

STATE OF IDAHO  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
BOISE

The Old Oregon Trail—The World's  
Most Historical Highway

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The history of the Old Oregon Trail is a story of the great big out of doors, a tale of the hills, a story of human endeavor, suffering, privation, determination, and final accomplishment.

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Remarks of  
Hon. Addison T. Smith  
of Idaho  
in the  
House of Representatives

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EXTENSION OF REMARKS  
OF  
HON. ADDISON T. SMITH

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Mr. SMITH. Mr. Speaker, on the 31st of March last I introduced Joint Resolution 232, to provide for designating the route of the Old Oregon Trail, which is as follows:

Joint resolution to provide for designating the route of the Old Oregon Trail

Whereas the Old Oregon Trail, which originated at Missouri River points and traversed half a continent, and was the route over which the "great migration" of covered wagons and ox teams went in 1843 and saved the Oregon country to the United States, and over which for many years the homeseekers and empire builders went in great numbers and made a great producing territory out of what was formerly a wilderness; and

Whereas the Oregon country at that time consisted of all that territory between the summit of the Rocky Mountains and the shores of the Pacific Ocean and between the California and Canadian borders, and was held under a joint sovereignty of England and the United States, and whose fate for all time was settled by the migration of 1843, when approximately 1,000 American men and women faced the perils of the desert and the wilderness to carve out new homes in the Oregon country and make it American territory; and

Whereas thousands perished by the way and were buried in shallow graves by the old trail; and

Whereas the United States has set aside as national monuments many battle fields and other historic spots in this country; and

Whereas the Old Oregon Trail was more than a battle field and offered a greater challenge to courage, for along its dusty course of 2,000 miles American citizens daily faced death without the panoply of war, the beating of drums, or the flying of flags, and saved a vast empire to the United States; and

Whereas this service has long been neglected and the youth of our land have not learned of the heroic self-sacrifice of those intrepid pioneers, who did so much for America; and

Whereas in order that this the "world's most historic highway" may be perpetuated in history and its traditions be kept alive for all time, and in order to show to the world that the American people are not unmindful of the sacrifices of our citizens and do recognize valorous deeds: Therefore be it

*Resolved, etc.,* That the highway extending from Independence, Mo., and from Council Bluffs, Iowa, to Seaside, Oreg., and to Olympia, Wash., through the States of Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, Wyoming, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington, and variously known as the Overland Trail, the Mormon Road, the Emigrant Road, and the Oregon Trail, and coinciding as near as may be with the system of Federal-aid highways through said States, shall hereafter be known as the Old Oregon Trail.

Sec. 2. That the road herein designated as the Old Oregon Trail shall follow, as closely as economic and topographic conditions will

permit, the route traveled by the pioneers in their journeys westward to the Oregon country over said trail, and shall extend through Kansas City, in the State of Missouri; Kansas City, Gardner, Lawrence, Topoka, Rossville, Louisville, and Frankfort, in the State of Kansas; thence through Fairbury, Hebron, Grand Island, connecting with the road from Council Bluffs through Omaha, Fremont, and Columbus, and thence through Kearney, North Platte, Lewellen, Bayard, and Scotts-bluff, in the State of Nebraska; thence through Torrington, Fort Laramie, Douglas, Casper, Alcova, Muddy Gap, Eden, Granger, Kemmerer, and Cokeville, in the State of Wyoming; thence through Montpelier, Soda Springs, Pocatello, American Falls, Burley, Twin Falls, Buhl, Glenns Ferry, Mountain Home, Boise, Nampa, Caldwell, Parma, Payette, and Weiser, in the State of Idaho; and through Nyssa, Ontario, Huntington, Baker, La Grande, Pendleton, Umatilla, and along the Columbia River through The Dalles, Hood River, Portland, Astoria, and Seaside, in the State of Oregon; thence through Vancouver and on to Olympia, in the State of Washington.

