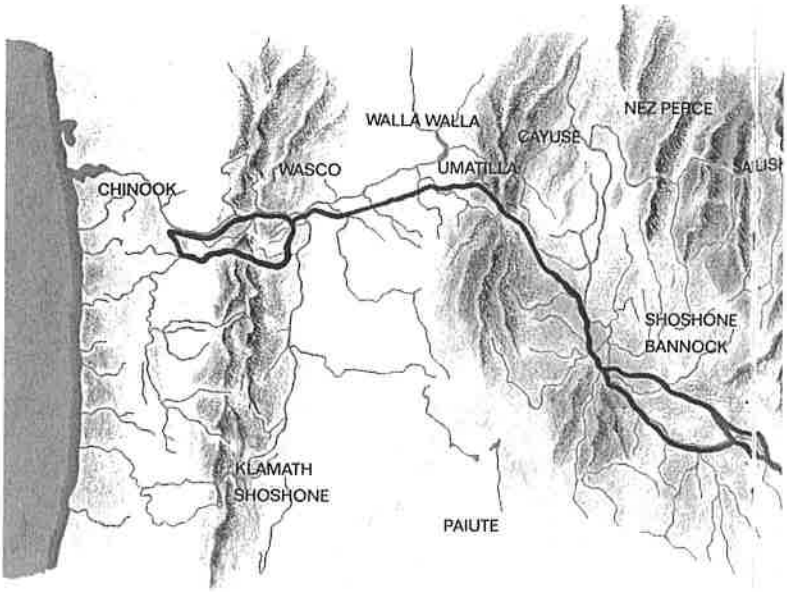
Tribes Of The West

After they crossed the Missouri, the overlanders were in Indian country. First they encountered the *Oto* and *Kansa* tribes as well as some *Potowatomie* and *Kickapoo*. These Indians lived in villages and bartered their vegetables for items like cloth and fishhooks. They also kept toll bridges over the deeply cut prairie creeks, which the overlanders found helpful but infuriating, as they had to pay to get across.

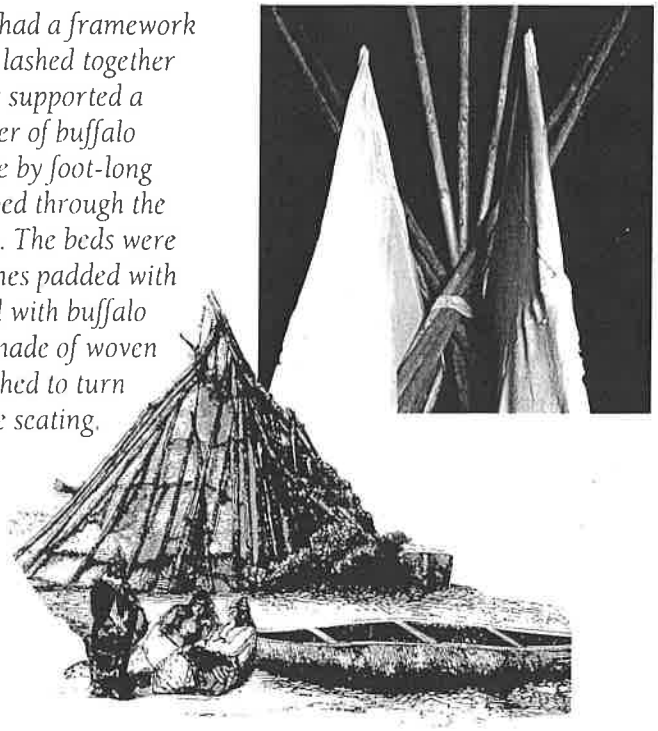
Left: *A* Klickitat *Indian. The* Klickitat *lived in the foothills of the Cascade Mountains and hunted in the Willamette Valley* (see map on page 4).

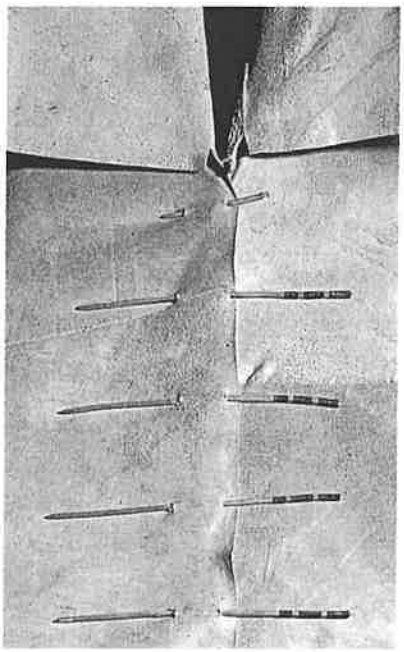
The *Pawnee* did some farming, but they were also horsemen and hunters. They wore their heads shaved Mohawk style, and frequently fought with other plains tribes over hunting territory. The *Lakota* (or *Dakota*) were a group of tribes whom the overlanders usually called the *Sioux*. Like the *Cheyenne* and *Arapaho*, they had been forced onto the plains in the eighteenth century by rival tribes. They became the most famous of the buffalo-hunting Indians of the plains.

The *Shoshone* Indians hunted, trapped, and fished in the northern mountain regions. Like the *Nez Perce* and *Salish* (*Flatheads*), they were friendly to white people, supplying them with fresh fish and berries and sometimes acting as guides.



Right: *The tepee had a framework of 16 to 20 poles, lashed together near the top. This supported a semi-circular cover of buffalo hides held in place by foot-long wooden pins slipped through the overlapping holes. The beds were made of pole frames padded with grass and covered with buffalo hides. Backrests made of woven willow were attached to turn them into daytime seating.*



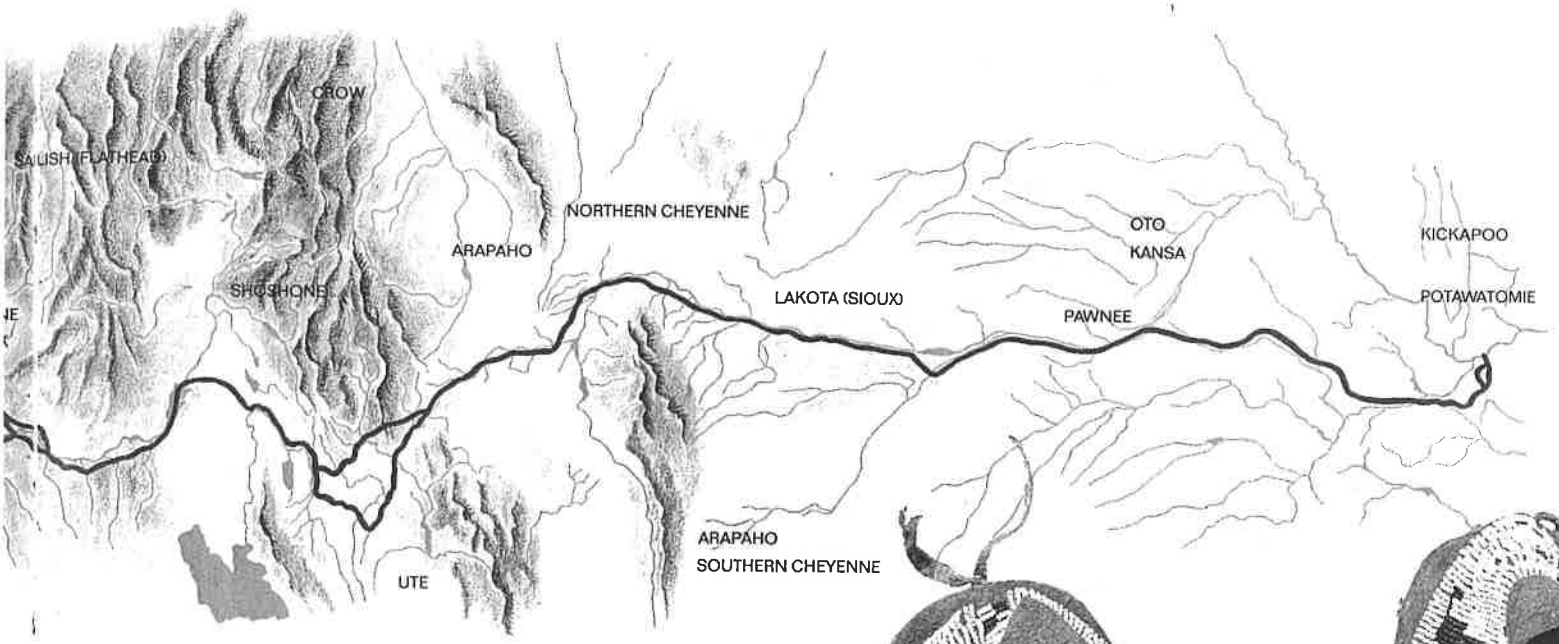


This was so well known that if an Indian from any tribe in the region wanted to show goodwill to an overlander, he would say, "I Shoshone."

In the infertile regions of the Great Basin the *Utes* and related tribes had to live chiefly on roots and plants, which led overlanders bound for California to call them all *Digger* Indians. The *Cayuse, Umatilla, Chinook*, and other fishing tribes whom the Oregon settlers met on the banks of the Columbia were more prosperous.

