to America:

September 29th, 1869 - I have been 18 years this day, an inhabitant of Utah Territory, and I may say 18 years of hard toil, and almost continual disappointment. My 20 acre farm turned out to be a mere salaratus patch, killing the seed which was sown, instead of producing a crop; and I am now in Ogden City (Utah), living in a small log house, and working at my trade, as a dressmaker...I came here in obedience to what I believed to be a revelation of the most High God; trusting in the assurance of the Missionaries, whom I believe to have been the spirit of truth, I left my home, sacrificed my property, broke up every dear association, and what was, and is yet, dearer than all, left my beloved native land, and for what? A Bubble that has burst in my grasp...In 1864 I married Mr. Edward Pearce, I had been a widow 15 years, my children all married, and I felt I had the right to decide for myself, in a matter
Baker, cont'd...

that only concerned myself. I hoped that my old age would be cheered by his companionship that I should no longer be alone. But it was not to be; he only lived six months...823

One of the best recorded examples of fulfillment comes from an anonymous letter published in *Hunt's Merchants' Magazine and Commercial Review* in June 1852. It was sent to them by "An Enterprising Woman in California" who appeared to "keep a restaurant or eating-house, in a mining village"824 and it reads:

I have made about $18,000 worth of pies - about one-third of this has been clear profit. One year I dragged my own wood of the mountains and chopped it, and I have never had so much as a child to take a step for me in this country. $11,000 I baked in one little iron skillet, a considerable portion by a camp fire, without the shelter of a tree from the broiling sun. But now I have a good cooking stove, in which I bake four pies at a time, a comfortable cabin, carpeted, and a good many "Robinson Crusoe" comforts about me, which, though they have cost nothing, yet they make my place look habitable. I also hire my wood hauled and chopped. I bake on an average about 1,200 pies per month, and clear $200. This, in California, is not thought much, and yet, in reality, few in comparison are doing as well. I have been informed there are some women in our town clearing $50 per week at washing, and I cannot doubt it. There is no labor so well paid as women's labor in California. It is hard to apply one's self incessantly to toil, but a few years will place you above want with a handsome independency...I expect to go home some time during the present year, for a short visit, but I could not be long content away from the sunny clime of this yellow land. A lovelier or more healthy climate could not be, and when I get a few friends about me, I think I shall be nearly happy again.825
LETTERS OF ADVICE ABOUT TRAVEL TO OREGON AND CALIFORNIA

Louisiana Strentzel's (1849) advice about preparations for the journey to California:

I know not what to say to you about coming, but I do not think that even if the country should prove to be everything that it had been represented to be or that we anticipated, or even Eden itself, that it would be better for those who are well settled at home and doing well, to await until the storm has calmed and those already here settled or returned back home. From the best information the gold is inexhaustible and people can do as well to come after while as at present, but if you do come I advise you to come by water, it is far less expensive and you can come in half the time that you can by land. I cannot advise any family to come the overland route, but if they should let them prepare well for the journey and travel in small consolidated companies, say about ten wagons and twenty or twenty-five men, to each family I would say one light strong carriage for women and children to ride in (with two mules) and a woman can drive it anywhere; one strong wagon with six mules...Put nothing in your wagon except provisions and clothing and such articles as are indispensably (sic) necessary on the road. Bring vessels to haul about fifty gallons of water, india-rubber sacks are the best. Let each family have about five or six good milk cows two boys can drive any number. I believe there would have been little or no sickness amongst the emigrants if they could have lived on a milk diet. The most prevalent diseases were diarrhea and gastric fever produced by bad water and irregular living. We brought our own cow clear through. She has been worth thousands of dollars to us, yes, I may say millions, for she has been the means for preserving the lives of our children...unwind when you stop...Each company should have the same kind of teams so they can travel all alike...Several women rode horse-back all the way but a carriage is best, especially in bad weather...826

Her husband adds a note and one can see his sense of humour:

...be happy, improve your home, let it be a "Sweet home" and if you have enemies persuade them for a land journey to California.827
For some women it was a journey of toil and exhaustion and regret, but for many more, the good far outweighed the bad and it was a journey full of new friends, new adventures, excitement, joy and fulfillment.
CHAPTER 6 - ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

This study has been an attempt to re-examine and broaden Turner's frontier thesis to incorporate women. To fully comprehend the historical geography of the Oregon Trail, women's recorded experiences must be examined and analysed in order to add their very valuable voices to the current literature on this topic.

This examination focussed on three particular gender issues: female participation in the migration process; female psychological and physical adaptation to the landscape; and, finally, the issue of a unique and individual female landscape experience occurring within a female community experience.

The method used to conduct this study was to personally accompany a wagon train as part of a celebratory re-creation of the nineteenth century migration experience along the Oregon Trail. In the process of performing this twentieth century migration, I recorded a daily journal on tape which I later transcribed into typewritten form. Lacking sufficiently developed artistic skills, or the time to draw, I used a camera to record pictures of the landscape and people and activities on my journey.

As a second body of primary information, this study was based on the diaries and letters written by women travelling along the Oregon and California Trails during the second half of the nineteenth century (1845-1885). The data so collected were compared to my twentieth century journal. A
comparison of a set of specific criteria was done in an effort to understand more clearly the effects of the migration process on women migrants in relation to the three issues of gender previously stated.

The issue of women's participation in the Oregon Trail migration process is most strongly reflected in their personal writings under the category of expectations and hopes, i.e. their own personal reasons for going west. They can be identified as active decision makers and equal participants because they believed and said they were. Their use of specific language, such as "I" and "my" (as opposed to "we"), identifies them as such. In addition, under the category of the general relationships between men and women, it is also clear that there boundaries were blurred between gendered work spheres as is reflected in the women's writings that they acted as teamsters, that their husbands helped them with the responsibilities of laundry, and cooking and the care of children, and that certain companies made the decision to return east because of the general health and welfare of women.

The issue of participation and willingness is also very strongly reflected in the particular use of words or language to describe the landscape and events of the Trail in general. These words denote the women's attitude during the migration process, which in the vast majority of cases examined, was discovered to be one of contentment, joy and happiness. Words such as beautiful, sublime, enchanted,
glorious, admirable, curiosity and comfortable were used hundreds of times.

The second gender issue of female physical and psychological adaptation to the landscape is reflected in all the criteria for comparison. The perceptual and behavioural changes these women experienced were as a direct result not only of the migration process across particular changing physical landscapes (environmental determinism) but as a reflection of the total experience. Their values changed over space and time as they migrated west. We can know this because the women's own diaries and letters reveal their persona through their use of language. Understanding them as individuals is possible using the technique of immersion in the historical literature discussed earlier. And in this way, it is possible to suggest that women are a stronger reflection of Frederick Jackson Turner's frontier thesis than men.

The issue of women's unique migration experience and as a female community experience is reflected in their writings of the former under the categories of impressions of the landscape, climate, hardships related to walking, riding a horse and riding in the wagons, their relationship (or lack of it) with God, expectations and hopes and fulfillment and regrets; and of the latter, under the categories of sanitation and personal hygiene, relationships with First Nations', clothing and laundry, and food. Cross-over categories include finances, general relationships with men,
relationships with traveling companions, and Medical, Death and Birth.

The fact that women on the Oregon Trail in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries each experienced it uniquely is a function of the human condition. And it is best supported by the fact that each one wrote her own diary, journal or letters. As well, it is evident from their writings that even though they experienced many similar circumstances over the same landscape, their interpretations were all separate and unique. But where similarities exist, the female community experience is established.

A set of sixteen criteria are used for this study, the most important criteria being the physical landscape along those portions of the Oregon Trail which were experienced in both the nineteenth and twentieth century treks and some generalizations about reaction and adaptation to the landscape not experienced by myself.

The physical landscape which was common to both the nineteenth and twentieth century journals included that of the Columbia Plateau physiographic region extending from Boise, Idaho where I began my journey to the Dalles on the banks of the Columbia River and the Pacific Mountain System comprising the Cascade Mountain Range (Mount Hood) and the Willamette Valley.

There were those women who found the landscape at Boise and along the Snake River plain to be as sublime and
enchanting as I found it. But the main difference in timbre of the historical journals is related to the fact that the women had just ended a month-long migration across the Snake River Plain which began about Fort Hall and extended to Boise, a distance of approximately two hundred and thirty-four miles along a desert-type landscape that was devoid of trees, that experienced temperatures in excess of 100 degrees Farenheit for days on end, that experienced (alkali) dust storms, hail and thunderstorms enough to shatter their resolve. What delights most of the women at this point is the existence of trees (Balm of Gilead) along the shores of the river which serve to relieve the monotony of the landscape and to provide much sought-after shade.

The next point of comparison was in the area of the Burnt River Canyon and present-day Durkee, Oregon. The historical journals speak of the dangers of travelling through the steep-sided canyons along a serpentine path. This was a real danger for the twentieth-century migration as none of us were allowed to walk for two days due to dangerous highway conditions. We all rode in wagons from Farewell Bend State Park on the Snake River, up through the Burnt River Canyon to Pleasant Valley, Oregon.

The Grande Ronde Valley, La Grande, Oregon in the middle point of the Blue Mountains offers an interesting point of comparison between the historical journals and my own. Almost without exception, the women's journals describe the landscape of the Grande Ronde Valley in glowing
terms as do I. We all speak of its lushness and spectacular beauty.

The Blue Mountains present a formidable obstacle both to the nineteenth and twentieth century traveller. They have a much more abrupt incline than that of the Rocky Mountains which makes the Blue Mountains more difficult to ascend. Yet, this aside, the women's historical journals speak of beautiful scenery that is unsurpassed, with thick groves of yellow pine, cool shade and a "rich carpet of Nature's own weaving."828 Alternately, my comments refer to the fact that the black and white photographs I have of the landscape do not do justice to the colour of the bark (a beautiful copper gold) on these magnificent giants."829

Once out of the mountains, the next point of comparison on the landscape is in the vicinity of Pendleton, Oregon. Many of the women's journals comment on the rolling terrain, on its fertility and potential for productivity and on its beauty. But to this latter-day migrant, I found it monotonous, colourless and dull.

The John Day River seemed to evoke quite similar emotions and feelings in all of us. Travelling across the bluffs of the canyon down to the river presented some very real logistical problems for the early migrants while I was fortunate enough to travel along paved highway located in the river valley. But our reactions to the landscape were the same. They considered this place to be beautiful while my description speaks of the contrast between the lush
irrigated valley bottom and the dry, burnt canyon walls. My photographs portray a clearer picture than my words can tell.