A similar measure has already passed the Senate, and it is hoped that we may have consideration of this legislation during the present Congress.

I wish to submit for the information of the House some historical facts regarding this thoroughfare, assembled by Walter E. Meacham, of Baker, Oreg.:

The history of the Old Oregon Trail is a story of the great big out of doors, a tale of the hills, a story of human endeavor, suffering, privation, determination, and final accomplishment. It is a story as big and broad as life itself, a story of a people with a vision, who feared not and who laughed at death. King Solomon said "A nation without a vision is lost."

The pioneers who came in the first wagon train over the trail in 1843, and from then on through the succeeding years, had a vision of a happy home in the "Oregon country," and they endured all of the hardships of the trail in order that this vision might become a reality.

The history of the world does not offer a parallel of so many people travelling such a distance for a common purpose as the migration of 1852-53 to the "Oregon country."

Ever since the dawn of history mankind has been restless and has sought for new lands to discover and for new worlds to conquer, and ever the movement has been to the west. The last great migration, the greatest of them all, occurred in the latter part of the nineteenth century, when all of that country west of the Missouri was subjugated and the last frontier disappeared before the rush of the home seeker and empire builder.

#### OREGON COAST DISCOVERED

Going back a few centuries into history, we find that Sir Francis Drake discovered the Oregon coast in 1579 and called it "New Albion."

Juan Perez, a Spanish navigator, landed on the Oregon coast in 1775, and in 1778 Capt. James Cook secured a small bale of furs from the Indians on the northwest coast and took it to China and received a fabulous price for it, and which created an interest in the fur-trading possibilities of the Northwest which resulted later in explorations and eventually in the building up of the "Oregon country." Explorers of the various countries sailed the waters of the Pacific in search of the fabled straits of Anlan and the "Oregon," the "Great river of the west."

#### DISCOVERY OF THE "OREGON"

The honor of discovering the "Great river of the west" belongs to an American captain who had the vision and courage to sail his ship across the treacherous waters of the bar where the great flood entered the ocean, and on May 11, 1792, sailed up the river and gave it the name of his ship, "Columbia."

The incentive of great gains in the fur-trading business was a direct cause of the exploration and settlement of the "Oregon country." The first in the field was the Hudson Bay Co., whose ambition was to retain the "Oregon country" as a great fur-producing field and who discouraged settlement by those who desired to make homes. There were also the Northwest Co., Missouri Fur Co., the Mackinaw, and others.

#### LEWIS AND CLARK

In 1805 Lewis and Clark penetrated through the vast wilderness and reached the mouth of the Columbia River and made extensive and accurate surveys of the region. Their return and the report of the country that they found west of the Rockies stirred up great interest in this hitherto almost unknown region.

Now comes onto the scene another man with a vision—John Jacob Astor, who had been engaged in the fur-trading business for several years, and who saw the great possibilities of the "Oregon country" as a great mouth of the Columbia; and so he formed the Pacific Fur Co., taking in partnership with him Alexander McKay, Duncan McDougall, Donald McKenzie, and Wilson Price Hunt.

#### ASTORIA FOUNDED

Two expeditions were planned and carried out—one by sea and one by land—to reach the mouth of the Columbia and establish a fur-trading post there and other posts on the Columbia and Snake Rivers. Captain Thorn, on the ship *Tonquin*, led the expedition by sea and founded Astoria April 12, 1811, built a fort and raised the Stars and Stripes over it. The expedition by land was under the leadership of Wilson Price Hunt, who had in his company such men as Donald McKenzie, Joseph Miller, Robert McLellan, John Day, Ramsay Crooks, Pierre Dorion (interpreter), John Bradbury (scientist), Mr. Nutall (scientist), and John Reed (clerk).