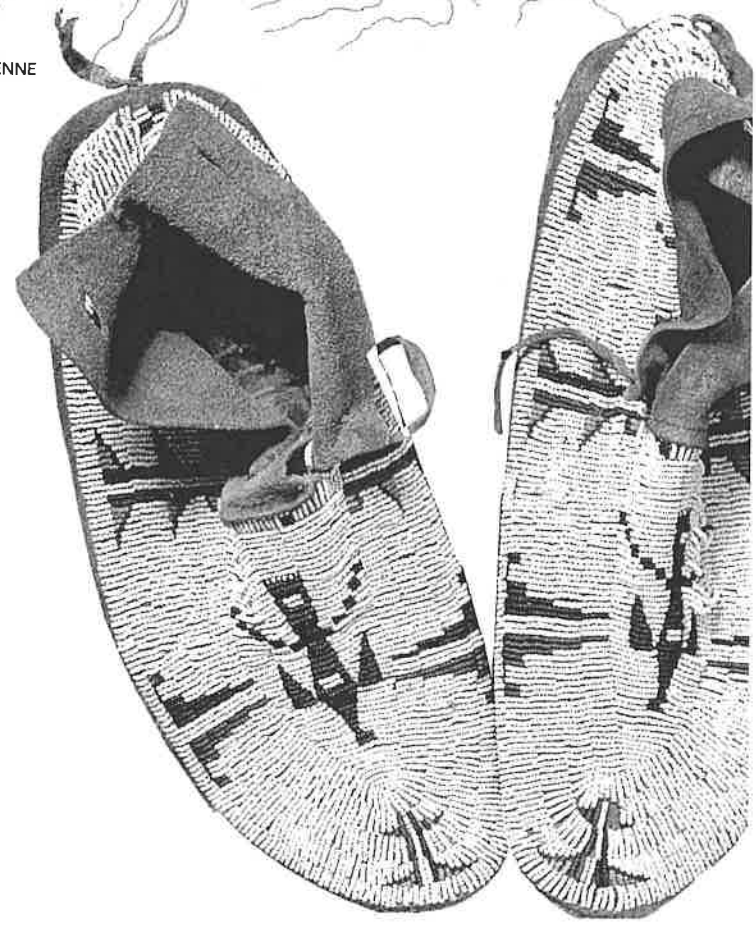
"Today we saw some* Nez Perce *Indians. Father tried to say some words to them in their own language, which he got out of Mr. Palmer's Guidebook, but they only laughed and so he walked away." Abe Larkin's Diary

Below: *Map of Indian territory.*



Native American Crafts

Buffalo hides were also used to make clothing, moccasins (a popular item for trade with overlanders), saddles for women (warriors used only a folded blanket secured by a girth!), and parfleches, which were folding traveling pouches. In earlier times, these articles would have been decorated with geometrical designs fashioned from porcupine quills, but from about 1800 porcelain and glass beads, obtained from white traders, began to be used instead.

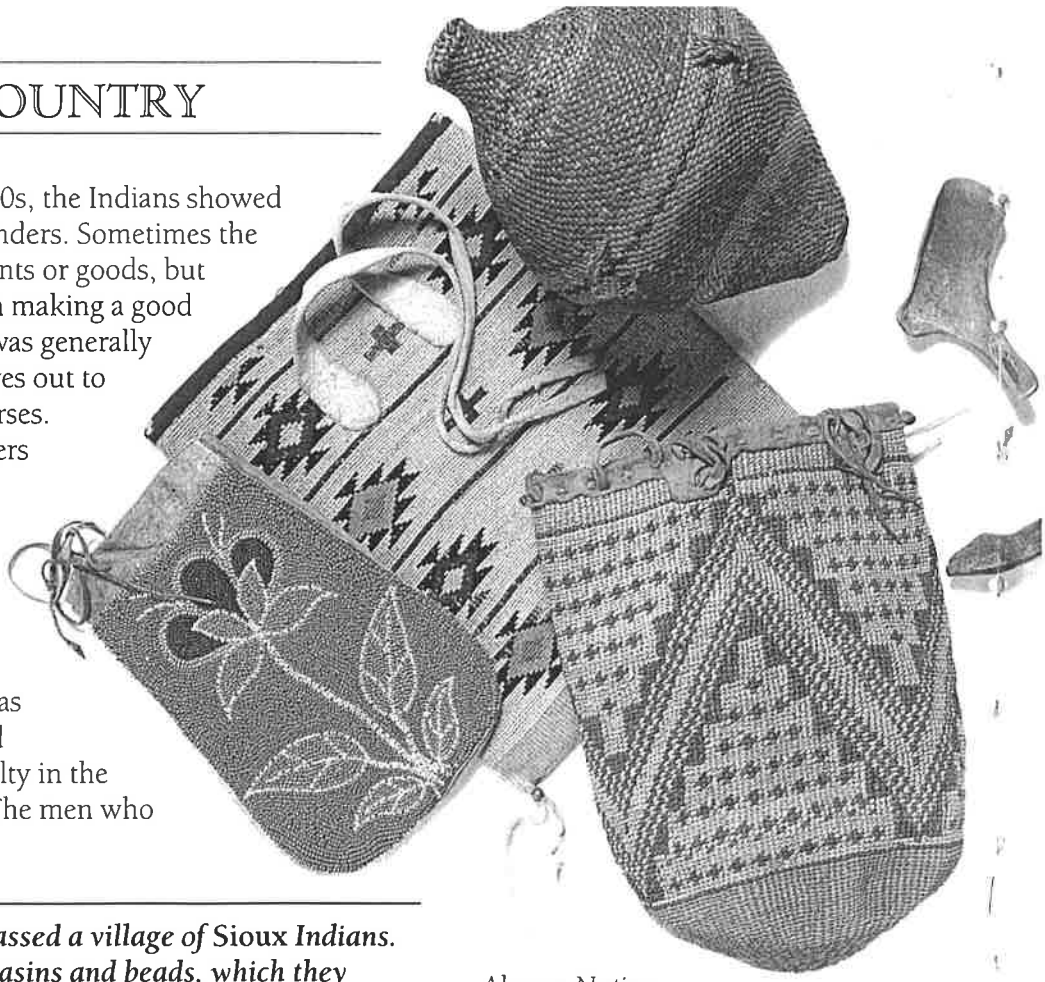


Right: *Fancy moccasins like these were probably used for ceremonies only. The beads would have been acquired in trade with the whites.*

Indian Country

In the 1840s and early 1850s, the Indians showed little interest in the overlanders. Sometimes the Indians demanded payments or goods, but often they were simply interested in making a good trade. What little bloodshed there was generally involved small bands of young braves out to impress their friends by stealing horses. More often than not, these youngsters were acting against the wishes of the chiefs, who had no desire to anger the travelers. Although the Indians were more a nuisance than a danger, the overlanders were wary. People like the Larkins had thought of Indians as "noble savages," but when they read exaggerated stories about their cruelty in the "penny press," they were worried. The men who guarded the wagon train at night would fire at any noise, and often ended up shooting each other. However, the Indians were much more interested in organizing raids against their traditional enemies than in attacking the overlanders. The Indians often used the rivers to mark the edges of their hunting grounds. As the wagon trains followed the rivers (*see page 32*), overlanders often met up with parties of Indians off to do battle. But they soon realized that, although young braves might steal their animals, the war parties would ignore them completely.

"This afternoon we passed a village of Sioux Indians. The women had moccasins and beads, which they wanted to trade for bread. Husband traded a big Indian a lot of pilot bread for a pair of moccasins, but after we started out he ran up making a big fuss and wanted them back. They had eaten some of the pilot bread and were not satisfied. We handed the moccasins to him in a hurry and drove away as fast as possible." Mrs. Larkin's Diary

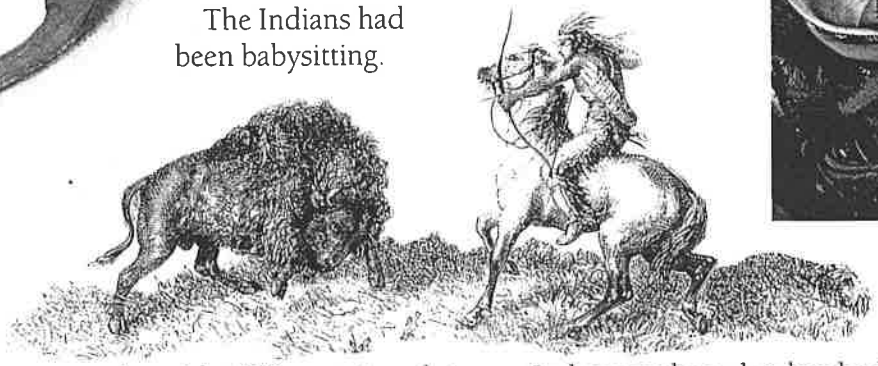


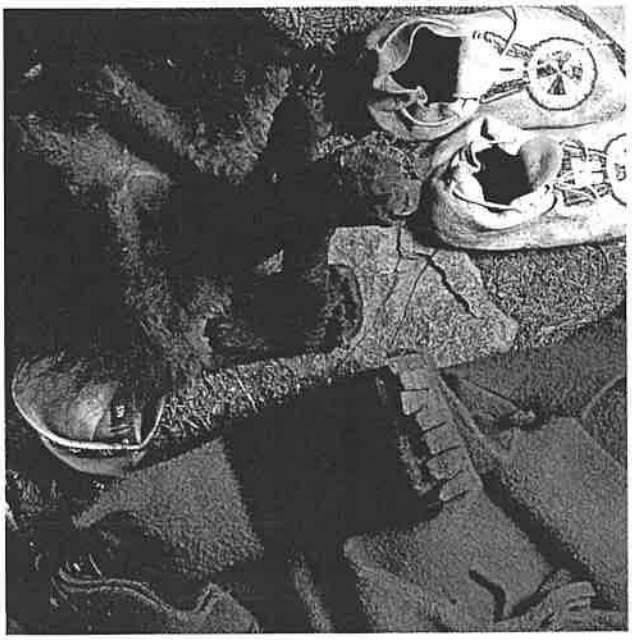
Above: *Native American weaving was of such high quality that it could be used for jars. The ladles are carved out of bone.*

Left: *Native American tomb.*

The Indians' love of children was well known. One diary tells of a mother who put down her baby in some tall grass in order to help her husband lower their wagon down a steep hill. She was horrified to see a band of Indians gathering round her child, and ran toward them. They stood back to let her pass, and she found her child lying as she had left him.