Once the nineteenth and twentieth century women reached the Columbia River for the first time, generally in the vicinity of the mouth of the Deschutes River, our comments reflect that we were literally struck by the force of the wind blowing off the Columbia. Most of the historical journal entries make mention of the various mountain peaks which are in view here and how it reminds them of how close they are to their final destination. And they also mention the concern at this point in the migration process about how they are going to get themselves and their remaining belongings over the Cascades.

Many of the migrants, especially in the latter part of the nineteenth century, chose to take one of the steamers down the Columbia River rather than cross the Cascades by land over Mount Hood. Comparison between those journals which describe the land travel and my journal reflect similar thoughts and experiences on the landscape. Crossing Mount Hood on the Barlow Road was quite a physical challenge. Luckily for the twentieth century migrants, we were not required to descend Laurel Hill which presented a major obstacle at this point in the journey. We had the benefit of paved highway while the former migrants were required to lower themselves and their wagons down the
western slope of Mount Hood by a system of ropes and pulleys, using the base of giant fir trees as a anchor.

And the final point of comparison, after travelling approximately five hundred and forty miles along much of the same route, we ended up in the breathtaking Willamette Valley, the final destination. Some loved it immediately, some loved it eventually but the majority, including myself, were just glad to be home.

The main difference between the historical journals and mine is the fact that what nineteenth century women recorded in words to describe their reaction and interaction with the landscape was accomplished in the twentieth century in the form of slides and photographs. They offer each other a much more fruitful method of comparison, their words and my pictures. And they serve to illuminate the same story.

Although comparisons between the thirty-eight historical journals and letters regarding the landscape preceding the point where mine begins offer hundreds of similar descriptions, the individual author's reactions to the landscape often differed. Some preferred the prairies to the mountains and vice versa. Reasons for this difference of opinion could be related, among many variables, to age, occupation, or place of birth.

Differences or similarities in response or reaction to the landscape by each individual author is not the primary concern of this thesis. It is more the concern that women had specific reactions, negative or positive, recorded them
and included enough of a written description to give the reader a sense of who these women were and who they were becoming in relation to the landscape experience.

One criterion where the nineteenth and twentieth century journals are in almost total agreement is with respect to climate (except for the odd exception where the migrants were travelling either significantly earlier or later in the year) which includes reactions to temperature, precipitation, wind and dust storms. With regularity all of the journals comment on the extremely hot summer days across the Snake River Plain (with cold, cold nights), and the accompanying wind and dust storms. Dust was the bane of everyone's existence. Thunder and hail storms were a fact of life on the Interior Plains but often, particularly the rain, brought welcome relief by laying the dust.

Hardships related to walking, riding a horse and riding in the wagons are also points of comparison used for this study. Comments in a majority of the journals describe to the reader how the act of walking became increasingly easier and a standard routine, often to the point of becoming invigorating and health-improving and that it was often viewed as welcome relief from bouncing and jolting around in the wagons. Comments regarding women riding horses all reflect their enjoyment and expertise. And journal entries concerning riding in the wagons is most often cited in the historical journals with respect to the women acting as teamsters although riding in the wagons was also viewed as a
necessity to avoid complete fatigue and physical deterioration. This is the point where mine and theirs match. Riding in the wagons for me was often boring, monotonous and sleep inducing, as it was also for them, while on other days it kept me going until I could regain my emotional and physical strength.

Two sets of criteria that are difficult to compare include first, the hardships related to preparation of food and finding a suitable water supply, and second, the difficulty associated with a consistent fuel supply. Much time and energy was spent during the nineteenth century migration process in making meals, looking for water and gathering fuel. In this respect, my experience was a joy. The food was, for the most part, supplied and prepared by a catering company hired out mostly to feed forest-fire fighters. Other meals were often provided by individual communities that we passed through. Clean water was supplied in trucks and fuel, in the form of propane and electricity, was generally not a problem.

Proper sanitation and personal hygiene were also a bigger problem for nineteenth century women on the Oregon Trail but as the years passed and the interior of the United States became more settled, many of these issues were much less problematic. Some of the wagon trains had a specific wagon set out for use by women; women used the rivers and streams they encountered whenever and wherever possible for washing and bathing; and the hot springs were set out early
in the century by enterprising individuals as curative places and were available for use to the weary migrants. From my experience, sanitation was generally not a problem but outdoor pottys were used and they could become quite vile smelling and dirty when not attended to sufficiently in the intense heat and dust which happened enough times to be a nuisance. Also, there was a consistent problem with getting enough hot water for the purposes of showering and washing.

It appears from the women’s journals writing in the past century that they experienced far less difficulty with doing laundry than was the case for me. The early migrants of course were always camping beside any water they could find along the way. They were certainly inconvenienced in many instances but for the twentieth century migrant, the only way to do laundry was to find a laundromat and for much of the five-hundred mile trip, there was not a washing machine or dryer to be found within fifty miles of our trail location. But as noted by the former women and those later, we all were pleased to have clean clothes as often as possible.

Finances appeared to be a problem for everyone. There was a price to pay for everything not only in this century (my trip cost in excess of $3000 Cdn. for 530 miles), but in the previous one as well (their cost was approximately $150 US for 2,000 miles). The historical experience was perhaps more expensive in real terms. Nineteenth century migrants
paid to cross bridges for themselves, their belongings and their livestock; they paid for food; they paid for ferries; they paid for shoeing; they paid for medicine; they paid for wood; they paid for clothing; they paid for repairs to their equipment; they paid for water hunters; and they paid for guides. But in both instances, money was stretched, friends pitched in and helped when they could and we all survived, poorer in a monetary sense but far richer in a spiritual, emotional and physical sense.

There were marriages, births, and many deaths on the Oregon Trail in the 1800s. In the 1990s, there were two marriages, no births, and only a couple of major accidents, although many declared they were dying from heat prostration and fatigue.

Notations regarding drunkenness and prostitution along with incidences of family violence appear infrequently in the women's historical journals. Most of the problems related to alcohol and prostitution occurred at major points such as the jumping-off-places in Nebraska and occasionally somewhere else along the Trail. And only one notation was found regarding family violence, although there has been much more recent work done in this area. The problems with alcohol in the nineteenth century are always with regard to men. The women never speak of the consumption of alcohol by either themselves or any other women friends, family or acquaintances. But my diary speaks often about my problems with alcohol on the Trail in the twentieth century. It was
not until nine months after my migration experience that I sought help for my disease of alcoholism, but this action was one of the direct results of the trek.

The majority of women who migrated along the Oregon Trail in the nineteenth century had a firm belief in God and mentioned God, Providence, Nature and sometimes Goddesses, regularly throughout their diaries and letters. One of the strongest passages comes from Tabitha Brown writing in the year 1846 where she comments that "Through all my sufferings in crossing the Plains, I had not once sought relief by the shedding of tears, nor thought we should not live to reach the settlements. The same Faith and hope that I had ever in the blessings of kind providence strengthened in proportion to the trials I had to encounter." My belief in the God of my childhood religion had been consciously dismissed many years prior to my experience in the summer of 1993 but God, as I understand God in my life today, has become my best friend, advisor and helpmate. The God of my understanding today is not the God of my childhood. The God of my understanding today began to take shape for me on the Oregon Trail and has evolved and grown over the past three years of my life to the point now where everything I am and everything I do is part of my quest for a greater and deeper spiritual understanding. Faith in God for those women provided direction, comfort and release from the overwhelming emotions and physical stress generated on the
Oregon Trail. Faith in God today for me provides the same and more that words cannot explain.

Relationships with travelling companions is another criterion for comparison between old and new. Women in the nineteenth century often spoke of their emotions and feelings surrounding friends and family they had left behind and those with whom they were travelling. Often friends and family parted somewhere on the Trail before the final destination and over and over again we read of the grief and sadness that accompanied those partings. My journal speaks also of my deepest thoughts and emotions concerning my family on the Trail. Leaving them all on the summit of Mount Hood was one of the hardest things I have ever had to do, but it made my understanding of the past painfully clear. I understood all at once what it was to feel admiration, respect, comfort, overwhelming grief and most of all love.

The categories of general relationships between women and men and romance on the Trail are interesting ones. The historical journals only hint at romance but it is clear from immersion in them that once an understanding of each author is formulated, reading and interpreting their remarks concerning men become more understandable and conclusions can be drawn. In the area of general relationships, it is also quite clear that for the majority of women, they experienced a close, intimate, sharing bond with the men on the Trail, including husbands, brothers, sons and friends.
Gendered work spheres became blurred, proper etiquette became blurred, and both women and men did what they deemed appropriate under the changing daily conditions of the Oregon Trail experience.

Frederick Jackson Turner's frontier thesis hypothesizes that the opening up of the American west and the taming of the frontier is what determined the American character traits of individualism, strength, freedom and democratic thought, inquisitiveness and restless energy. This study examines this thesis as it relates to women and finds that what appears to this writer to be overwhelming evidence to support it exists in their personal writings. This study would proffer that the majority of women included in this work already possessed many of the above-stated traits before their encounter with the landscape and establishment of a new society in the American west, but that the migration process along the Oregon Trail effected a change in them by strengthening and more sharply defining the edges of their personalities. These women were then free to establish a different female community in the new environment of the Pacific Northwest.
APPENDIX 1
AN EXTENDED NOTE ON SOURCES

The analysis has included an indepth examination of thirty-eight diaries and 7 letters written by women crossing the Oregon Trail between the years 1845 and 1885 as well as this author's journal written in 1993. The methods used for the selection, arrangement, emphasis and sequencing of the historical data extracted from these narratives is provided by Gottschalk (1945) and Harris (1978).

The selection of material from the diaries was based on key words that relate to the thesis problem. This has been stated in the introduction: what effect did the migration process have on the personalities of individual women who crossed the Oregon Trail landscape between the years 1845 and 1885 and how are those changes reflected in their personal writings? And what comparisons can be made between those journals written during the nineteenth century and a twentieth-century journal written by this author during a partial re-creation of the same migration process over virtually the same natural landscape? The key words were identified as migration, personality, individual women, and the Oregon Trail landscape.

The material has been arranged both geographically in a line from east to west and chronologically. For example, the Oregon Trail started for most migrants from one of three cities in the east, either Independence or St. Joseph, Missouri or from Kanesville (Council Bluffs), Iowa. And
their trip ended somewhere in the Willamette Valley, Oregon. Regardless of their starting point and final destination, all of the migrants travelled across the same physiographic regions but not necessarily at exactly the same time of year (although generally within days of each other regardless of the year of travel). Therefore references from the journals concerning the physical landscape, climate and vegetation are distinguished from each other not only by specific date but also chronologically starting with the earliest journal (1845) and moving through to the latest one (1885). Another purpose for arranging the material in this manner is to reflect changes that occurred relative to the built landscape which served to somewhat alter the degree of difficulty of the migration process.