#### HUNT EXPEDITION FORMED

After being greatly harassed in his undertaking by the Missouri Fur Co., which did not relish the thought of a rival company coming into the field, Mr. Hunt finally gathered together a company of boatmen and hunters with which to make the journey, the outfitting point being St. Louis, Mo., which was then the outpost of civilization. In October, 1810, Mr. Hunt and his party left St. Louis and proceeded up the Missouri River in boats a number of miles, where a winter camp was made. Early in the spring of 1811 the start was made from Nodawa, there being 26 in the party. As the party proceeded, desertions were made in the little company, but recruits were also received as they went along, so that the party was enlarged rather than diminished.

Benjamin Jones and Alexander Carson, Edward Robinson, John Hoback and Jacob Rizner, and several other hunters on their way back to civilization were met and could not resist the lure of adventure and joined Mr. Hunt's party, and were a welcome addition to that little band. Robinson had been scalped a few months previous and wore a handkerchief around his head in lieu of hair.



The Omahas, Poncas, and Sioux Indians were encountered as the party proceeded, and friendly relations being established with all of them, the little company proceeded without molestation. Great herds of buffalo, elk, and deer were seen and the company did not lack for fresh meat. The party left the river at the Arikara Village, where it traded with the Indians for horses with which to make the trip overland to the Columbia. This village was located probably near what is now known as Pierre, S. Dak.

Guns, powder, bullets, highly colored beads and blankets, knives, and tomahawks were traded for horses, and finally, after much trafficking, 82 horses were secured and loaded with members of the party and its belongings.

#### THE TRIP OVERLAND

The party now turned its back upon all communication with the outer world and set out upon its tedious and dangerous journey over the mountains and plains which separated it from the object of its trip.

The Cheyenne Indians were next encountered, with which the party traded for more horses. In Wyoming the Crow Indians were met and more horses obtained. The party was forced to watch these Indians continually to avoid treachery, but finally parted with them without any trouble.

The Shoshone and Flathead Indians were the next tribes encountered and trading for more horses and for buffalo meat was prosecuted. The party reached Wind River, Wyo., in September, 1811, and proceeded up that stream for a number of miles, then crossing the mountains and coming upon the headwaters of the Snake River the latter part of September.

#### EMBARKING ON THE SNAKE

At the old post of Fort Henry, near where St. Anthony, Idaho, now stands, the party built rafts and boats and embarked joyfully on the waters of the Snake, thinking now that all was plain sailing on to the mouth of the Columbia. At this place Robinson, Hoback, Rizer, and Mr. Miller, one of the partners, stayed to trap and hunt for beaver and other animals. The balance of the party embarked on the river October 18, 1811.

On October 21, what is now American Falls, was reached and it was necessary to lower the boats around the Falls by means of ropes.

On October 28 the party arrived at a point near the present site of Twin Falls. Here the party met with many reverses and endured many hardships. One of the boats was wrecked and one of the boatmen, Antoine Clappine, was drowned.

This place in the river was called Caldron Linn. The situation of the travelers was indeed gloomy, as a survey of the river showed that it was impossible to navigate it, and the banks of the river were so high and steep that it was difficult to secure water for drinking purposes.

There was no game in the country and the company began to suffer from hunger.

#### HARDSHIPS AND PERILS FACED

The party divided into several groups to try and discover the best way out of the dilemma. McLennan and 3 men kept on down the river, Crooks and 5 men started back up the river to secure horses left at Fort Henry, McKenzie and 4 men started across the desert, and Mr. Hunt and 31 men, besides the squaw and two children of  
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Pierre Dorion, stayed in camp. In three days Crooks and his party returned, deeming it impossible to secure the horses and get back to the party before winter. The main party then kept on down the river, subsisting on fish and an occasional beaver. The party then divided, Mr. Hunt and 18 men going on one side of the river and Mr. Crooks and 18 men on the other side.

Some Snake Indians were encountered from whom some salmon and a dog were purchased. On November 17 several Indians were met, one of whom had a horse. Mr. Hunt finally purchased the animal in exchange for an old tin kettle after having offered a gun, ammunition, and beads in vain.