The Indians had been babysitting.

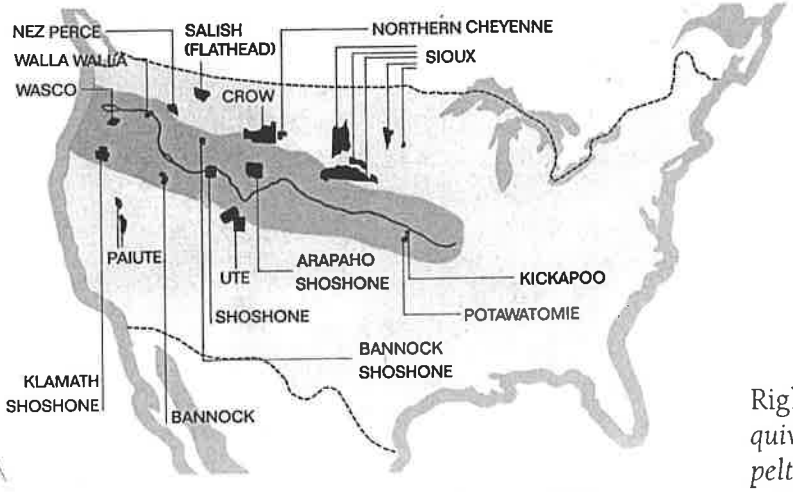




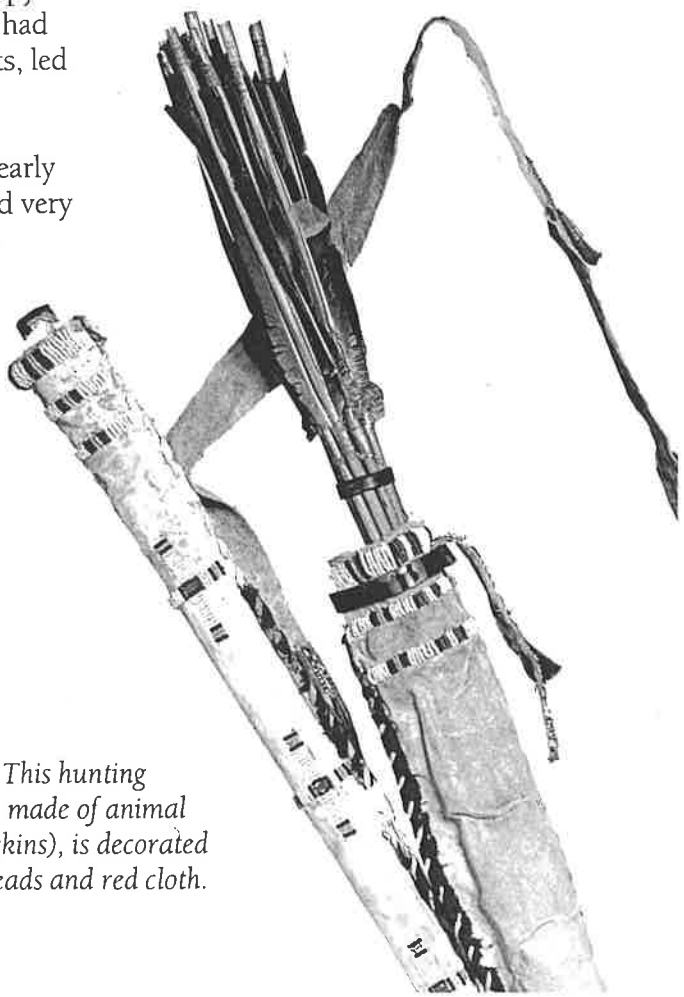
Above: *Native American dress included a blanket and moccasins. The saddle is covered with fur.*

By the mid-1850s, relations between Indians and overlanders had worsened. A series of misunderstandings, and some trigger-happy officers, led to the massacre of a Sioux village after the villagers had been deceived by a flag of truce. This, and other similar conflicts, led to over 30 years of "Indian Wars."

By 1890 the Indians' old way of life had been destroyed. The buffalo, numbering perhaps twelve million in 1850, was nearly extinct, made so by the white hunters armed with their new and very effective breech-loading rifles (*see page 26*). White settlers were farming the prairies and plains and the once mighty tribes of the west were confined to reservations.



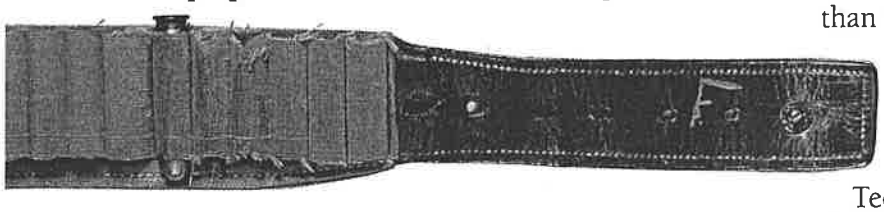
Above: *Native American Reservations in 1890*



Right: *This hunting quiver, made of animal pelts (skins), is decorated with beads and red cloth.*

HUNTING

The prairies were known to be rich in game, and the overlanders counted on being able to hunt for food. They were well prepared: Each adult male was expected to have at least one rifle and a revolver. Additional supplies included shotguns, bullet molds, lead, gunpowder, and assorted knives. The guidebooks advised overlanders to carry these weapons in case they were attacked by Indians, but in fact they were used far more often for hunting. Each morning the captain would send out a well-armed party of sharp-shooters like Matt Belknap, to hunt.



Above: *The cartridges in this belt were used by buffalo-hunters with breech-loading rifles.*

During the first stages of the journey the hunters seldom came back with anything bigger than rabbits, prairie chickens, pheasants, and other small birds and animals. But as they traveled farther west, they could hope for elk, antelope, bighorn sheep, and, best of all, buffalo.

Techniques for hunting buffalo varied. Before they got horses and firearms, the Indians would often stampede a herd over a precipice and then finish them off with bows and arrows. A hunter armed with a rifle might walk to within a few yards of a buffalo, and if it did not catch his scent, he could fire off round after round of bullets.

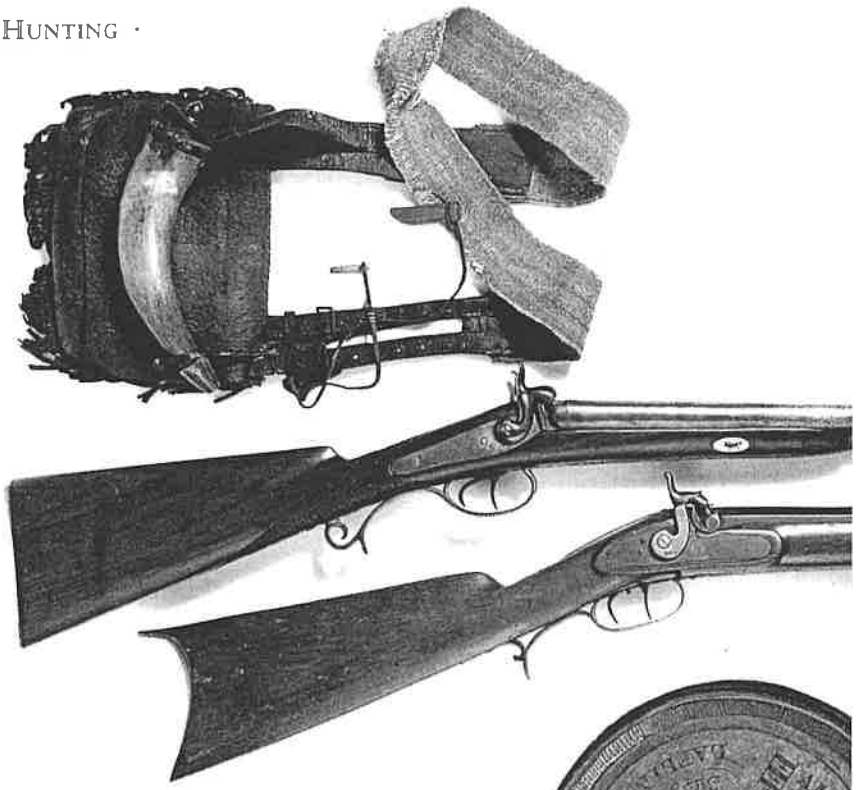
Above: *A buffalo-hunter's kit, with a warm jacket, cartridge bag, and saddle.*

Right: *A professional buffalo-hunter at work. Much of the equipment used by hunters was bought from the army.*

Left: *A hunting knife.*

"The valley of the Platte is dotted all over with the skeletons of buffalo. Such waste of creatures that God has made for man seems wicked, but every emigrant seems to wish to signalize himself by killing one." Mrs. Larkin's Diary

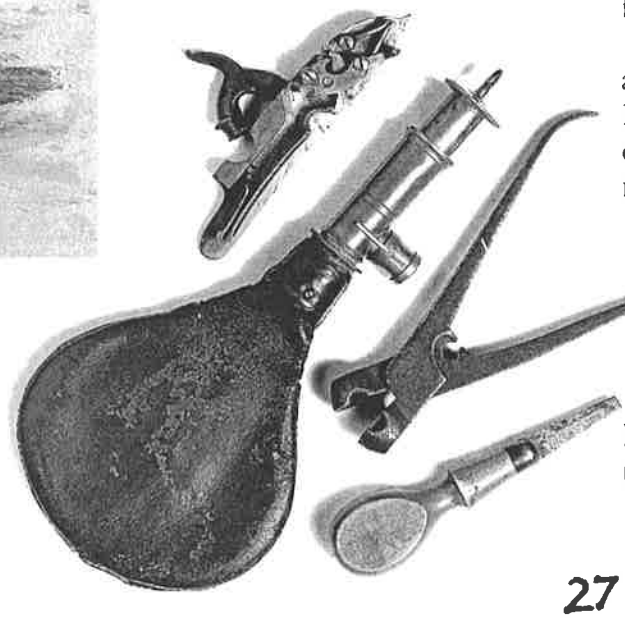
The buffalo, which could be up to ten feet long, and weigh as much as a ton, would simply stand there with a dazed expression and then drop to the ground, stone dead. More adventurous hunters might ride into the flank of a stampeding herd, single out one buffalo, and aim for the spine in hopes of felling it with a single shot.