The veracity of the *Covered Wagon Women: Diaries and Letters from the Western Trails, 1840-1890* is assumed. They form a large part of a major collection held by the Oregon Historical Society in Portland, the Astorian collection, in the Astoria Public Library, Eastern Washington State Historical Society Library, in Spokane, the Washington Historical Society's collection in Tacoma, the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University, the Oregon Collection of the University of Oregon Library in Eugene and the Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

Material from the Donner Party letters written by Tamsen Donner in 1846 was used specifically by the *Sangamo Journal of Springfield, Illinois* to encourage migration to
the west. In her letter dated June 16th, 1846, she speaks of her trail experience in pleasant terms and makes note of virtually no hardship whatsoever. The use of her letters by the newspaper lends credibility to the primary source material for this thesis.

Twentieth-century historians writing about the nineteenth-century American west and more specifically those who write about the Oregon Trail have used many of the Covered Wagon Women: Diaries and Letters, as well as some of the unpublished primary material examined in this thesis, to influence and support their studies. Lillian Schlissel uses Amelia Stewart Knight's diary from 1852 in her book, Women's Diaries Of The Westward Journey. Sandra Myres uses the diary of Knight along with those of Lavinia Porter, Agnes Stewart, and Cecelia Adams, amongst others, in her book, Westering Women and the Frontier Experience: 1800-1915. As well, Ruth Barnes Moynihan uses the diary of Abigail Scott Duniway to support her autobiography of this early feminist in her book titled Rebel For Rights. John Mack Faragher includes the diaries of Maria Parsons Belshaw, Mrs. Tabitha Brown, Mrs. Elizabeth Dixon Smith Geer, Celinda Hines, Charlotte Emily Pengra and Lavinia Porter in his study Women and Men on the Overland Trail. Employing the diaries and letters in these contemporary studies adds further weight to their credibility.

Independent sources have been used for comparison purposes with respect to names of places (often there were
the same or similar place names mentioned which in fact were located in different states), topographical information (especially landscape elevation and distance between settlements) and physiographic regions. Throughout the compilation of the primary source material for the thesis it was necessary to make frequent reference to one particular modern source of information, namely the Rand McNally Road Atlas of the United States, Mexico and Canada, 68th Edition, 1992 which was extremely useful not only for elevation and distance, but also helped to clarify state borders which were often difficult to discern from the historical maps. The second modern source of reference was the Landscape Restoration Handbook which provided valuable information related to the natural vegetation in each specific physiographic region. In both instances, there was no contradiction between the historical sources and the modern source, simply clarification of the data.

Frederick Jackson Turner stated that the American character was, in large part, created during the process of taming the nineteenth-century frontier. The construction of a framework for examining the influence of the migration process and the landscape on the personalities of the women on the Oregon Trail is a re-evaluation of Turner's thesis as it is this author's firm belief that women were more affected by the frontier than men and in this way are better examples of ruggedness, individuality, inquisitiveness and democracy.
This thesis takes instruction from Butlin's *Historical Geography: Through the Gates of Space and Time* wherein he discusses the implications of studies concerned with gender and historical geography.

What this must lead to will be the production of many, more sensitive, nuanced, and indeed realistic views of the life-worlds of the past within their many geographical contexts and constructs, and an enhancement of the richness of a range of disciplines, not least historical geography. We need to know more about not only the exploitation but also the dominance of women in production systems in the past, of the aspects of life and landscape which were of particular interest to women travellers, and how these did or did not contrast with the perspectives offered by male contemporaries, of the ways in which written evidences, of all kinds, of women's experiences were constrained by cultural and ideological factors...the roles played by women in individual and collective movements of protest and opposition to social inequalities and exploitation, and in celebration of local and national experiences.836

A historical geography concerned with women, migration and the landscape serves only as a partial explanation of societal change at an individual and group level over time and space.837 It is limited by the lack of other current studies about the 'reverse' effect of migration (environmental determinism), but it is a significant contribution to the new historical geography which seeks to rewrite past geographies 'from the bottom up'838 to include the experiences of women in all aspects of geographical research.
FOOTNOTES:

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION


7. Federal Writers' Project, op. cit., p. 54.

8. Merrill J. Mattes. Platte River Road Narratives: A Descriptive Bibliography of Travel Over The Great Central Overland Route to Oregon, California, Utah, Colorado, Montana, and Other Western States and Territories, 1812-1866. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988, p. xii. "...of the total migration to the Pacific Coast not more than half went by sea. All others reached there by going over land...more than ninety percent got there via the great central Platte route."


10. Brown, op. cit., p. 469; see Clark, Jr., Malcolm Eden Seekers: The Settlement of Oregon, 1818-1862. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1981, pp. 2-3. "...there was one (motivation) which was held in common...Its name was Eden and it was the major
"...there was one (motivation) which was held in common...Its name was Eden and it was the major apparition of the American Dream...Eden was aspiration."; see Simonson, Harold P. *The Closed Frontier: Studies in American Literary Tragedy*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1989, pp. 2-3; John D. Unruh, Jr. *The Plains Across: The Overland Emigrants and the Trans-Mississippi West, 1840-60*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1982, pp. 14-15.


13. According to Samuel N. Dicken and Emily F. Dicken in *The Making of Oregon: A Study In Historical Geography*, Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1979, p. 99, "By the terms of the act each male white citizen, 18 years of age or older, was entitled to 320 acres of land if single; if married, his wife could hold an additional 320 acres in her own right...This was the first large-scale disposition of land in the Pacific Northwest and its effects were far-reaching. Although the act was in effect for only five years, more than two and one-half million acres were granted to more than 7,000 claimants. It stimulated immigration and accelerated expansion into different parts of the state."


16. Keturah Belknap writes that "the past winter there has been a strange fever raging here (it is the Oregon fever) it seems to be contagious and it is raging terribly, nothing seems to stop it but to tear up and take a six months trip across the plains with ox teams to the Pacific Ocean." Belknap, Keturah. "The Commentaries of Keturah Belknap, 1848." Kenneth L.

17. Unruh, *op. cit.*, pp. 84-5.


23. Turner himself would support...a re-evaluation of his thesis as opined by Jacobs, *op. cit.*, pp. 53-54. He notes that "...Turner (1891) himself recognized the special, at best semi-scientific, nature of history, which requires that each new generation write 'the history of the past anew with reference to the conditions uppermost in its own time'."

24. "...the report of emigrant trains passing Ft. Kearny indicated that up to that date (June 6, 1851) ...837 wagons had passed with 1,156 men, 928 women, 799 children, 5,957 oxen, cows, horses and mules..."
Holmes, op. cit., Volume III: 1851, p. 9; according to Amy Kesselman. Diaries and Reminiscences of Women on the Oregon Trail: A Study in Consciousness. Department of History, Masters thesis, Portland State University, 1974, pp. 20-1. "The precise number of women in the overland parties remains a matter of conjecture. A count of the westward bound travellers taken at Fort Kearney (in what is now Nebraska) in 1852, recorded 9,909 men, 2,252 women and 3,058 children."; see Dicken and Dicken, op. cit., p. 160. Although the male to female ratio was in the process of balancing itself during the nineteenth century, it took almost one hundred years from the first family-oriented wagon train in 1843, until the population of Oregon was effectively balanced.


26. Schlissel, op. cit., p. 28; Faragher, John Mack. Women and Men on the Overland Trail. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979, p. 163. "In their diaries and recollections many women discussed the way in which the decision to move was made. Not one wife initiated the idea; it was always the husband. Less than a quarter of the women writers recorded agreeing with their husbands; most of them accepted it as a husband-made decision to which they could only acquiesce. But nearly a third wrote of their objections and how they moved only reluctantly."

27. Glenda Riley argues in Inventing The American Woman: A Perspective On Women's History, 1607-1877, (Vol. I), Arlington Heights, Illinois: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 1986(a), p. 84, that "Some women did hate to leave their homes, but others initiated the idea or migrated on their own."; see the editor's preface to the diary


29. Jacobs, op. cit., 65-66; Lee, op. cit., p. 91, suggests that Turner's frontier thesis provides the
basis for "a more general theory of migration. Most of the effects, desirable and undesirable, that were attributed by Turner to the frontier can, with equal or better logic, be attributed to migration, and in addition, the migration theory does not collapse or depend upon tradition for its maintenance after the frontier is gone."; see Taylor, op. cit., p. 2.


32. Holmes, op. cit., Volume VII, pp. 9-10. "There were some pertinent events or activities that relate to the experience of women travellers who write during the 1850s.

This was first of all, the decade of intense activity in the rise of the feminist movement in the United States...The major symbol was the "Bloomer Costume," named for Amelia Bloomer, an active person in the woman's movement of the day...Women traveling overland seem to have been even more active in wearing this costume than other American women...These women on the western venture were also more independent and intellectually adventurous than those who remained in the east."

33. Myres, op. cit., p. 98. "There is no such thing as a typical overland journal. Each writer had different experiences; each noted different things along the route. Each started with different preconceptions of the trip, and these ideas changed during the course of the journey."

34. "Despite notions of genteel womanhood that promised respectability, despite a patriarchal family system,
and despite the fact that men got more public recognition than women for their work, women created a supportive female community and helped to shape communities and politics in the West." Elizabeth Jameson. "Women as Workers, Women as Civilizers: True Womanhood in the American West." *Frontiers* Vol. VII, No. 3, 1984, p 6. It is my opinion that women developed a more intimate 'female community' while crossing the Oregon Trail partly in response to their interaction with the landscape. That sense of community, developed over the months of travel, was the basis for the community Jameson describes.


40. Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 476. "In the 1860's these portages were accomplished by short stretches of railroad. On a
voyage up the Columbia from Portland, a traveler met the first interruption at the lower Cascades... Here was a 5-mile rail line around the Cascades... A railroad 15 miles in length circumvented the Dalles...


CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THE BIOGRAPHICAL APPROACH

44. Brown, op. cit., p. iii.

45. An exception to this statement is the work of Samuel N. Dicken and Emily F. Dicken The Making of Oregon: A Study in Historical Geography. Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1979, which provides the reader with a fairly successful 'gender-balanced' historical geography of the exploration and settlement of Oregon.


48. Gilbert, E.W. The Exploration of Western America, 1880-1850, An Historical Geography. Cooper Square Publishers, Inc.: New York, 1933, p. 27. Gilbert bases his description of the physical geography of Western America on an earlier version of Fenneman's work (1915-1916) in which Fenneman divided the North American continent "into eight major physical regions, all of which are represented in the United States." Only four of these original eight regions are useful for this study.