Mr. Hunt here left the river and started over the desert. The party encountered great suffering and hardship on this journey and finally reached the Boise River and an Indian camp, where fish and dogs were purchased for food. The Payette and Weiser Rivers were forded, and the Snake River finally reached again.

November 28, a bag of meal and some fish were purchased from a party of Shoshones, who informed Mr. Hunt that they had seen white men on both sides of the Snake River within the last few days.

#### A DESERT THEN

Washington Irving, in his account of the Hunt Expedition, has this to say of the country west of the Snake:

"A dreary desert of sand and gravel extends from the Snake River almost to the Columbia. Here and there is a thin and scanty herbage, insufficient for the pasture of horse or buffalo. Indeed these trackless wastes between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific are even more desolate and barren than the naked, upper prairies on the Atlantic side; they present vast dreary and thirsty wilds between the habitations of man, in traversing which the wanderer will often be in danger of perishing."

If the same party could go over this route now, what a different story they would have to tell for the magic hand of reclamation has made a garden out of the former desert and populous towns have sprung up in the Snake River Valley, where members of the Hunt expedition nearly perished of hunger and hardship.

#### TERRORS OF THE CANYON

Mr. Hunt and his party continued on down the river canyon, which was very steep and difficult to negotiate. Food was very scarce, the party subsisting on a black-tail deer, a beaver, and some frozen berries. The horses were killed and eaten one by one until only that owned by Pierre Dorion remained.

On December 6, 1811, Mr. Crooks and his party were seen on the other side of the river returning after a vain attempt to get through the narrow precipitous canyon of the river and seeing nothing but mountains piled upon mountains for miles ahead. Crooks and his men were almost starved, having subsisted on a few beaver and old moccasins. Hunt and his men then turned about and started back up the river.

In their extremity Mr. Hunt suggested that the horse of Pierre Dorion be killed and eaten, but the owner doggedly refused to part with his animal. Continuing on, the party came unexpectedly upon a camp of Shoshone Indians, who fled in great fright when the white men came in sight. The party immediately caught five horses and killed one for food. They made a boat out of the skin and sent meat over to the starving men on the other side of the river. One of the Canadians, Jean Baptiste Provost, returned in the boat and, because of his hunger and enfeebled condition, became excited on beholding meat roasting before



the fire and upset the canoe and was drowned in the cold, swift current of the river.

A station on the Homestead Branch of the railroad down the river is named after the unfortunate Canadian, and one also in honor of Saudepie, another Canadian boatman who ferried meat across the treacherous stream for the relief of the men on the other side. Proceeding along the river banks the party met with some Shoshone Indians, and the lure of an old tin kettle secured another horse for food.

Mr. Hunt now came to the Weiser River, where a band of Shoshones were camped. From them he traded for a couple of horses a dog and some dried cherries. After considerable dickering they procured an Indian guide to lead them over the mountains to the Columbia. On December 23 the party crossed the Snake, leaving it with no regret, the Canadians calling it the "Accursed Mad River."

#### TRIP ACROSS THE MOUNTAINS

The route now led up the Burnt River from the present site of Huntington to where Durkee now stands and on across the hills to the Powder River Valley at the present site of Baker, which was reached by the party on December 28. The party continued on across the valley, passing the present site of Haines and North Powder. Mount Hunt, one of the highest peaks in the Elkhorn range west of Haines, has been named after Mr. Hunt.

It was in the vicinity of North Powder that the wife of Pierre Dorion gave birth to her baby. The main party kept on while Dorion remained with his wife and children in their crude camp and attended her in her sickness.

#### NEW YEAR'S FEAST

On December 30 the party arrived in the Grand Ronde Valley and found six lodges of Shoshones camped in the vicinity of the present town of Union. On December 31 Dorion and his family caught up with the main party. It is fitting at this time to pay a tribute to the Indian wife of Dorion, who had shared the hardships of the dreary march with as great fortitude as the men, though she was far advanced in her pregnancy. She exhibited a force of character in many of the trying situations faced by the party worthy of one in a much higher walk of life.