Right: *A hunting pouch, a horn powder flask, and two guns. The top one is a shotgun used for small game, and the bottom one is a muzzle-loading rifle for heavier game such as antelope. Below them is a powder keg.*

Above: *An American pheasant.*

Below: *Shooting equipment: a powder flask, bullet mold, and gun lock. To make round musket balls for his rifle, Matt Belknap pours lead into the mold through the hole at the top and waits for it to solidify before opening it up again.*

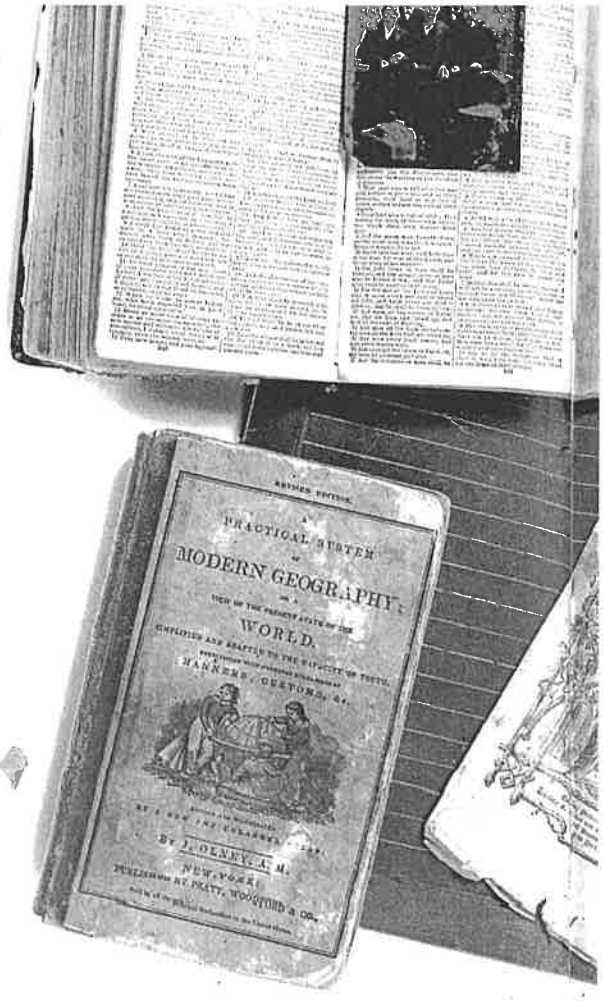


Travelers like the Larkins particularly prized the meat of buffalo cows, the bulls being regarded as too tough and stringy. The hump would be roasted, the tongue braised, and the marrow bones baked in the coals of the campfire. Meat that was not eaten fresh would be preserved by the traditional Indian technique of jerking. Cut into thin strips, it would hang over a smokey fire for half a day or dangle from the back of the wagon to cure. If there was time, the hide would be cured, so that eventually a pile of robes might lie alongside the family's store of blankets.

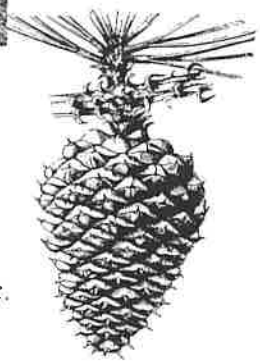
Early overlanders like the Larkins tried to use as much of the buffalo as possible, just as the Indians did. But as overland travel became more common, this changed. The earliest overlanders reported seeing the plains black with buffalo and they lived in fear of a deadly stampede. Within a few decades, however, as more and more overlanders killed for "sport" rather than for needed food, and commercial hunters killed for the hides, the once-vast herds were nearly exterminated. By then overlanders had other food sources, but the Indians had lost their traditional hunting forever.

Children's Activities

For the Larkin children, the journey to Oregon began as one great holiday. "We're going to where the Injuns be!" shouted Abe when his father told him their plans. Of course, they had chores to do each day – milking the cows, carrying water – just as they did back in Indiana. But Abe would not be helping his father with the plowing, and Rachel and Rebecca would not be doing spinning, quilting, and other household chores alongside their mother. Back in Indiana, Rachel, Abe and Rebecca went to school, at least for most of the winter months. Older pupils like Rachel did lessons in grammar and geography from textbooks, and younger ones would "work out" sums on a slate, practice handwriting in their copybooks, or recite in turn from a reader. But there is no time for formal "schooling" on the trail, although Mrs. Larkin or one of the other mothers sometimes holds a spelling bee or hears the children recite.



Above: *Rabbitbrush grows in the drier regions of the west. It has yellow blossoms and a very strong smell.*



Right: *Fir cone.*

Above: *Margaret tries to catch lizards, but they are always too quick for her.*

The Larkin children gather berries, currants, and hazelnuts. They pick wild flowers: Black-eyed Susans, purple blazing star, wild geraniums, and the pink prairie rose. Sometimes they find a species they have never seen before, so they save some seeds to plant in Oregon or send to friends back East. But the children soon get tired of the journey. Rebecca complains of dust or mud, depending on the weather. Mrs. Larkin keeps little Margaret happy by giving her some colored beads to string together – a difficult task in a bouncing wagon.

"Matthew brought me some flowers... Their form and color resemble the snowball and their perfume the night-blooming jessamine."
Rachel Larkin's Diary

Above: *Mr. and Mrs. Larkin followed the guidebook's advice to "lay in a good supply of school books for the children."*

NOONING

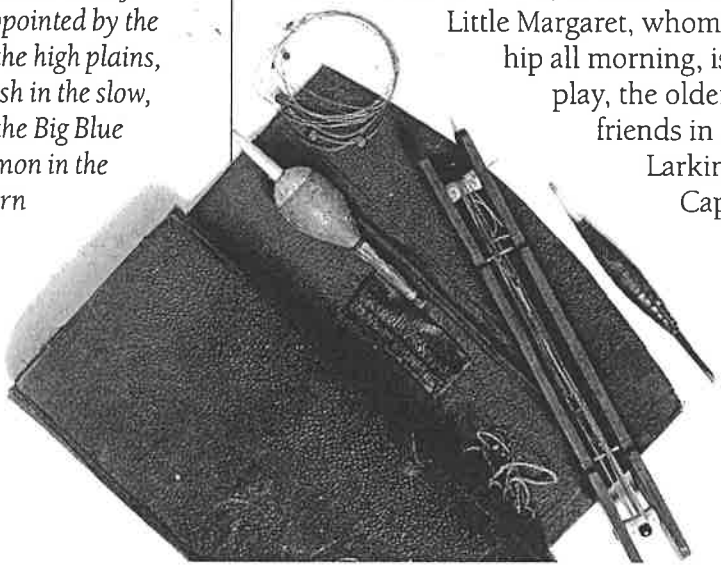
It is midday, and the wagons have been rolling along for five hours. The day is hot and the oxen are tired.

Captain Bonner's advance scouts have found a cool stream not far ahead, and he calls a halt. The wagons pull up and the oxen are released, though not unyoked, and the whole party settles down for an hour of rest.

Above: *Overlanders resting beside their wagons at noon.*

"Mrs. Pringle called on me today and very much admired my bonnet. I promised to give her the pattern and returned the compliment by admiring her apron."
Mrs. Larkin's Diary

"Nooning" is Mrs. Larkin's favorite time of day. The family eat leftovers from breakfast, so she does not have to do any cooking. Little Margaret, whom she has been carrying on her hip all morning, is allowed to toddle about and play, the older children run off to see their friends in the other wagons, and Mr. Larkin leaves for a meeting with Captain Bonner and his council. Mrs. Larkin uses the time to relax and to write in her diary. She notes down the latest gossip on the wagon train, and any news she has been able to get of the outside world.



Below: *Abe's fishing gear has a collapsible rod which is ideal for travel. He is disappointed by the lack of fishing on the high plains, but there are catfish in the slow, muddy waters of the Big Blue and trout and salmon in the rivers of the western mountains.*

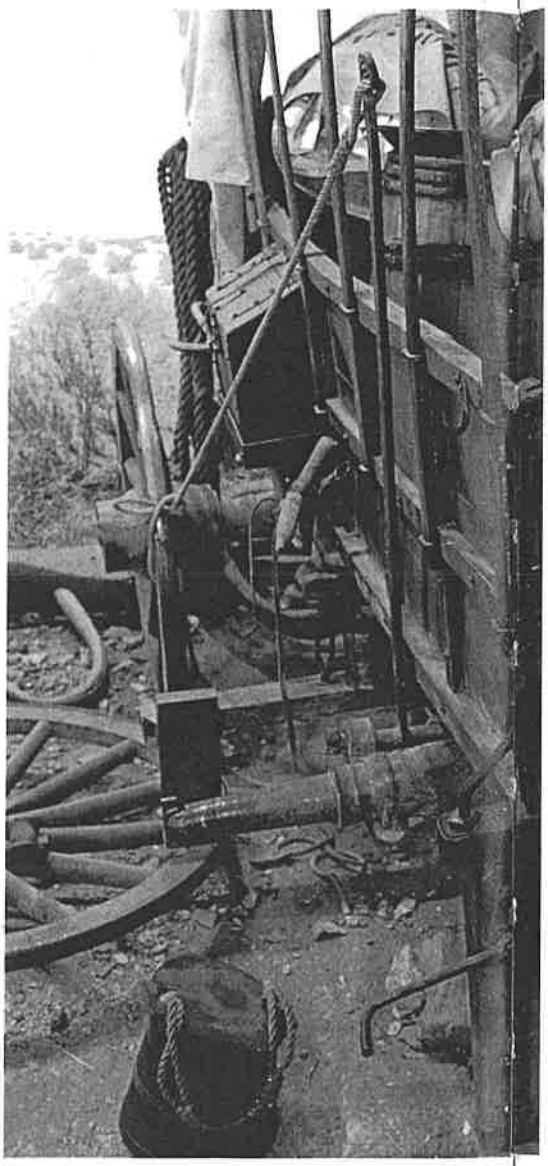
Mishaps

From 1852 to 1853, almost 90,000 overlanders headed for Oregon and California. The wagon trains, which left the jumping-off points almost daily, often overtook each other. They also met up with "go-backers" who were returning east. They had "seen the elephant" (*see left*), an expression meaning that they had experienced the hardships of life in the west and decided they could not put up with them. Besides the weariness of months of travel, the overlanders had many other problems: Even if the driver was as good as Mr. Larkin, any wagon, however well made, could break down, and the oxen could become sick or exhausted (*see below*).