49. Fenneman, op. cit., pp. xi-xii. The eight physiographic regions include the Great Plains Province, The Southern Rocky Mountain Province, the Wyoming Basin, the Middle Rocky Mountain Province (Wasatch), the Northern Rocky Mountain Province, the Columbia Plateau, Sierra Cascade Province and Pacific Border Province.

51. Mattes, op. cit., pp. ix-x. This description of Mattes is provided in the forward penned by James A. Michener.

52. Ibid, p. xii.

53. Ibid, p. 4.

54. Brown, op. cit., p. 327, makes an important point with reference to the misnaming of the High Plains or Great Plains region of the United States by Zebulon Pike in 1805 when he "charted the course of the upper Mississippi and recommended sites for military bases." Pike referred to this area as part of the "Great American Desert" and that it was not until 1855 that "signs of the breakdown of the desert idea first appeared officially with the railroad surveys..." (p. 370). The point made here is that exploration of the North American continent was happening prior to and concurrent with travel across the Oregon Trail and in this way a more concise and factual picture of the physical geography of the area was not established until well past the beginning of the twentieth century. Therefore it is important to note that misnaming also occurs in the primary source material contained in the women's diaries; see Fenneman, op. cit., p. vi.


56. William Norton. *Historical Analysis in Geography*. New York: Longman, 1984, p. 79 and p. 81; see Cronon, William, George Miles and Jay Gitlin (eds.) *Under an Open Sky: Rethinking America's Western Past*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1992; Schlissel, op. cit., p. 4 and p. 13; Norwood, op. cit., p. 156 where she argues that "To date, Annette Kolodny is the only scholar addressing the question of change in women's valuation of landscape as they encountered the American frontier... Kolodny argues that women valued some natural environments more highly than others. The prairies were a much more comfortable
environment for women than the previous forest frontiers...Kolodny also argues...that the appeal of the prairie was as a sanctuary in which women could lead lives of idealized domesticity. Kolodny's work suggests much more complexity to the promotional literature urging women to journey West than has previously been evidenced."


59. Ibid. The beginning of the Oregon Trail in the east is at present-day Kansas City, Missouri which is located at the very eastern edge of the region labeled the Central Plains. In this way collapsing the two regions then is a discretionary matter since absolute lines are difficult to distinguish.


64. Mattes, op. cit., p. xii. "The Lewis and Clark Trail up the Missouri River and over Lemhi Pass to the headwaters of the Columbia River is famous as the prime route of westward exploration, but no emigrant to Oregon or California followed in the footsteps of those eminent explorers."


70. Brown, op. cit., p. 458. "Horace Greeley's advocacy of pioneering has been made generally known through his oft-quoted advice to young men to "go West."" Greeley was editor of the New York Tribune.


73. Wagner and Camp, op. cit., p. 269.

74. See introduction written by Rodney R. McCallum (ed.) in the reprinted version of Farnham's wagon train journal of 1839, op. cit.

75. From the Foreword in a reprint of Palmer's journal, published as a March of America Facsimile Series, Number 83, Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, Inc., 1966. The author of the foreword is unknown.

76. First Nations' (or aboriginal) is the politically correct term now in place of the racist term, 'Indian'.

University of California Press, 1955, p. 1. "In recent studies, "migration" has ordinarily been defined not as the relatively permanent transfer of persons or groups over relatively large distances...but as such a movement under conditions specific to the pre-1914 era. Large-scale "migration," so defined, is then declared to be a phenomenon of the past -- and this at a time when almost anywhere in the world a whole life spent in one place is exceptional. It is maintained here...that the principal change since 1914 has been an increased control by the state over migration, rather than a decrease in the propensity to migrate."

78. Philip E. Ogden. Migration and geographical change. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984, p. 3; see Kosinski, Leszek A. and R. Mansell Prothero (eds.) People on the Move: Studies on internal migration. London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1975, p. 4. "No attempt has been made to follow one uniform definition of migration throughout this volume."; Lewis, G.J. Human Migration: A Geographical Perspective. London: Croom Helm, 1982, p. 8. Lewis argues for a softening of the line between the definition of 'mobility' and 'migration' to make room for "...the diversity of contemporary studies of migration." And then makes virtually the same statement made by Kosinski & Prothero when he says that "Within this volume...no attempt will be made to follow one uniformly strict definition of the term migration."; White, Paul and Robert Woods (eds.) The geographical impact of migration. London: Longman, 1980, p. 3. "...the concept of mobility and its subset, migration, is of use in clarifying what is implied by a residential movement."

79. Ogden, op. cit., p. 13. "E.G. Ravenstein (1834-1913) was one of the first scholars to suggest that clear laws of migration characterised migrants, their origins and destinations and the nature of migration streams. He developed these ideas in three papers published in 1876, 1885 and 1889."


81. Ibid, pp. 5-6.

82. Ibid, p. 5.

84. Joanne Meyerowitz. "Women and Migration: Autonomous Female Migrants to Chicago, 1880-1930," in History of Women In The United States: Historical Articles on Women's Lives and Activities, Nancy F. Cott (ed.), New York: K.G. Saur, 1992, p. 317. "The large-scale migration of women is not a new discovery for historians and demographers. In fact, for at least a century now, social scientists have suggested that, in some historical contexts, more women migrated than men. In 1885, E.G. Ravenstein wrote in his well-known laws of migration: "Females are more migratory than males." But a corollary to this appears in White and Wood, op. cit., p. 14. "Ravenstein noted...in 1885...that 'woman is a greater migrant than man', although he elaborated this conclusion by adding that men were more migratory over long distances and especially in international migration. (although) It is arguable that Ravenstein's statement was a product of his time and place."

85. Mattes, op. cit., p. xiv. "An army of nearly half a million...marched up the Platte in the vanguard of empire. It appears that about one out of every 250 of these marchers left some kind of meaningful written record of their great adventure." Therefore there are approximately 2,000 or more written records in existence, albeit not necessarily in the form of a daily journal. It is unknown exactly how many more primary sources have come to light in the past six years since the publication of this book.


87. John Mack Faragher. Women and men on the Overland Trail. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979, p. 16. Faragher argues against such a notion and notes that "the written record of the overland emigration was left by all kinds of people: city and country folk, college graduates and the barely literate, old and young, rich and poor."; see also "letter of Virginia E.B. Reed to

88. Joseph Velikonja. "Social Cost of Migration: The Slovene Experience," in Person, Place and Thing: Interpretative and Empirical Essays in Cultural Geography, S. T. Wong (ed.), 1992, pp. 99-100. Velikonja posits that "What is relevant for the economic aspects of migration can be applied to social aspects as well. Because migration is relocation of people as social beings, it is appropriate to attach social considerations and social labels to each component of the migration process and consider the burdens and benefits that may not be included in the empirically measured short term costs and benefits."

89. In this study, a discussion of the push-pull factors related to the Oregon Trail migration phenomena is necessary as it relates to the diaries themselves where women have recorded particular reasons for migration. This thesis is more concerned with the physical and psychological affects of migration in response to the landscape but, to do that, a recognition of motivation is key. Dorothy O. Johansen suggests that "in the American experience, the push-factors in migration theory are less important than the pull-factors; that different communities of destination draw different types of migrants and that in the building of differentiated communities economic and environmental factors are less important than individual psychological factors." From her article "A Working Hypothesis for the Study of Migrations," in Pacific Historical Review 36, February(1967), p. 5.

90. Pooley and Whyte, op. cit., p. 12.

91. Rhoads Murphey. The Scope of Geography. Third Edition. New York: Methuen, 1982, p. 53.; see Parkman, Francis. The Oregon Trail. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1946, p. 5. "...I have often perplexed myself to divine the various motives that give impulsion to this migration; but whatever they may be, whether an insane hope of a better condition in life, or a desire of shaking off restraints of law and society, or mere restlessness, certain it is, that multitudes bitterly repent the
journey, and, after they have reached the land of promise, are happy enough to escape from it.


"Feminists began to use "gender" because it allowed us to break out of the biological straitjacket of "sexual differences," to engage the ways in which sexual meanings - which appear to be fixed and "natural" - are variously and culturally elaborated. "Gender" refers to ideas about feelings about sexual difference and identity that do not necessarily reflect biological "reality" but are instead imposed upon, and help to constitute, human subjects and their experiences of biological, social and political reality. "Masculinity" and "femininity" came to be seen as elaborate cultural constructs that did not mirror nature but... exerted a powerful influence on the identities, behaviors, psychology, and cognition of men and women... Feminine "difference" was invoked to criticize humanist standards and to make room for women as gendered subjects."; see also Pratt, Geraldine. "Reflections on Poststructuralism and Feminist Empirics, Theory and Practice," in Antipode 25:1, 1993, p. 56, where she
argues "...(we) fall in line with what Bordo (1990) discerns as "a new drift within feminism, a new skepticism about the use of gender as an analytical category".


98. McDowell, op. cit., p. 159; see Mackenzie, Suzanne. "Restructuring the relations of work and life: women as environmental actors, feminism as geographic analysis," in Kobayashi and Mackenzie, op. cit., p. 41.


100. Kay, op. cit., p. 435; Jackson, op. cit., p. 105, suggests that altogether "contributions by (human) geographers to feminist theory have been comparatively
rare (see Foord & Gregson 1986, and the subsequent debate in Antipode).


103. Ibid, p. 446.

104. Ibid, p. 448.


108. Ray Allen Billington (ed.) *Frontier and Section: Selected Essays of Frederick Jackson Turner.* Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1961, p. 42. "In these successive frontiers we find natural boundary lines which have served to mark and to effect the characteristics of the frontiers namely: the "fall line," the Allegheny Mountains; the Mississippi; the Missouri where its direction approximates north and south, the line of the arid lands, approximately the ninety-ninth meridian; and the Rocky Mountains. The fall line marked the frontier of the seventeenth century; the Alleghenies that of the eighteenth; the Mississippi that of the first quarter of the nineteenth; the Missouri that of the middle of this century (omitting the California movement); and the belt of the Rocky Mountains and the arid tract, the present frontier."


111. Harold P. Simonson. Beyond the Frontier: Writers, Western Regionalism and a Sense of Place. Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1989, p. 17. Simonson argues that the infighting over the ultimate 'truth' of Turner's frontier thesis will never come to a successful conclusion, but it is useful to have a focus around which points of view may gather.


113. Ibid, p. 149. Turner is quoted as remarking ""Women's minds...tend to be like the Platte River - a mile wide and an inch deep."" Jacobs notes that ""...these examples of Turner's humor are related to the fact that women were virtually ignored in his version of western history..." I would suggest that this is more an indication perhaps of Turner's sexist attitude and a weak attempt at humor. Jacobs (p. 170) hits closer to home when he states that "Like Turner, Merk lectured on the theme of Yankee male conquest in a victory over the wilderness, Indians, and Mexican Americans, a theme underscored with the ever-present paternal view of women as passive companions on a trek."