The praises of Sacajawea, the Indian woman who accompanied Lewis and Clark on their journey across the continent, are heralded in song and story, while the patient little Indian woman with the Hunt expedition is unnamed and unsung, while the privations she underwent were many times greater than those of Sacajawea. The party spent New Year's day with the Indians feasting on horse and dog meat and celebrating the day in the best manner possible under the circumstances.

The following day the party struck out to cross the Blue Mountains passing near the present location of La Grande. The journey across the mountains was very difficult and tedious, the snow being waist deep and the weather very cold.

The child of Pierre Dorion died on the trip across the mountains. On January 8, a camp of the Sciatogas on the Eu-O-Tal-la or Umatilla was reached, which was near the present site of Pendleton.

#### THE UMATILLA REACHED

These Indians had brass kettles, axes, teakettles, and other implements showing that they had communication with white traders.

Here horses and dogs were bought for food. A blanket, a knife, or a half pound of blue beads bought a horse. These Indians did not eat horse flesh but feasted on elk and deer meat, but they asked such a

high price for it that the white men were forced to content themselves with a bit of horse and dog meat.

The Umatilla abounded with beaver, and the Indians were induced to trap this animal, as its skin could be easily sold to the white traders.

#### THE COLUMBIA

The party pressed on and reached the Columbia on January 21, at a point between the mouth of the Umatilla and the mouth of the Wallah Wallah River. Here fish and dogs were secured from the Indians found there. Stray bits of information from the Indians gave the party hopes that McKenzie and McLennan and party had passed down the river some time before. Proceeding down the river the party arrived at the Indian village of Wishram on January 31.

Wishram was located near what is now the town of Spedis, Wash., a few miles up the river from the Dalles.

The village must have been near what we now call Cello Falls, as it is spoken of as the fishing mart of the Indians and where the salmon were speared as they tried to leap the rapids.

This tribe was called the Tlak-Luit, and are described as being very sly and thievish.

Continuing on down the river, Mr. Hunt and his party reached what is now called Cascade Locks where a thieving band of Indians were encountered and the utmost vigilance was needed to protect the property of the party. After considerable dickering Mr. Hunt procured the necessary number of boats with which to make the trip down the river to Astoria.

#### THE JOURNEY'S END

The trip from here down the river was uneventful, and finally on the 15th day of February, 1812, the party swept down the stream and came in sight of Astoria.

The feelings of the party can be imagined when we stop to consider that it had been over a year on the way from St. Louis, most of the time in a trackless wilderness and among savage tribes.

Among the first to greet them were Reed, McLennan, and McKenzie, from whom they had been separated at the Caldron Linn, near what is now Twin Falls. These men had started out from the Caldron Linn to find a route and had come together at what they called the Devil's Scuttle Hole and is near what we call the Seven Devils country. They followed the Snake down to the Columbia; then down to Astoria where they arrived a month ahead of Mr. Hunt. The distance traveled by the Hunt party was about 3,500 miles, though the actual distance from St. Louis to Astoria is only 1,800 miles.

The following days were given over to rejoicing over the safe arrival of the party. The colors were hoisted, guns were fired, and there was a feast of beaver, fish, and venison, which was a welcome diversion from horse and dog flesh which the party had subsisted on for so long. The festivities ended up with a grand dance at night, led by the Canadian voyagers.

#### RETURN TRIP ATTEMPTED

On March 22, 1812, John Reed, Ben Jones, McLennan, and two Canadians started back to St. Louis with dispatches for Mr. Astor, telling of the business at Astoria and the safe arrival of Mr. Hunt and most of his party. Mr. Reed had the dispatches in a tin box which he strapped securely on his back.