Above: Crossing the Plains, *1851. Painting by Charles Nahl.*

"Alkali water" killed many oxen. This water was full of chemical salts left behind as the lakes dried out in the hot weather. An ox that had drunk this water might be saved if chunks of bacon and swigs of vinegar could be forced down its throat to stop the salts burning its insides. Rough ground and desert sands were also a hazard, as they often led to lameness and sore feet. The remedy for this was to put the ox in booties made of rawhide.

"There is no end to the wagons, buggies, yokes, chains, etc. that are lying all along this road, and many the poor horses, mules, oxen, cows, etc. that are lying dead in these mountains." Mrs. Larkin's Diary



Above: *There were other hazards besides sick oxen. A broken wheel was almost irreplaceable. Few wagon trains had time to wait while a new wheel was made out of a discarded table top or some other piece of quality furniture.*

Right: *A "brake" made of strong rope stopped the wheels turning.*

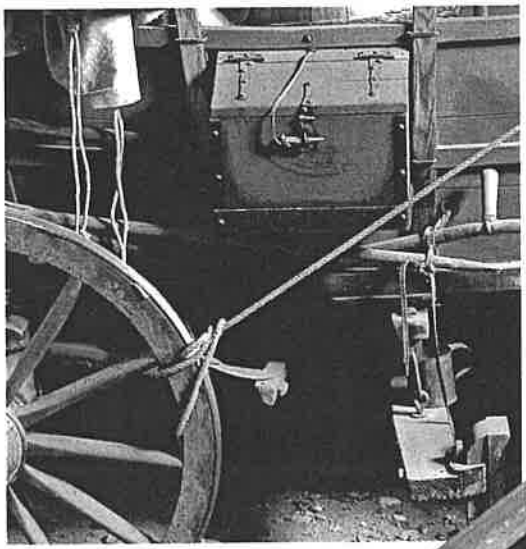
Broken axles were taken almost as a matter of course. Nearly every wagon started out with at least one spare, to reduce the risk of having to detour for miles in search of a tree large enough to be made into a replacement.

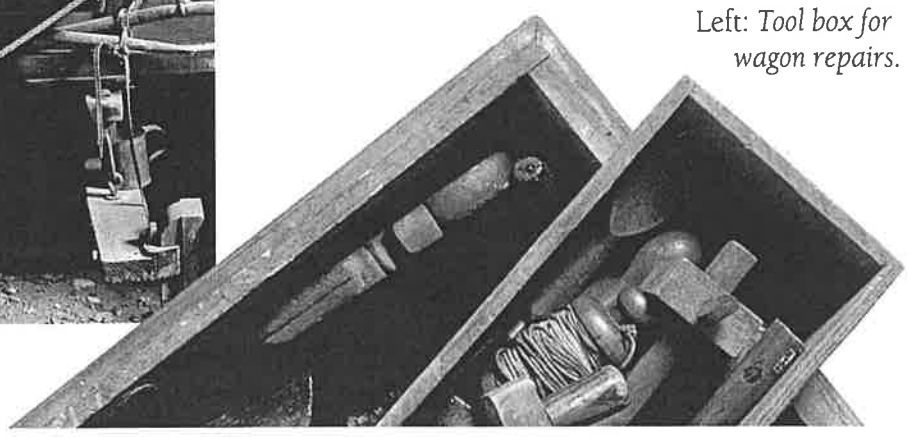
The iron tires on the wagon wheels sometimes became loose as the wooden wheels shrank in the dry desert air, and they had to be held in place by wedges.

Left: *Almost every overlander was obliged to abandon some valued objects, ranging from cook-stoves to barrels of bacon and boxes of books, in order to lighten their load. One overlander even saw an abandoned diving bell!*

Difficult Terrain

Mountain slopes and steep hills presented a challenge, even to the most experienced driver. It was relatively easy to go uphill, as the oxen were used to pulling, and they could be double-teamed. If the going was very hard, a makeshift windlass could be set up: An empty wagon was staked on the hilltop, with one set of wheels running free, and a strong rope tied to that axle was lowered to the wagon below. Then the men and oxen would slowly turn the wheels, reeling the wagon up the hill like a fish. Going downhill was more difficult, as oxen were not used to braking. Rope "brakes" could be used to lock the wheels, but this did not always stop the wagon sliding down the hill and being damaged. Even the gently rolling plains could cause problems for an inexperienced driver, as the top-heavy wagons tipped over easily.

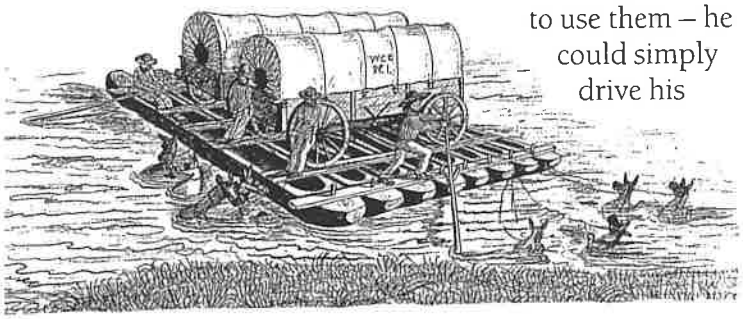




Left: *Tool box for wagon repairs.*

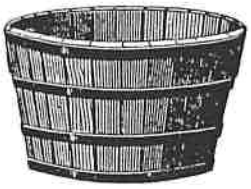
Crossing a River

The wagon trail followed the course of rivers, which were important because they provided water and grass. However, they had to be crossed again and again, often with some difficulty. By the time of the Larkins' journey, there were many ferries. They made crossing safer and easier, but heavy traffic on the trail sometimes created delays of several days, and prices were high. If there was no bridge or ferry – or if the overlander did not have enough money to use them – he could simply drive his



wagon across the river or stream at its shallowest spot, with his family inside.

Mr. Larkin, whose guidebooks were out-of-date, had not expected the extra expense, so he usually makes the livestock swim across and puts only the wagon on the ferry. He is annoyed by the delay of waiting for the ferry, but Mrs. Larkin is delighted to have a chance to do the laundry. Lacking firewood, she and Rachel must make do with cold water and lots of strong soap. The soap was homemade, from a liquid called lye which was got from ashes and animal fat.

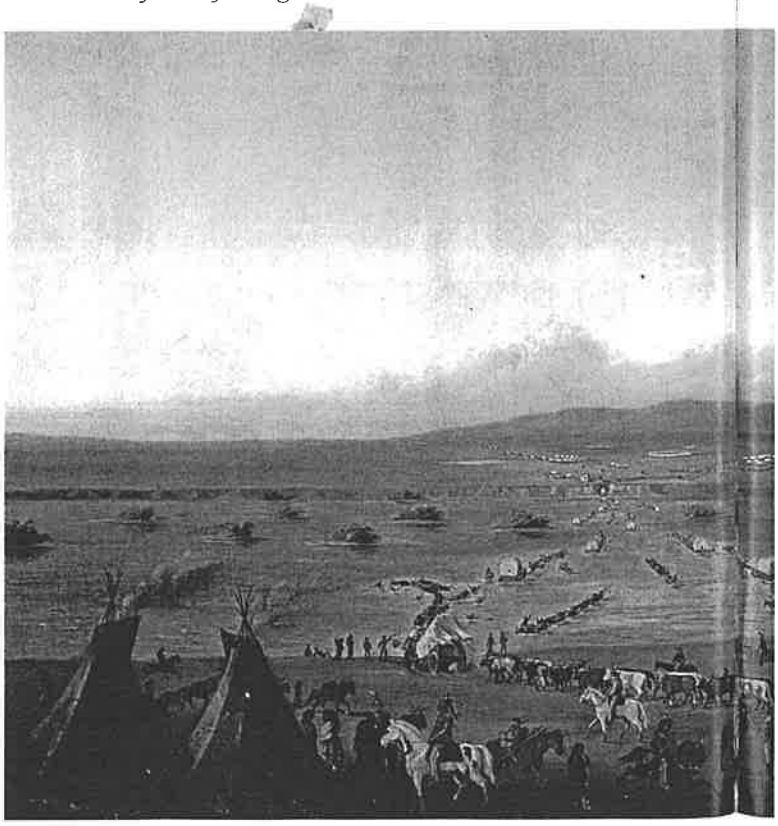


After a thorough rubbing, the clothing is rinsed, wrung out, and hung on any available bushes to dry. If there are no bushes, it may simply be put on wet.