114. Ibid, pp. 170-1. This is as opposed to Jacobs view of the nature of what he labels the "reverse environmental" of Turner's thesis, that is "the destructive influences upon the land by westering farmers, cattlemen, miners, and lumbermen."; see Riley, Glenda. Frontierswomen: The Iowa Experience. Ames: The Iowa State University Press, 1981, p. 53. "It is a fallacy to perceive all women as belonging to a homogeneous group - in this case, all frontierswomen sharing the same thoughts and experiences. This misconception has caused frontierswomen to be inaccurately stereotyped as farm wives and leaves out recognition of the single women - unmarried, divorced, and widowed - who chose to challenge the frontier without the aid of a man."

115. Turner discussed the concept of frontier in 1893 and the concept of the 'west' in his essay (1896) "The Problem Of The West". Faragher, John Mack. Rereading Frederick Jackson Turner. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1994, pp. 61-76.; Jacobs, op. cit., p. 155. Turner in writing to a former student in 1928 says ""The 'West' with which I dealt...was a process rather than a fixed geographical region...""; Cronon, op. cit.; Limerick, Patricia Nelson, Clyde A. Milner

116. Faragher, op. cit., p. 6.; Cronon, op. cit., p. 5. "As we survey the field of western history in the 1990s... fully a century after the U.S. census declared the frontier era over, an odd paradox confronts us. For many historians the western past has lost its fascination... For many ordinary Americans... the western past has lost none of its excitement..."; see Sara Brooks Sundberg's article "A Female Frontier: Manitoba Farm Women in 1922" in Prairie Forum, Vol. 16, No. 2, Fall, 1991, p. 185 where she alludes to "...the passing of the (Canadian) frontier."


118. Riley argues there is a "lack of common definitions for "frontier" and "West."" And "Historians often solve the dilemma by equating West with the trans-Mississippi West, but this is still a large geographical area and an elastic time period." Riley, op. cit., p. 70.

119. Unruh, op. cit., pp. ix-x.

120. Ibid, p. 324; see Myres, op. cit., p. 98.

121. Faragher (1979), op. cit., p. 5. He attributes his interest in "a cross-sexual perspective on the history of marriage and the family..." to his association with Howard Lamar, Professor of History at Yale University. He goes on to suggest that "...it seems clear that only
the radical perspective of feminism can provide the concepts necessary to reconstruct our past, to liberate it from the shackles of its own ideologies. It is my belief that an important step in creating a society of free and equal women and men is the creation of a history of women and men in their real connectedness."

In an article written twelve years later, Faragher notes that this earlier work "bears the feminist stamp of the era..." and that "it developed amid the political and intellectual struggles of the resurgent women's movement of the 1970s..." Quoted from "Twenty Years of Western Women's History," in Montana, the magazine of Western history, Vol. 41(2), Spring, 1991, p. 72.

122. I agree with his statement. To date there is a dearth of studies specially concerned with the Oregon Trail either in the field of history or geography.

123. Riley, op. cit., p. 70, warns that "without comparative studies, it is impossible to determine whether western women expanded their realm and rights faster than did women in other places. Certainly, western women received the right to vote before those in the North and South, but this achievement fails to demonstrate a priori that western women were more suffrage-minded than their counterparts in other regions. Numerous western women also became entrepreneurs in businesses, ranging from millinery to prostitution, but this does not prove that western women were more business-minded than their northern and southern sisters. We simply do not know how western, southern, and northeastern women compare."

This thesis does not seek to pit eastern women against western women in terms of western women's increased sense of self but rather that this increased sense of self did exist and that it was in part directly related to the migration experience.


127. Tuan, op. cit., p. 688.


131. May, *op. cit.*, p. 4. May questions whether perhaps "women were more powerful and visible on the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century farmsteads before the 'cult of domesticity' began to cloister them in the lace-curtained parlors of middle-class homes?"

132. Bledsoe, *op. cit.*, p. 22; see Pooley and Whyte, *op. cit.*, p. 3. "Migration is...an aspect of human behaviour which, to a much greater extent than other demographic factors can...have many complex and unpredictable outcomes."; Jeffrey, *op. cit.*, p. 45 for an argument against this hypothesis. "For most women found the trip neither exhilarating nor liberating."


134. Faragher, *op. cit.*, (1991), p. 72 "...if these studies seem to bring us no closer to answering the big question about women and the western movement definitively, it is because the problem is essentially one of interpretation, not evidence. There will never be an objective or definitive answer, only the most recent word in an ongoing argument."

135. From this author's knowledge, Julie Roy Jeffrey's book *Frontier Women*, was the first major study to examine Turner's thesis as it related to women using "records left by the women themselves." Jeffrey, *op. cit.*, p. xii. Also, "The evidence upon which this study draws varies. Over two hundred women's journals, reminiscences, and collections of letters, as well as a number of interviews, provide the basis for much of this work. Some of these are published. Most are not and may be found in the Western collections of a few major libraries or in state historical societies." Jeffrey, *op. cit.*, p. xv.
136. Susan G. Butruille. *Women's Voices From The Oregon Trail: The Times That Tried Women's Souls and A Guide To Women's History Along the Oregon Trail.* Boise: Tamarack Books, Inc., 1993, p. 3. This book was written as a celebration of (and in time for) the 150th anniversary of the Oregon Trail by a "fifteen-year teacher, student, writer and speaker on women's history."

The difference between her work and this thesis is that hers does not concern itself with the geographical concepts of migration and exploration, nor does it concern itself with Turner's thesis. Also her trip was performed by car as opposed to my being part of an actual recreation of the 1843 Oregon Trail wagon train experience. Her book is separated into Part I and Part II with the latter being set up in the format of an east to west, state-to-state line along the Oregon Trail noting "markers, signposts, landmarks, and historical sites that leave traces of women's presence. Some of these places relate to the Oregon Trail, while while others tell of women involved in westering and pioneering both before and after the Oregon Trail era." (p. 145)


*Woman of Power,* Issue Sixteen, 1986, p. 7, "Sex is the biological given for men and women. Gender is the cultural definition of behavior defined as appropriate to the sexes in a given society at a given time.


144. *Ibid*, p. 73.


146. Lydia Maria Child. *The American Frugal Housewife*. Bedford: Mass.: Carter & Hendee, 12 edition, 1832, p. 91, (first published in 1828) where she comments that "there is no subject so much connected with individual happiness and national prosperity as the education of daughters. It is a true, and therefore old remark, that the situation and prospects of a country may be justly estimated by the character of its women... Is the present education of young ladies likely to contribute to their own ultimate happiness, or to the welfare of the country... we do think the general tone of female education is bad. The greatest and most universal error is, teaching girls to exaggerate the importance of getting married..."; see diary of Julia Anna Archibald (Holmes), 1858 in Holmes, *op. cit.*, Volume VII, pp. 190-215; see diary of Abigail Jane Scott (Duniway), 1852 in Holmes, *op. cit.*, Volume V, pp. 35-172; Moynihan, Ruth Barnes. *Rebel For Rights: Abigail Scott Duniway*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983, p. xiii where she write that Duniway was one of nineteenth-century America's "hardest and most tireless suffrage worker(s) the western states produced."

147. Riley, *op. cit.*, (1986a), p. 84. "Frontierwomen did not display any single characteristic. They exhibited a full spectrum of personalities, talents, abilities, and attitudes. They came from a variety of backgrounds. They followed a large number of careers ranging from homemaker to field hand. In other words, their lives were so multifaceted that they cannot be explained by an image or a stereotype."

149. Of particular interest to the field of women's history in its entirety is the book edited by Professor Gerda Lerner The Female Experience: An American Documentary. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1977. On pages xxi-xxii, she argues that "The problem of organizing a work of this kind is essential ly that of finding a new framework for conceptualizing the history of women...a male-oriented conceptual framework has dominated the questions by which the past of human kind has been organized. Even historians working in women's history at first worked under the assumption that women were a "marginal minority" and that women's history was no more than a collection of "missing persons and facts." But women are neither marginal nor a minority. They are and always have been at least half of all Americans; they are distributed through all classes and categories of U.S. society. Therefore, any effort to make of women's history a sort of supplement to U.S. history and to fit it into the traditional categories can only be an inadequate substitute for the challenging task of reconstructing the female past and analyzing it by concepts appropriate to it. Historians of women's history, seeing the need to go beyond "contribution history" have increasingly turned to primary sources for the female point of view and for a record of the female experience. This is an essential first step toward writing a new history which will with true equality reflect the dual nature of humankind -- its male and female vision."; Jeffrey, op. cit.; Faragher, Johnny and Christine Stansell, "Women and Their Families On the Overland Trail to California and Oregon, 1842-1867," in Feminist Studies Vol 2, No. 2/3 (1975), pp. 150-66.

150. Dee Brown's The Gentle Tamers: Women of the Old Wild West. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1958. Brown's book was "...one of the first books to attempt an overview and analysis of the roles of women in the west. The Gentle Tamers elaborated and codified the assumption that the white male "tamed" the West in its physical aspects and that white women, who followed the men, gently tamed the social conditions...By focussing on women as a group, Brown filled a major gap in western historiography, and because he provided a
thesis and a framework, his book remains the most widely read book on women in the west." Jensen and Miller, op. cit., p. 173.


154. Lerner, op. cit., p. 6. "Women are essential and central to creating society; they are and always have been actors and agents in history."; Kay, op. cit., p. 437. "Women as...actors have indeed been banished from most of the regional historical geography books on North America."

155. Stratton, op. cit., p. 23. She profiled eight hundred women from 1854 to 1890.


157. This is corroborated by the diaries themselves.

158. Myres, op. cit., p. 103. "Some had previous trail experience, for some of the immigrants were perennial movers, and many had moved at least once or twice and some three or more times. One analysis of Midwestern male heads of households on the overland trails showed that 78 percent of them had made at least one previous westward move. One can assume that women probably followed similar patterns." This is corroborated by the diaries examined for this study.