They were reinforced by a party of 12 men carrying supplies to the post on the Oakinagan.



At Wishram, they had to portage their supplies around the rapids and were set upon by the Indians and Mr. Reed badly wounded and his tin box of dispatches stolen, the Indians thinking it contained "Big Medicine." One Indian was killed and one wounded. The Indians demanded that Mr. Reed be given up as a sacrifice to the dead warrior, but the demand was refused and the matter settled by the white men giving the Indians a blanket to cover the dead warrior and tobacco for the living.

The object of Reed's journey now being defeated by the loss of the tin box, the whole party repaired, with Robert Stuart, to the establishment on the Oakinagan. After a few days there, they started back for Astoria and in the course of their journey came upon Mr. Crooks and John Day, both naked and almost famished.

They reported that they had been stripped of their clothing by the inhabitants of Wishram and were on their way to the Wallah Wallahs. The whole party now continued down the river and reached Astoria on May 11. A second land expedition to convey dispatches to Mr. Astor was sent out June 29 under command of Robert Stuart. A party of 60 journeyed together as far as the Wallah Wallah village for mutual protection from the thieving bands at Wishram.

#### STUART'S TRIP

John Day, a veteran hunter, who accompanied the expedition from St. Louis and who underwent great hardships at the hands of the Indians, became deranged from the sufferings he had endured and was sent back to Astoria under care of friendly Indians. Within a year he died, and thus passed out a frontiersman for whom later two rivers in Oregon were named.

At the village of the Wallah Wallahs, Mr. Stuart secured horses for his little band which was to bear the dispatches to St. Louis. With him were Ben Jones, Andri Vallar, Francis Clerc, McLennan, and Crooks.

Crossing the Blue Mountains the party came upon a great sulphur spring and lake around which were numbers of antlers which had been shed by the elk which frequented the region. On this site is now located Hot Lake, Oreg., a great health resort.

On August 12 the Snake River was reached, and on August 20 the party encountered Hoback, Miller, Rizner, and Robinson, who had left the Hunt party at the Henry post to trap and hunt. They reported that they had been robbed of their furs and clothing by a band of Arapahays and had barely escaped with their lives and had wandered among the hills barely existing on fish and berries.

The augmented party now continued on its way up the river and finally reached the Caldron Linn, where they found that six of the caches made by Mr. Hunt had been found and ransacked by the Indians. Before reaching the Caldron Linn, however, they came upon some Shoshones busily engaged in spearing salmon at a place which they named Salmon Falls.

Here Robinson, Rizner, and Hoback were outfitted and remained to trap and hunt. On September 19 Mr. Stuart and his little party reached the headwaters of the Snake, where their horses were stolen by a rascally band of Crow Indians, and they proceeded on their way on foot. The winter was spent in camp on the banks of the Platte River, and in the spring the march to St. Louis was renewed. Finally, on April 30, 1813, the party reached St. Louis and the dispatches were sent to Mr. Astor in New York City. The journey had taken 10 months of time and incredible hardships, and the news of the journey of Mr. Hunt and his party and the return trip created a great sensa-

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tion and was the first news of the establishment of Astoria at the mouth of the Columbia.

#### EXPEDITION HAS NO EQUAL

There is no expedition in all history which faced the perils and endured the hardships which the Hunt expedition did. Famished at times almost to the point of complete exhaustion, facing death in every mile, with hope almost gone, this brave little band kept doggedly on and finally accomplished its purpose and reached its destination. They blazed the original Old Oregon Trail from old Fort Hall to the sea, and later Stuart and his men on their return trip blazed the way to the Missouri down the Platte.

In later years this route was traversed by the covered wagons of the home builders and the pack trains of the gold seekers, and because of the great multitude that came and the great number who died on the way and the purpose that the old trail served in saving the "Oregon country" to the United States, it became the world's most historic highway, the road that won an empire.