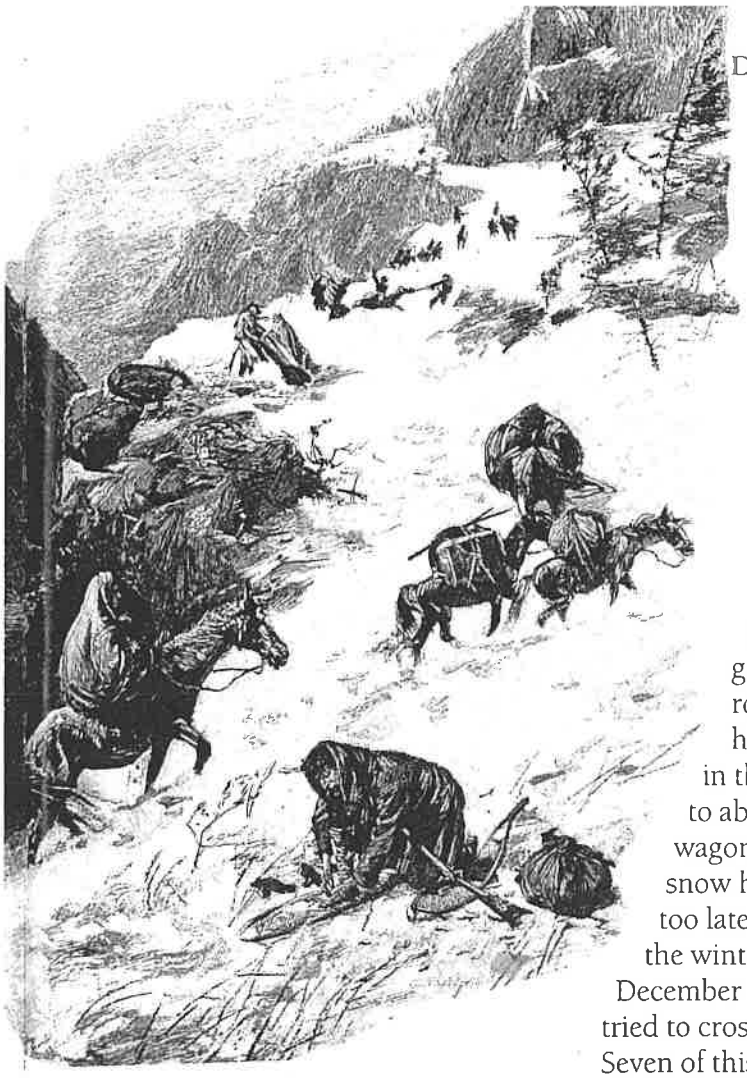
"Mother and I burnt our arms very badly while washing. They were red and swollen and painful as though scalded with boiling water." Rachel Larkin's Diary

Above: *Good fords were not always easy to find. Hidden boulders or quicksand could wreck a wagon, like the abandoned one shown here, or it might overturn in a tricky current.*

Below: *If the water was too deep to drive across, there was no alternative but to tow the wagon across with the swimming cattle, as this painting shows. Mr. Larkin usually asks Matt to ride ahead of the wagon and look out for any dangers.*

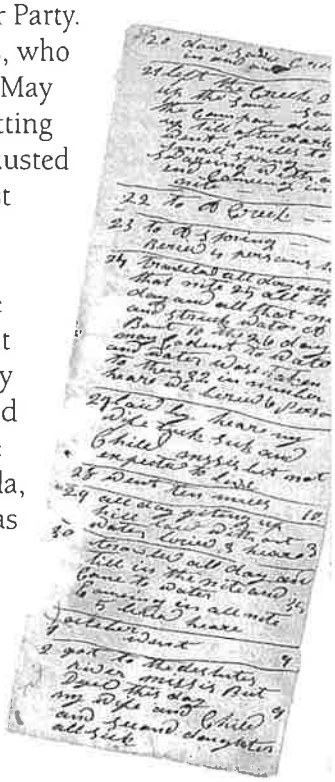


The Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art, Tulsa, Oklahoma



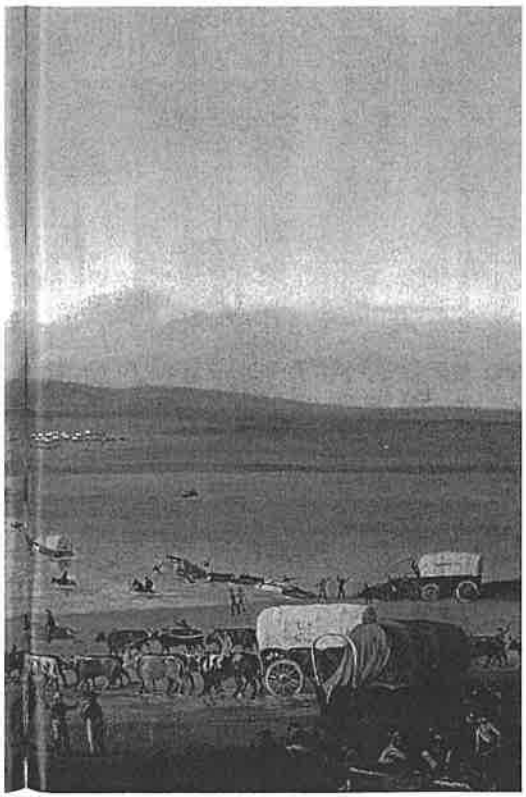
DISASTER

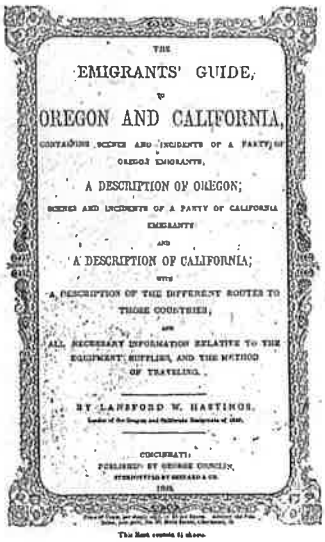
Rumors of disaster spread quickly, and the Larkins would have heard of the fates of overlanders such as the Donner Party. This wagon train was full of rich families, who left their jumping-off point at the end of May 1846 a month late, because they were kitting out wagons with fancy things. They exhausted their oxen trying to catch up with the rest of the overlanders, and took a short-cut recommended in Lansford Hasting's guidebook. The author wanted to make the route seem easy, but he had not even tried it himself! Making only one or two miles a day in the grassless salt desert, the party was forced to abandon most of its animals. By the time the wagons reached the foothills of the Sierra Nevada, snow had blocked the mountain passes and it was too late to turn back. The families had to spend the winter there, in crude log cabins. By mid-December the party was starving and 17 members tried to cross the mountains to get help (*see left*). Seven of this party made it to Sutter's Fort, where a rescue operation was begun. After two failed attempts, a rescue party finally reached them in April 1847. Only 47 of the original 81 people were alive. Many had survived only by eating their dead companions.



The Donner Party was not the only one to run into trouble. Stephen Meek persuaded his party to take a completely new route in order to avoid the Blue Mountains. They ended up lost, with no grass or water. Meek went ahead by himself and managed to reach the Columbia River. A rescue party was organized, but they found that 75 people had already died.

If such disasters were rare, it was because overlanders learned from others' mistakes. Virginia Reed, a survivor of the Donner party, had some good advice for anyone thinking of making the journey: "Never take no cut offs and hurry along as fast as you can."





THE
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AND
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WITH
A DESCRIPTION OF THE DIFFERENT ROUTES TO THOSE COUNTRIES,
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BY LANSFORD W. HASTINGS,
CINCINNATI:
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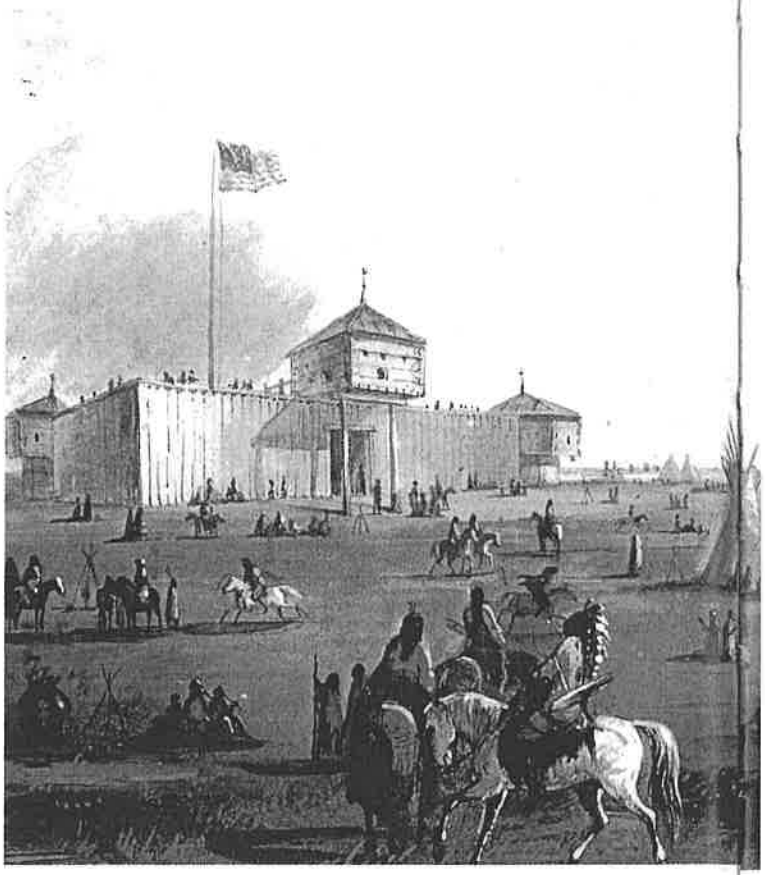
Above: *Lansford W. Hasting's misleading guidebook.*

Stopping at a Fort

Before setting out from Independence, the Larkins followed the guidebooks' instructions closely, as they wanted to have enough supplies for the whole trip. However, not all emigrants were so careful, and even those who had packed properly often found they needed extra supplies, so they were very glad of the forts and trading posts along the way.