159. Louise M. Newman. "Critical Theory and the History of Women: What's At Stake in Deconstructing Women's History," in Journal of Women's History, Vol. 2 No. 3 (Winter) 1991, pp 58-9. "The fields of women's history and gender history are at a crucial juncture in their development. The conflict is partly over what categories of analysis should be used and how power or human agency should be conceptualized. Historians of women use the terms "experience, "identity," and


161. "The human document has been defined as "an account of individual experience which reveals the individual's actions as a human agent and as a participant in social life." The personal document has been defined as "any self-revealing record that intentionally or unintentionally yields information regarding the structure, dynamics and functioning of the author's mental life"

The first definition is by a sociologist and emphasizes "experience...in social life" as an element of the human document. The second definition is by a psychologist and emphasizes "the author's mental life" as an element of the personal document. Yet the words human document and personal document have been used interchangeably. The two kinds of documents seem to have one essential characteristic in common: a human, personal reaction to the events with which they deal." Gottschalk, Louis. "The Historian And The Historical Document," in The Use Of Personal Documents In History, Anthropology, and Sociology, Gottschalk, Louis, Clyde


163. Ibid, p. 11.


171. Alpern, op. cit., p. 5.

172. Ibid, p. 3.

173. Ibid, p. 4.

174. Personal Narratives Group, op. cit., p. 3.


177. Ibid, p. 46.


179. Miles and Crush, op. cit., p. 84.


183. Dicken and Dicken, op. cit., p. xiii.


188. Ibid, p. 688.
189. Bergmann, op. cit., p. 57.


191. Bergmann, op. cit., p. 54.

192. Bergmann, op. cit., p. 66.


194. Ibid, p. 344.


199. Miles and Crush, Personal Narratives as Interactive Texts, op. cit., p. 85.


201. Ibid, p. 84.


204. Ibid, p. 443.

205. Ibid, p. 443.


211. Halfacree and Boyle, op. cit., p. 344.

212. Ibid; see also Bartholomew; Miles and Crush.


216. Halfacree and Boyle, op. cit.; Miles and Crush, op. cit.; and, Kay, op. cit.

218. Ibid, p. 18.


221. Ibid, p. 554.

CHAPTER THREE: PHYSICAL LANDSCAPE SETTING


223. Ibid, p. 28.

224. Ibid, pp. 27-29.


227. Gilbert, op. cit., p. 29.

228. Fenneman, op. cit., p. 7.


233. Ibid, p. 29.


237. Gilbert, op. cit., p. 39. "On the eastern side of the Plains the annual rainfall is between 20 and 25 inches, while on the western side it is less than 15 inches... The rainfall varies very greatly from year to year, but
agriculture is impossible without irrigation where the rainfall is under 20 inches."


239. Ibid, p. 375.

240. Gilbert, op. cit., pp. 36-7. "The Plains have what is essentially a continental climate: When compared with the east of the United States, the Plains have a greater amount of sunshine, a greater daily range of temperature, and more wind...north and north-west in winter, and south and south-east in summer..."The plains have a very clear atmosphere...The sky has a more delightful blue than I ever saw anywhere else; the atmosphere in a serene calm evening is so clear that a slight smoke can be discerned at the distance of many miles...In point of health it is unnecessary to say anything; such a country must necessarily be salubrious." The mean annual temperature for the route of the Oregon Trail along the plains ranges from approximately 80-85 degrees F. in July to an absolute maximum of 105-110 degree F.

241. Fenneman, op. cit., p. 133. "The floor of this basin is a plateau with a maximum east-west dimension of about 250 miles and a north-south dimension of nearly the same. Its total area is nearly 40,000 square miles. It is bordered...by abrupt mountain slopes, indented by long spurs and studded by isolated mountains. The altitude of the plateau surface is generally between 6,500 and 7,500 ft."


243. Brown, op. cit., p. 398-9. "South Pass, principal route-focus of the Rockies. There are literally hundreds of passes across the Continental Divide formed by the Rocky Mountains, and many of them were known a century (and a half) ago, but none attained the significance of South Pass in west-central Wyoming...South Pass is no narrow defile through winding mountain gorges, but a major break in the Rocky Mountain system, and it was so recognized at an early time...Factors contributing to its great use as a way through the mountains include: (1) comparatively low elevation, hence longer snow-free season than in many other passes; (2) ease of approach, especially from the east; and (3) advantageous position with respect to major
routes of east-west travel...It would be more correctly called now the Central Pass, or, as some observant travelers have put it, the Great Gap."

244. Fenneman, op. cit., p. 135.

245. Ibid, p. 141. "It's elevation increases from 7,000 ft. at the northern end to 7,500 ft. at the southern end."

246. Ibid, pp. 142-3. "Most of it is a barren waste, much of it badlands. The Wind and Bighorn Rivers and a few tributaries have floodplains a mile or more in width affording valuable farm lands."

247. Ibid, p. 145. "Its lowest part is not far from the point where the Union Pacific Railroad crosses the Green River."

248. Ibid, p. 143. "The Great Divide Basin...is mainly on soft Tertiary strata...in part brightly colored and yield a light clay soil of red color. The area thus underlain is locally called the "Red Desert.""

249. See especially the description of the Devils Slide area of northern Utah, passed through and commented on by Mary Matilda Park Surfus, 1883 in Chapter 5, pp. 25-6, as her company made its way west via the southern route through Wyoming (passing through Fort Bridger) and then turning north through upper Utah state, Idaho and continuing west.


251. Ibid, op. cit., p. 140.

252. Ibid, p. 168. "The Teton is a north-south range, 40 miles long, just east of the Wyoming-Idaho boundary and south of Yellowstone Park. Though small in area, this is one of the most majestic ranges of the Rocky Mountains. Its deeply gashed granite crest, snow covered and several thousand feet above timber line, has many peaks above 12,000 ft. and reaches its greatest heights in Grand Teton (13,800 ft.) and Mt. Hayden (13,700 ft.). On the east the range rises very abruptly above the Snake River Valley...12 miles wide with a terraced floor and enclosed on the south by glacial moraines."
253. Ibid, p. 171. "To name and describe these ranges singly would involve too much detail."

254. The Wasatch Range runs north-south through much of the state of Utah. Salt Lake City is located in this mountain range.


256. Gilbert, op. cit., p. 33.

257. Dicken Dicken, op. cit., p. 60. Dicken and Dicken suggest that "the map of the interior of Oregon, almost a complete blank in 1804, was slowly filled in. But it was not until the 1850s that systematic instrumental surveys began, producing more accurate maps. The Clark map...which was completed in 1810 and published in the journals in 1814 was an excellent beginning. It shows great detail along the Columbia and Snake rivers, on the basis of information obtained from the Indians, and extends the map far beyond the line of Lewis and Clark's travels."

258. Gilbert, op. cit., p. 33. "The major portion of the Columbia Plateaux consists of the drainage basin of the Columbia River, while the eastern section is in the basin of the Snake River, the main tributary of the Columbia. The old topography of the region was covered with flows of lava which came from different centres. Lakes were formed after these outpourings and the present soil is a result of the disintegration of the lava. The rivers flow in ravines several thousand feet deep, thus exposing the horizontal beds of the lava."

259. Fenneman, op. cit., p. 225.


263. Ibid, p. 234.

264. Ibid, p. 239.


266. Fenneman, op. cit., p. 248.

268. Ibid, pp. 268-9. "The largest and most interesting stream in this district is the Deschutes, which flows north to the Columbia at the east foot of the Cascades. "It flows through a plateau composed chiefly of basalt. From Cline Falls to its mouth (144 miles) it flows in an abrupt canyon 500 to 2,000 ft. deep. Its fall is large, being 13 ft. per mile for the last 100 miles, and about twice that amount for the next 100 miles above...Its waters are clear and fresh and it has the distinction of having the most uniform flow of any river in the United States which does not flow from a great lake. It is very unlike a desert stream. At its junction with the Columbia, its maximum recorded discharge is only six times its minimum."

269. Ibid, p. 268.

270. Ibid, p. 270.


272. Fenneman, op. cit., p. 251. "Most of this area above 4,000 ft. at the south or 3,500 ft. at the north, is covered with pine forest. This applies to plateau and mountains alike. The summits of the highest mountains...are bare above 7,500 ft. Their topography indicates glaciation to a moderate degree."


275. D.W. Meinig. The Great Columbia Plain: A Historical Geography, 1805-1910. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1968, pp. 16-7. "Midsummer has the most stable weather, characterized by heat and drought, occasionally modified in degree but rarely broken in kind from early July to early September. This can be a hot land. Clear skies, a blazing sun, and little breeze build temperatures to ninety degrees and more day after day over much of the region; in the low central basins and in the canyons and coulees days of one hundred degrees and more are not uncommon, though the higher eastern margins rarely experience these extremes."

277. Ibid, p. 39. "The Plateau region receives a small annual rainfall, which is everywhere less than 20 inches, frequently below 10 inches, and over a considerable portion of the south-west less than 5 inches."


279. Ibid, p. 35.


281. Ibid, p. 432. "The Columbia River in its great transverse gorge has cut down through thousands of feet of lava. The several lava flows are here arched upward in a complex anticline."


283. Ibid, p. 450.

284. Ibid, p. 450.


286. Brown, *op. cit.*, pp. 470-1. "In 1847 the January temperature dipped to -7 degrees F. (in Oregon City), and snow lay deep in the Willamette Valley by month. But this was considered to be unusual...for not until the winter of 1861 did such frigid blasts from the north occur again...Although the Northwest climate provided a long frost-free season, favorable to many crops and to the grazing industry, the coolness of the summer was thought to prohibit the growing of corn."


289. Ibid, p. 41.

CHAPTER FOUR: TWENTIETH CENTURY MIGRATION ALONG THE OREGON TRAIL


293. I was quoted in the Friday, August 27, 1993 edition of *The Bay News*, published in San Luis Obispo, California as saying that "People on this trail are of a like mind: We are here to live the experience. The Trail is a very personal trip for everyone." Katherine Lesperance, a free-lance writer from California, went on to write that as we spoke I was "stuffing (my) luxurious sun-streaked hair beneath (my) Stetson, (and then) laced up (my) Nikes for the day's walk."


312. Ibid, p. 64.
313. Ibid, p. 67.
315. Ibid, p. 81.
316. Ibid, p. 82.
317. Ibid, p. 81.
318. Ibid, p. 84.
319. Ibid, p. 93.
320. Ibid, p. 93.
321. "Just a note about birds. For the better part of this trip we did not see many birds at all. Almost none. It's very strange especially juxtaposed to the condition in Vancouver where the sound of seagulls flying overhead are a part of daily life on the coast. The birds related to this particular landscape through which we have been travelling are pheasant, quail, grouse, etc. i.e. birds living in tall and short grasses rather than birds living in trees or on the water." Ibid, p. 109.
327. Ibid, p. 111.
335. Ibid, p. 38.
341. Ibid, p. 72.
342. Ibid, p. 93.
345. Ibid, p. 106.
347. Ibid, p. 56.
348. Ibid, p. 86.
349. Ibid, p. 5.
350. Ibid, p. 50.
353. Ibid, p. 68.
356. Ibid, p. 5.
357. Ibid, p. 7.
358. Ibid, p. 31.
359. Ibid, p. 57.
360. Ibid, p. 60.
361. Ibid, p. 96.
362. Ibid, p. 45.
363. Ibid, p. 73.
364. Ibid, p. 73.
366. Ibid, p. 75.
367. Ibid, p. 76.
368. Ibid, p. 15.
369. Ibid, p. 11.
370. Ibid, p. 36.
371. Ibid, p. 32.
374. Ibid, p. 32.
375. Ibid, p. 92.
376. Ibid, p. 66.
378. According to Rand McNally, *op. cit.*, p. 105, the distance from Vancouver to Boise, Idaho is 660 miles, the distance from Boise to Portland, Oregon is 432 miles and the distance from Portland to Vancouver, B.C. is 316 miles, for a total of 1408 miles, which does not include all the extra little side trips, and days I got lost.