#### TRAGEDY OF THE TRAPPERS

During the summer of 1812 John Reed, Giles LeClerc, Francois Landry, Jean Baptiste Turcot, Andre Chappelle, Pierre Dorion and family, and Pierre Delaunay established a camp on the Snake River to hunt and trap and to search for Robinson, Hoback, and Rizner.

During the autumn Landry died and Delaunay deserted, but a little later on Robinson, Hoback, and Rizner joined the party.

Rizner, LeClerc, and Dorion and his family made a camp five days' journey from the main camp in a well-stocked beaver country.

One evening, while Dorion's wife was preparing supper, LeClerc staggered into camp pale and bleeding. He informed her that the Indians had killed her husband and Rizner. She immediately caught two of the horses, loaded LeClerc and some provisions on one of them and herself and the two children on the other, and fled.

On the third night LeClerc died of his wounds and exposure, as they dared not build a fire. On the fourth day the main camp was reached and the Indian woman found it deserted, with signs of a great struggle having taken place, and she surmised that the entire party had been wiped out by the Indians.

She and her children wintered in the Blue Mountains in a wild and lonely canyon, subsisting on the flesh of the two horses and such other food as could be procured. In the spring she struck out across the hills and finally arrived at a village of the Wallah-Wallahs. Thus passed out many of the brave spirits who helped blaze the trail to "Oregon" when it was a vast wilderness, and thus was lost to view the brave, patient, resourceful little Indian woman who endured so much.

Then came on the War of 1812-14, and through the treachery and cowardice of those in charge of the post, Mr. Hunt being absent, Astoria was given over to the English and remained in their possession until it was restored by treaty several years later. Then for a number of years the "Oregon country," consisting of the present States of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, western Montana, and northwestern Wyoming, was a "no man's land," which was held under a joint sovereignty of England and the United States.

#### HISTORY MADE AT CHAMPOEG

Then came that epoch-making convention at Champoeg, in the Willamette Valley, May 2, 1843. Here 102 men gathered to consider the proposition of forming a provisional government and to decide whether or not they would live under American or British rule.

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Here were gathered the various types of frontiersmen, plainmen, trappers, missionaries, traders, home builders—all of them men who were inured to the dangers of the wilderness—Americans, Canadians, Englishmen, clad in buckskin and homespun, with their rifles in their hands, with the leaders of the rival factions marshaling their men for the fateful moment.

The Hudson Bay men were for English rule, for that meant that the great expanse of the "Oregon country" would be held as a vast game preserve. Those who desired to make homes and build up industry were for American rule. Then Jone Meek, who later became the first United States marshal for Oregon, rallied the Americans with a stirring appeal for the flag, and when the final vote was taken it showed that 52 had voted for American rule and 50 for British rule.

It was indeed a very narrow victory and one which might be overthrown at a subsequent time by England importing a number of its subjects and holding another convention where those in favor of English rule would predominate.

When the British learned of the activities of Astor in sending out expeditions by land and sea to found a post at the mouth of the Columbia, an English expedition was sent out under the command of David Thompson, an intrepid and resourceful man, to reach the destination first and hoist the flag of England and proclaim all of that country the property of Great Britain. Thompson became lost in the fastnesses of the Rockies, a greater part of his command deserted him, and he reached the mouth of the Columbia three months too late, for he found Astoria established and the American flag flying over the ramparts of the little fort.

#### FIRST OREGON ROOSTERS

The first name which we naturally associate with the "Oregon country" is that of Thomas Jefferson, who visioned the possibilities of the great Northwest and who sent out Lewis and Clark on their famous expedition, which resulted in much valuable information being recorded of the territory tributary to the Columbia.

In a letter to John Jacob Astor under date of November 9, 1813, Jefferson says:

"I learned with great pleasure the progress you have made toward an establishment on the Columbia River. I view it as the germ of a great, free, and independent empire on that side of our continent, and that liberty and self-government spreading from that as well as this side will insure their complete establishment over the whole."