Right: *A painting of Fort Laramie and the surrounding Indian village by Alfred Jacob Miller.*

Left: *A photographer has set up shop at the fort, and people have pictures taken to send to their relatives.*



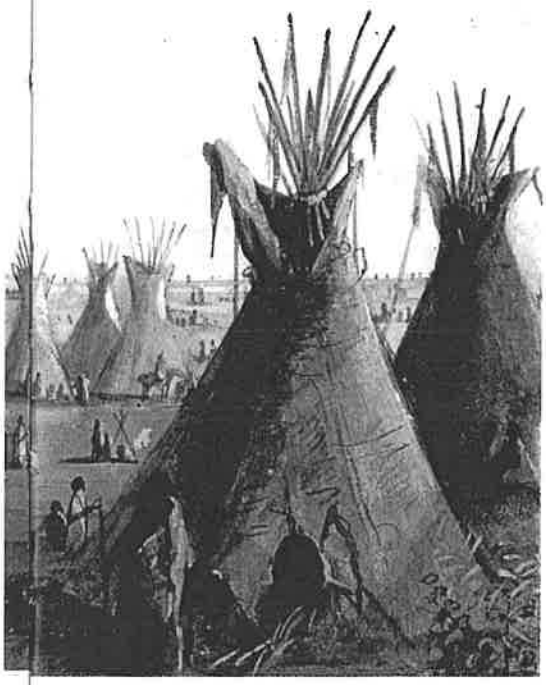
Fort Laramie

The Larkins' party has arrived at Fort Laramie, which by 1853 had become a bustling trading post. This fort was established by the American Fur Company in 1834 to buy animal pelts brought in by "mountain men" and Indian trappers (*see opposite page*). By the 1840s, the fur trade had declined, and as the numbers of overlanders had grown, it was realized that more money could be made from selling them goods and offering much-needed services such as a post office, a hospital, and a blacksmith. The sutler, or army provisioner, who supplied the troops with food from his shop also sold goods to the overlanders.

Many people felt that soldiers should be stationed along the wagon trails to protect overlanders against attacks by Indians, and by the 1850s, 90 percent of the U.S. Army was stationed in the West. The army bought Fort Laramie from the American Fur Company for $4,000 in 1849 and it became the first and most important in a string of military garrisons.

Above: *The sign outside the sutler's store boasts that it stocks "all articles a man wants in civilized countries or on the plains."*

"We are thankful that our bacon has kept, as supplies here are very dear. Five dollars won't buy what a dollar bought back East."
Mrs. Larkin's Diary



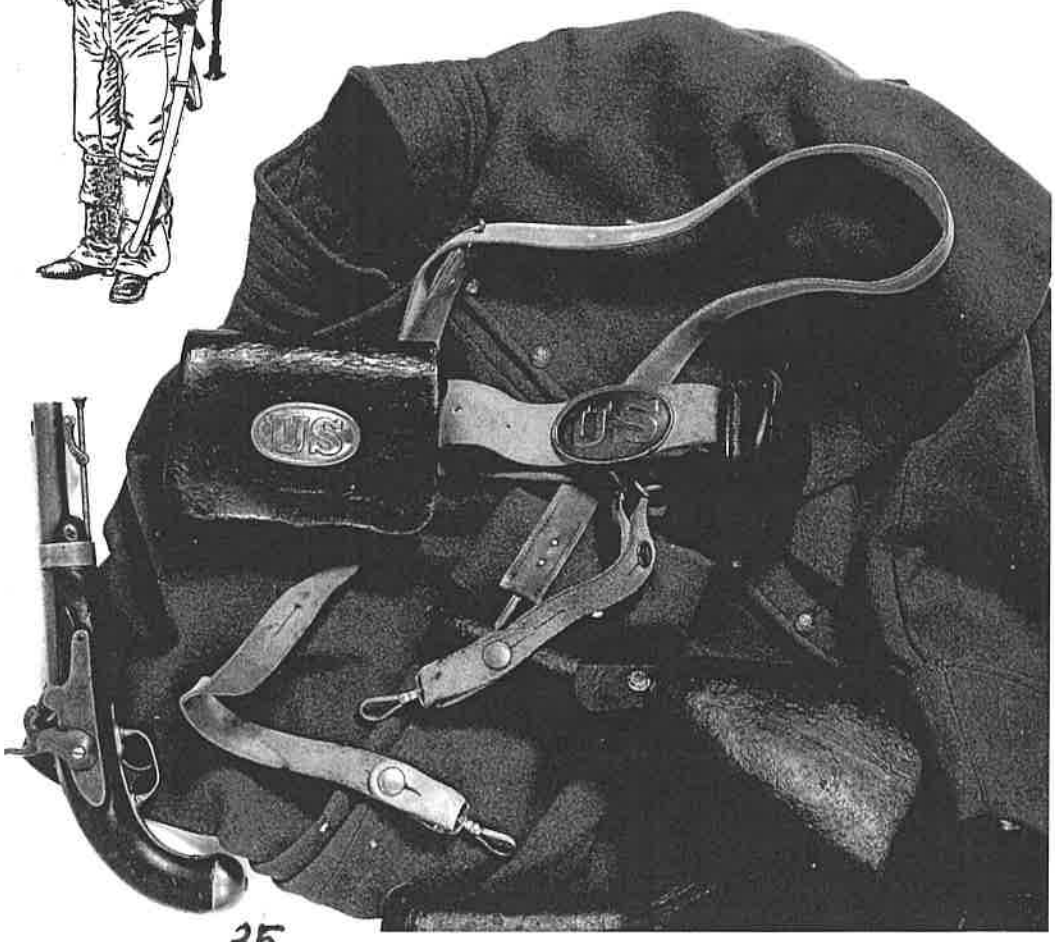
Although the sight of the cavalry's blue coats made the overlanders feel safe, the army was not really very good at protecting them. Reports of problems with Indians could take days to reach a fort, and sometimes the cavalry's response would be to attack the wrong Indians, which caused more fighting and made the Indians mistrustful of the army and the overlanders. The government's Indian agents, who arranged peace treaties with various Indian tribes in exchange for annual payments, were far more effective than the soldiers. However, the army and the Indians were not completely hostile to one another: Villages of Indians, eager to trade, usually encircled the walls of the stockades.

Right: *Some of the furs traded in the early days at Fort Laramie: Deer, red fox, ermine, river otter, and buffalo.*

Left: *Infantryman in uniform.*

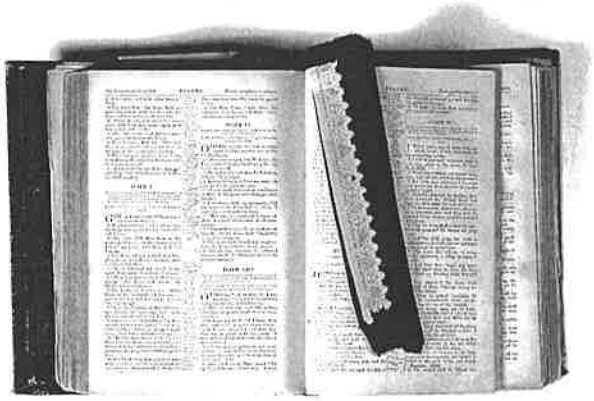
Above: *Cavalryman's saddle, curry combs and canteen.*

Right: *A soldier's winter overcoat and belt with a powder pouch, bullet bag, and pistol. Cavalrymen usually carried their pistols in holsters, like the ones shown here, slung over the fronts of their saddles.*



A Special Day

Only rarely did the Larkins and their company take time off for a celebration. Even Sunday, the "Sabbath" of these normally religious people, would pass like any other day, unless they encountered a traveling preacher. People said, "There's no Sunday west of Kansas." Weddings, however, did call for special activity. The couple would be subjected to a "chivaree," as their friends spent the wedding night jostling their wagon, shooting off guns, and banging on kettles. Overlanders tended to marry young, especially girls. It was unusual for a girl not to be married by the age of 16.



Above: *The family Bible.*

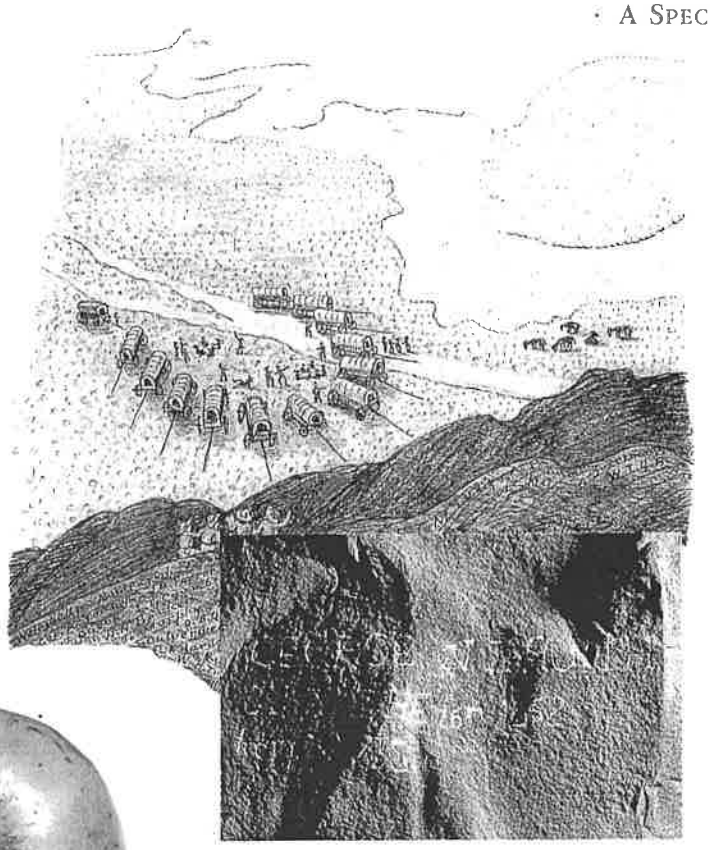
Only one special day is regularly mentioned in the overlanders' diaries: The Fourth of July, Independence Day. The Larkins and their company are especially pleased because they have reached Independence Rock, so named by a group of early travelers who reached it on Independence Day. This means that, despite the rainy weather, they are right on schedule. They spend a few days on the grassy banks of the Sweetwater River, grazing their oxen and celebrating their good fortune.