392. The change in elevation was between 98 feet above sea level at The Dalles to 2665 feet at Dufur. This change occurred over a distance of about 13 miles according to Rand McNally, *op. cit.*, p. 80.


397. Ibid, p. 104.
399. Ibid, p. 83.
400. Ibid, p. 83.
402. Ibid, p. 5.
407. Ibid, p. 54.
408. Ibid, p. 56.
410. Ibid, p. 68.
413. Ibid, p. 108.
415. Ibid, p. 44
417. Ibid, p. 16.
418. Ibid, p. 29.
419. Ibid, p. 31.
421. Ibid, p. 77.
422. Ibid, p. 79.
CHAPTER FIVE: A DESCRIPTIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS OF WOMEN'S NINETEENTH-CENTURY DIARIES RECORDED ALONG THE OREGON TRAIL


448. I suspect she is speaking of her husband here.

449. Moore, op. cit., p. 268. She feminizes the concept of Heaven in this notation and also in the note recorded on the Tuesday the 29th where she refers to "the goddess sleep."


452. Sayer was the editor and publisher of The Sibyl, "a little paper advocating the women's movement of the 1850s, published in Middleton, New York." Holmes, op. cit., Volume VII, p. 191.


454. See comments later on in thesis regarding Archibald's opinions regarding manner of dress, etc. to gain a true perspective of the strength of this woman's individual character.


456. Ide, op. cit., Volume X, p. 73.

457. For descriptions of each physiographic region by twentieth-century geographers, please refer to Chapter Three.


459. This phrase jumping off place appears to be a common term as it is also used by Stewart Eakin, Jr. in his journal dated Wednesday, August 15, 1966 where he notes "When we come to a hill (Tygh River) or mountain like this we call it the jumping off place."; see also


463. "In (sixteenth-century) Europe the knowledge of the human body had been codified and put in the custody of a powerful, exclusive, and respected profession. Stored in learned languages (Greek, Latin, Arabic, and Hebrew), such knowledge was the preserve of monopolists who called themselves Doctors of Physick."
Boorstin, op. cit., p. 338.
"Disease, they said, was the upset of the balance of "humors" in the body...the four cardinal humors..."sanguine,..."phlegmatic," "choleric," or "melancholic." Ibid, p. 341.
"The humoral lore taught physicians how to discover the unique "natural" balance of humors in each person, and then how to restore that balance in the whole body by such treatments as sweating, purging, bloodletting or inducing vomiting." Ibid, p. 342.


466. Ibid, pp. 34-5.


469. Ibid, p. 27.

471. Ibid, p. 17.


473. Ibid, pp. 80-1.

474. "Chimney Rock...(4,242 alt.), rising abruptly from the valley flow, is an eroded formation with a bare, conical base of reddish sandstone covering about 40 acres. From the center rises a narrow shaft about 150 feet high. The pinnacle is weathering away more or less rapidly." Federal Writers' Project, op. cit., p. 211.

475. "Scott's Bluff (4,662 alt.), which rises 750 feet above the plain, was always a point of major interest to early overland travelers...The name is also applied to the nearby group of bluffs. The lower two-thirds of the bluff is a flesh-colored clay similar to that in the badlands along the river; the top third is sandstone." Federal Writers' Project, op. cit., pp. 212-3.

476. "Mitchell Pass...divides the (Scotts) bluff in half." Federal Writers' Project, op. cit., p. 213.

477. (Fort) Kearney lies at an elevation of 2,146 feet.

478. Also referred to in Martha Missouri Moore's diary as "Fremonts peak." Moore, op. cit., Volume VII, p. 272.


482. Ibid, pp. 9-10.


There is indication in the journals that Ancient bluff ruins, Castle Bluffs and Courthouse Rock are all one in the same; see Belshaw, *op. cit.*, p. 15; Sutton, *op. cit.*, p. 26; A problem of identical names of places, especially rivers, creeks and streams occurred frequently throughout the historical journals.

Hines, *op. cit.*, Volume VI, p. 93.

Belshaw, *op. cit.*, p. 15.


According to Abigail Scott (Duniway) in her "Journal of a Trip to Oregon, 1852" in Holmes, *op. cit.*, Volume V, p. 66, "...These bluffs derived their name from a melancholy tradition. A traveler (of the name) was once taken sick near these bluffs and becoming unable to travel was, at his own request abandoned by his companions; He was never after heard of but a party in passing these bluffs some times afterwards found the bones of a man some distance from the spot where the unfortunate person had last been seen..."


There were many guide books in print at this time. One such book is "Emigrants Guide, 1859," by Colonel Frederick West Lander, cited by Moore, *op. cit.*, Volume VII, p. 282.

Taylor, *op. cit.*, Volume VI, p. 166.

"Old Fort Laramie, Wyoming is situated at an elevation of 4,250 ft. above sea level." Federal Writer's Project, *op. cit.*, p. 170. Laramie, Wyoming (7,165 ft.) is located to the south on the old Cherokee Trail/Overland Trail.


"...The walls of the gorge are of gray granite. A streak of black granite running from the bottom to the top of the southern ridge...appears to be a roadway. Neither the appearance of the gorge nor any other evidence indicates that the opening was cut by erosion. It seems rather...formed by some convulsion of nature. The chasm, 330 feet deep, is only 30 feet wide at the bottom." Federal Writers' Project, op. cit., p. 189.

The Sweetwater River flows out from the North Platte River at Independence Rock. As noted above this
author interchanges Sweet Water (Sweetwater) River and Platte.


521. "The Wyoming Basin region occurs between the northern and southern Rocky Mountains. This region encompasses several major basins including the Big Horn, Wind River, Bridger, and Shirley Basins. The elevations of the Wyoming Basin region are mostly between 6000 and 8000 feet above sea level. The basins are interrupted by mountains, buttes, river valleys, and badlands." Harker, *op. cit.*, p. A-89.

522. This is where two or three trails diverge - one trail going south to Salt Lake City, Utah; and the Sublette Cutoff (south to Fort Bridger) and Ladner Road (north preferred) routes to Oregon. "Most emigrants have a very erroneous idea of the South Pass...They suppose it to be a narrow defile in the Rocky Mountains, walled in by perpendicular rocks hundreds of feet high...The fact is they are in the South Pass all the way up the Sweet Water. The 'pass' is a valley some twenty miles wide, with the Sweet Water mountains on one side, and Rattlesnake mountains and the Wind River range on the other..." Federal Writers' Project, *op. cit.*, p. 194.


529. The Green River is a tributary of the Colorado. It was crossed by companies that travelled both the North and South Platte Route.

530. Spelling is 'Hams' according to Rand McNally, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

531. The Hams Fork Cutoff (a.k.a. the Oregon-California Trail) runs between Fort Bridger in the south (on the Cherokee Trail) and the Ladner Road route in the north. It runs parallel to the Bear River.


546. "Elevation is approximately 6750 feet above sea level." Rand McNally, *op. cit.*, 104.

She comments that on ‘Sept 17th...We have passed beautiful & sublime scenery, Echo Canyon especially - that surpasses very thing I have yet seen before - and some spots yesterday I felt I could live and die in! but here we have truly "no continuing city".

549. Echo, Utah is located on US 84 about 20 miles west of Salt Lake City. Rand McNally, *op. cit.*, p. 97.


551. The Devil's Slide is located on US 84 about 10-12 miles north-east of Salt Lake City, on the route following north to Idaho. Rand McNally, *op. cit.*, p. 97.


557. Ide, *op. cit.*, Volume X, p. 84.

558. Between Buhl and Haberman is Thousand Springs and "Though long a source of mystery to both laymen and geologists, the Thousand Springs...are the outlets of buried rivers that are lost in the lava terrain 150 miles to the northeast...The whole of central Idaho seems to be an area of subterranean rivers..." and "In the high cliffs above Thousand Springs and in other places throughout Hagerman Valley, marine fossils are abundant. Besides remains of luxuriant tropical vegetation, there are also survivals of mastodons, wild hogs, and a rare species of ancient horse that seems to have been the immediate forebear of the present animal." Federal Writers' Project, *The Oregon Trail, op. cit.*, p. 115.

559. The Bear River also flows through the state of Utah.

561. Meade Peak to the southeast of Soda Springs is 10,541 feet above sea level. Rand McNally, *op. cit.*, p. 25.


566. Soda Springs lies at an elevation of 5,777 feet and "...is one of the oldest settlements in the State." Federal Writers' Project, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

567. Martha Jane Gray suggests in her diary notation on July 1st that the Soda Springs rise "out of the rocks 50 ft. high," *op. cit.*, p. 13.


573. "The major portion of the Columbia Plateaux consists of the drainage basin of the Columbia River, while the eastern section is in the basin of the Snake River, the main tributary of the Columbia. The old topography of the region was covered with flows of lava...Lakes were formed after these outpourings and the present soil is a result of the disintegration of the lava." And further that "The explorer, having crossed the Rocky Mountains, entered one of the three interior plateaux. The discovery of the great arid interior and of the inland drainage basin was one of the most important events in the history of American discovery." Gilbert, *op. cit.*, pp. 33-4; see Holmes, *op. cit.*, Volume XI; "The High Desert region occurs in the rain shadow of the Cascade Mountain Range. The region includes most of central and southeastern Washington, much of eastern Oregon (excluding the Blue Mountains),


575. Fort Hall lies at an elevation of 4,445 feet. "Fort Hall became the most important trading post in the Snake River Valley. It was the only inhabited place between Fort Bridger, Wyoming, and Fort Boise, Idaho." Federal Writers' Project, op. cit., pp. 202-3.


577. I believe the author is referring to Saddle Mountain at 10,302 feet (Lemhi Range), Borah Peak at 12,662 ft. (Lost River Range), the highest point in Idaho and Hyndman Peak at 12,078 feet in the Sawtooth Range. Rand McNally, op. cit., p. 25.