The Fourth of July Feast

The sideboards of the wagons are laden with antelope, sagehen, and rabbit, both roasted and fried, several kinds of fresh bread, baked beans, rice, and, as a special treat, Irish potatoes and pickled cucumbers brought all the way from Missouri. To drink, there is coffee, tea, and "lemonade" made of sugar, water, citric acid, and a few drops of essence of lemon. Over a dozen sorts of cakes and pies are spread out for dessert, and some long-hoarded chocolate is given to the children.

Matt and Rachel join a group of young people who climb Independence Rock

Right: *Preparations for the Independence Day celebrations.*



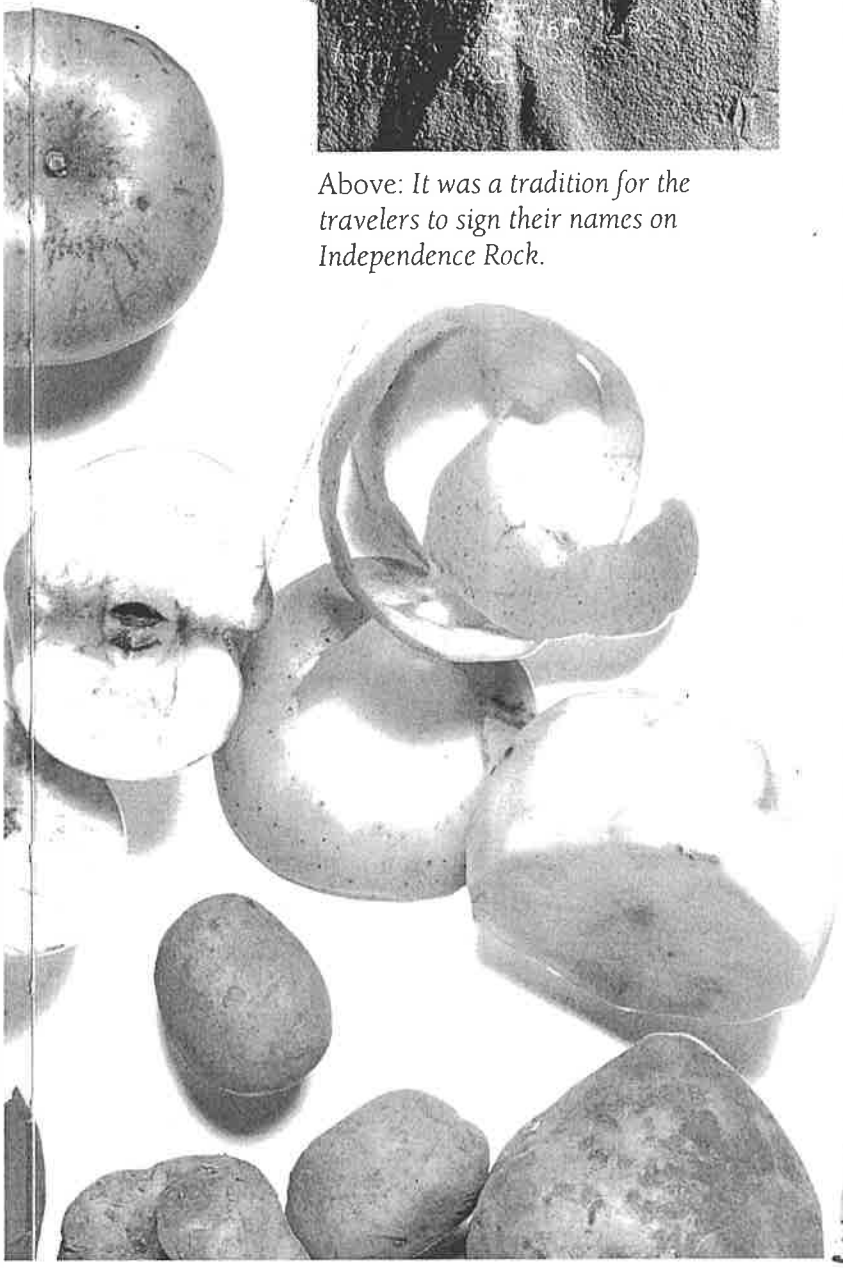
Above: *It was a tradition for the travelers to sign their names on Independence Rock.*

to look for the names of friends and to write their own. Meanwhile, Mrs. Larkin and the other women have decided that, to celebrate properly, they need an American flag. One of them has some scraps of blue cloth, another has red, and another white. By the time the party begins, Old Glory, complete with 28 stars, flies from a makeshift flagpole in the middle of the wagon circle. Many of the company are dressed up in costume. Rachel is decked out as "Lady Liberty," but most of the young people are dressed as Indians. The "Indians" perform "war dances" to the delight of the crowd.

There is a contest to see which of the children can best remember the Declaration of Independence from their school days back east, with the winner to receive the last precious piece of chocolate. The "official" party closes with three cheers for America (Oregon Territory in particular) and a five-gun salute, but the dancing and revelling go on late into the night.

Right: *Pen-box, inkwell, and spectacles. Steel tipped pens began replacing quills in the late 1820s.*

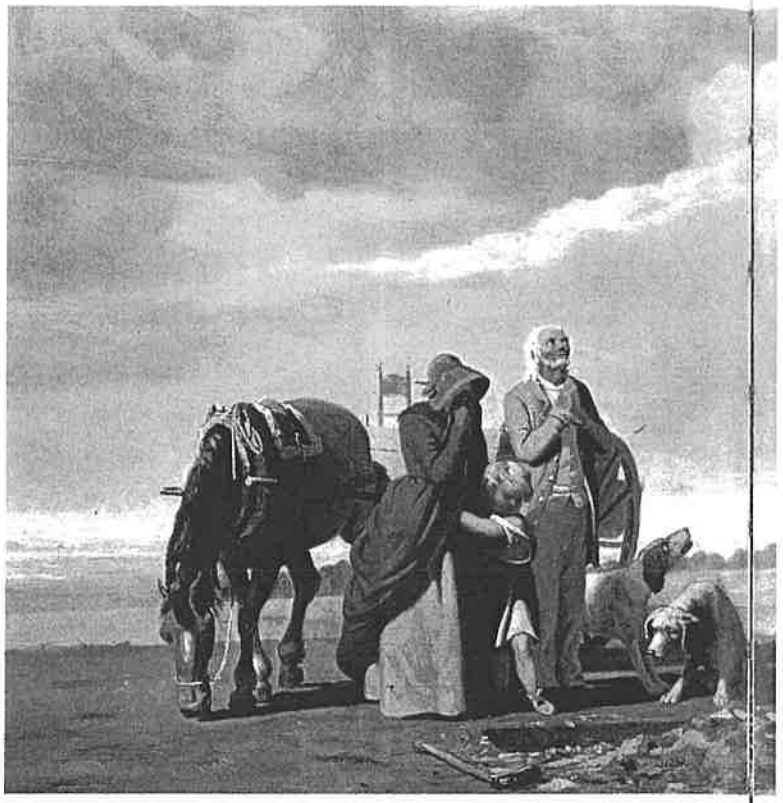
As always, Mrs. Larkin writes a detailed account of the celebration in her diary. Many overlanders kept diaries, and a lot of them still survive. Some, like Mr. Larkin's, have short entries: "June 20. Up Platte River. Good road. Made 21 mi. June 29. Up same. Overtook Capt. Tutherew's Company. Made 15 mi." Others, like Mrs. Larkin's and Rachel's, contain more interesting information.



Sickness & Death

Of nearly 300,000 emigrants who headed west between 1840 and 1860, around 30,000, or one in ten, died along the way. Some diaries speak of practically nothing but death and burial. Accidents accounted for the deaths of some of the overlanders. Diary accounts tell of little children falling out of wagons and being crushed beneath the wheels, of people being shot by night guards who mistook them for Indians trying to steal their livestock, and of men being swept away and drowned when they tried to herd their cattle across raging rivers.

Left: *A wooden tombstone like this was unusual. Most graves were simply mounds of earth.*



Above: Prairie Burial, *c. 1848. Painting by William Tylee Ranney. Even if a person was in the best of health, a serious attack of cholera could kill in a single day.*

"July 11. Passed 15 graves. Made 13 mi. July 12. Passed 5 graves. Saw 8 dead cattle. Made 10 mi."
Mr. Larkin's Diary

However, the most common cause of death on the trail was disease: Measles, typhoid, mountain fever, the "bloody flux," or dysentery, and above all the dreaded cholera. Asiatic cholera, carried by rats on ships, arrived in American port cities in late 1848 and 1849 and from there it spread to anywhere with poor water supplies and bad plumbing. Even cities such as St. Louis lost a tenth of their population, and the wagon trains, who were camping and watering every day with no proper toilets, in the same places as all the previous trains had camped, were particularly hard hit by the disease.

Like most overlanders, the Larkins have a variety of medicines: Laudanum (tincture of opium) and camphor for cholera, hartshorne for snakebites, citric acid for scurvy, castor oil for bowel disorders, borax and alum for boils and sores, and whiskey and various dried herbs for everything else.

Doctors

If someone was very ill, the party might try to summon a doctor. Often traveling by wagon train themselves, doctors advertised their services and let people know where they were by posting notices on the "roadside telegraph." Their fees varied considerably. Some took payment only for medicines, while others charged a fee for visiting the patient. Typical charges might be $2 for seeing a cholera