579. There is now the American Falls Dam and American Falls Reservoir at this location. Rand McNally, op. cit., p. 25. American Falls lies at an elevation of 4,330 feet. Federal Writers' Project, op. cit., p. 108.

580. Hanna notes that American Falls was reached the next day after stopping at Fort Hall (Monday 19"). Upon further investigation it was understood that American Falls is located 44 miles to the west of Fort Hall. Hanna, op. cit., p. 25.


582. This quote refers to Rock Creek, Idaho which is about 6 miles south-east of Twin Falls, Idaho, elevation approximately 3,745 feet. Rand McNally, op. cit., p. 25. Not to be confused with Rock Creek, Wyoming which is located approximately 37 miles north-west of Laramie (I-80) and lies at an approximate elevation of 6,800 feet. Federal Writers' Project, op. cit., p. 89.


584. Twin Falls lies at an elevation of 3,492 feet "Three miles south of Snake River and on the bank of Rock creek." Federal Writers' Project, op. cit., p. 112.

586. The "Snake River...is tributary to the Columbia, but larger. It is a thousand miles in length and the extreme breadth of its basin is 450. For more than half its distance it flows through a gorge...Most of its waters are unnavigable." Federal Writers' Project, op. cit., p. 107.


591. Ibid, pp. 72-3.


594. Saunders, op. cit., p. 5.

595. The journals simply refer to the Lost River but it is names the Big Lost River to distinguish it from the Little Lost River to the east. Rand McNally, op. cit., p. 25.


598. Taylor, op. cit., Volume VI, p. 163.

599. After leaving The Dalles our Wagon Train travelled to Dufur, over the Tygh Grade Summit at an elevation of 2,697 feet, through Tygh Valley and Wamic. Rand McNally, op. cit., p. 80.


602. Hanna, op. cit., p. 27.

603. Belshaw, op. cit., p. 34.


607. From Ontario, Oregon (on the border between Idaho and Oregon) up the I-84 (Oregon Trail) to La Grande, Oregon (in the middle of the Blue Mountains) the elevation increases from 2155 feet to 2788 feet above sea level. Rand McNally, *op. cit.*, p. 81.


618. We struck off I-84 just west of Pendleton, Oregon to follow more closely the original Oregon Trail, through Cecil, Rock Creek and Wasco. We hooked back up with the I-84 at the Deschutes River Recreation Area (where the Deschutes River joins the Columbia River).


625. Gray, op. cit., p. 11.

626. Hanna, op. cit., p. 31.

627. Hines, op. cit., p. 125. "22nd Thursday...Walked out to see the scenery which is very romantic. We are entirely hemmed in by the Cascade Mountains some of the immediate peaks of which some of our party judge to be 1000 ft in height...The side next to the river of which is perpendicular & clearly shows the action of water & I should think that this perpendicularity was caused by the Columbia's first bursting through the mountains & that the channel of the river was once near its base..."


630. Belshaw, op. cit., p. 40. "September 18th Had a fair wind to-day...Very stormy here, we can scarcely walk about. There is one store, boarding and gambling house all in one, and one above us, and some below at the boat landing. We hear nothing but bitter oaths...Such as makes sober and rational people shudder to hear..."


632. "This region includes the coastal mountains...the west slopes of the Cascade Mountains in Washington and Oregon, and the north coastal region of California...This region is often referred to as the temperate rainforest region..." Harker, op. cit., p. A-5.

633. Abigail Jane Scott (Duniway) writes that on "Sep 24 We traveled about twelve miles, seven brought us to the foot of Laurel Hill, and five to the crossing of Zigzag creek; Laurel hill is an almost perpendicular descent of two miles in extent, with three benches where the teams could stop to rest...We had to chain the wagon wheels, and slide the wagons down the rutty and rocky road..." Scott, op. cit., Volume V, p. 133.

634. Mt. Hood is Oregon's highest peak at 11,235 feet above sea level. The highest point of travel across Mt. Hood on the Barlow Road is at Summit Meadows which is
approximately 4,200 feet above sea level. Rand McNally, op. cit., p. 80.

635. Mt. St. Helens is 8,365 feet above sea level. Rand McNally, op. cit., p. 100.

636. Mt. Adams is 12,276 feet above sea level. Both Mt. St. Helens and Mt. Adams are in southern Washington and are clearly visible from higher vantage points along the Columbia.


638. "John Crosby was listed in the 1850 census as a "Dr. of Medicine"..." Hines, op. cit., Volume VI, p. 128.


640. Margaret Scott, in diary of Abigail Scott (Duniway), op. cit., Volume V, p. 163.

641. Chimney Rock, Nebraska is located in the Great Plains physiographic region, a few miles east of the border between Nebraska and Wyoming.

642. Pengra, op. cit., p. 27.


645. Ibid, p. 15.


647. See introduction to Springer diary, op. cit., Volume XI p. 73.


653. Ibid, pp. 141-49.
654. Ibid, pp. 149-50.
655. Pengra, op. cit., p. 4.
656. Ibid, p. 22.
659. Kyle, op. cit., p. 70. "As many of the stones as possible were moved aside for ease of passage for the wagons."
663. See also Donner Party letters. Tamsen Donner and Virginia B. Reed previously quoted later in this Chapter.
665. See letter written by Abigail Jane Scott (Duniway) from Oregon on July 18th, 1852 where she relates to her Grandfather that "...Aunt (Martha) has walked ten miles in a day twice and I have done it several times without as much fatigue as in walking two miles at home..." See Scott, op. cit., Volume V, p. 153.
669. Ibid, p. 175.


675. Ibid. See also notation for June 5th, June 10th, June 30th, July 3rd, and August 15th.


682. Ibid, p. 159.

683. Ibid, p. 159.


691. Ibid, pp. 52-3.


693. Sutton, op. cit., Volume VII, p. 35.


696. Scott (Duniway), op. cit., Volume V, p. 96.


698. Ibid, pp. 51-52.


704. Ibid, p. 25.

705. Ibid, p. 10.


This woman, born a New Yorker, made her first appearance on history's page as a teacher in Ypsilanti, Michigan, in 1849, at the age of 25 years. She moved on from there to Lansing, where she was principal of that city's Female Seminary. She then became a teacher in the Michigan Female College. During these years she was an active feminist, even adopting the "freedom costume," the "bloomer dress."

713. Note of man doing essentially women's work. An obvious blurring of the boundaries of women's and men's work spheres did occur on the trail.


718. Ide, *op. cit.*, Volume X, p. 61. She goes on in this particular notation to talk about getting dinner ready with the help of her maid 'Lucinda Hessler' which is indication of the financial position of the Ide family.


724. Ide, *op. cit.*, Volume X, p. 61. She goes on in this particular notation to talk about getting dinner ready with the help of her maid 'Lucinda Hessler' which is indication of the financial position of the Ide family.


730. Ibid, p. 80.

731. Virginia Reed did not see herself as a child even though she was only 13 years old at the time of the journey.

732. Ibid, pp. 77-81.


736. Ibid, p. 41.


739. Pengra, op. cit., p. 10.


742. Ibid, p. 34.

743. See Gray, op. cit., p. 10; and, Belshaw, op. cit., p. 30.


744. From an introduction written by Marguerite W. Black, whose husband, John M. Black, is the grandson of Mary Louisa Black, op. cit., Volume IX, pp. 55-57.


748. This passage speaks of the apparent fact that women and men were equal participants and decision makers on the Oregon Trail. This family was willing to return to the east for the sake of the health of a woman (who was a wife, mother and sister). Secondly, this passage speaks of the blurring of lines between the genders when Lucy comments on the role the men played in caring
for the infant boy. And thirdly, this passage speaks of the female community experience.

750. Stewart, op. cit., p. 4.
756. Ibid, pp. 170-1.
758. Ide, op. cit., Volume X, p. 68.
768. Ibid, p. 18.


776. "On November 9, 1885, just two months after her arrival, Viola Springer was married to George Marshall, a cowboy on a neighboring ranch. Viola already was acquainted with several people in the valley, no doubt from her prior residence in Oregon, and it may be that she already knew Marshall." Introduction to diary of Viola Springer, *op. cit.*, Volume XI, p. 74.


791. The Springer party travelled through Nebraska and Wyoming along present-day US 80 (Rand McNally, *op. cit.*, p. 104). The bluffs she speaks of here are
located at the very southeastern tip of the state of Wyoming approximately 40 miles east of Cheyenne.

797. Pengra, op. cit., p. 17.
802. Pengra, op. cit., p. 25.
815. "Harney, Oregon, was founded in 1885, the year the Springer family arrived. It is located at the mouth of Rattlesnake Creek...Originally a portion of Baker County, the county of Harney was formed in 1890." Ibid, p. 74.

816. Ibid, p. 139.

817. Ibid, pp. 140-1.


820. Ibid, p. 103.


827. Ibid, p. 269.

CHAPTER SIX: ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS


APPENDIX


832. Harker, Evans, Evans, and Harker (eds.), op. cit.
833. From a thorough examination of the historical journals, botany was a definite interest to most of the women writing from the Oregon Trail and in many cases was related to an interest in herbal remedies or homeopathic medicine as noted earlier.

834. David Rich Lewis. "Argonauts and the Overland Trail Experience: Method and Theory." *Western Historical Quarterly*, Volume XVI, Number 3, July (1985): p. 287. Lewis provides a content analysis of male gold rushers' diaries in which they express their concerns and trail experiences "applying value-analysis to sampled diaries of male argonauts and gathering the rhetorical and behavioral expression of common cultural values contained therein, similar experiences, expressions, and behaviors...Differences do exist, but when viewed in terms of common cultural values and social norms, the experiences of these lone male argonauts blend with the larger trail community experience as recognized and described by Faragher and other scholars."


837. John Philip Reid. *Law for the Elephant: Property and Social Behavior on the Overland Trail*. Huntington, Cal.: The Huntington Library, 1980, p. 11. "The problem is that no composite can be drawn. No journal or diary was representative of all life on the overland trail, nor were the experiences of a single emigrant typical."

838. Butlin, *op. cit.*, p. 68. "The terms 'people's history' or 'history from the bottom up' have been used by social historians to describe this revived emphasis on the historical experiences of the majority of the population (as opposed to the history of the elite and the privileged)..."; see Miles, Miranda and Jonathan Crush (eds.) "Personal Narratives as Interactive Texts: Collecting and Interpreting Migrant Life Histories." *Professional Geographer* 45(1) (1993): p. 85. "This represents an extension of earlier efforts to rewrite the historical geography of Swaziland "from below" using the insights and methods
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