Another strong character who battled long and hard for the recognition of the "Oregon country" by the United States was Senator Thomas H. Benton, of Missouri. Benton was ably supported by his colleague, Senator Lewis F. Linn. Benton understood the needs and aspirations of the early pioneers and comprehended to the fullest extent the future importance of taking and holding all of the "Oregon country" for the United States. For many years this stalwart figure battled for Oregon, and his efforts were finally rewarded by Oregon being admitted as a Territory and finally as a State.

Another man who did as much for Oregon as any other and who was unappreciated and misunderstood by many was Hall J. Kelly, who was inspired by the reports of the Lewis and Clark expedition in 1805 and the Wilson Price Hunt expedition in 1811. In 1817 Kelly began to lecture and write about the "Oregon country," and it was directly through his efforts that the various churches were inspired to send missionaries to this wild and unknown country. Kelly, however, did

not reach Oregon until 1832. He suffered many hardships and indignities and heartaches, but persevered in his work and surveyed the first town site in Oregon on the peninsula between the Willamette and Columbia Rivers in 1835, and also made a survey of the Columbia from Vancouver to Astoria, which he later turned over to the United States Navy Department. He lived the life of a hermit during the last few years of his life, crushed and embittered by the indifference and opposition which he encountered.

#### THE FIRST MISSIONARIES

The first Christian missionaries to Oregon were Jason and Daniel Lee, Methodist, who came in 1834; Rev. Samuel Parker, Congregationalist, in 1835; Dr. Marcus Whitman and wife, Rev. H. H. Spaulding and wife and W. H. Gray, Presbyterians, in 1836; Rev. David Leslie and wife, Methodists, in 1837; Rev. Elkanah Walker and wife, and Cushing Eells and wife, Congregationalists, in 1838; Rev. Francis Norbert Blanchet and Rev. Modeste Demers, Catholics, in 1838, and Peter John De Smet, Catholic, in 1840. These were the pioneers; others came after.

One cause of the missionary movement to the "Oregon country" was one largely sentimental and appealing powerfully to the imagination and call of self-sacrifice, which was one of the greatest elements in the life of a missionary, was the occurrence which happened in 1831, when four Flathead Indians sent a commission of four Indians to St. Louis in search of "The white man's book of heaven." The Indians found General Clark, who blazed the way across the continent with Lewis in 1805 and told him their story. General Clark explained as best he could to the Indians the history of man, the birth of Christ, precepts of the Bible, the death and resurrection of Jesus. Two of the Indian messengers died in St. Louis, and the others went back to their tribe disappointed because they could get no teacher to come with them. The appeal of the Indians caught the attention and stirred the hearts of Christian men and women as nothing had ever done before, and was one of the causes of the pioneer missionary coming to the "Oregon country." Jason Lee preached the first sermon west of the Rocky Mountains on July 27, 1834, at Fort Hall. Lee then continued on his journey west and reached Fort Vancouver in September, where he was kindly received by Chief Factor John McLoughlin, of the Hudson Bay Co., who promptly supplied all his personal wants.

The first mission house in Oregon was built by the Lees near the present site of the town of Gervais.

Dr. Marcus Whitman and Rev. H. H. Spaulding brought their wives with them in 1836. Mrs. Whitman and Mrs. Spaulding brought the first white women to come to the Oregon country. Whitman founded the mission at Walla Walla, where he and his good wife and Reverend and Mrs. Spaulding labored among the untutored Indians and endeavored to civilize them and teach them the Christian religion. Doctor Whitman was an indefatigable worker for Oregon and saw the advisability of the United States Government recognizing the "Oregon country" and making it a part of the Union.

In the winter of 1842-43 Whitman with one companion made his celebrated ride across the continent, facing untold hardships, and encountering unnumbered dangers to urge upon Congress the necessity of recognizing the "Oregon country."

Whitman also had a large influence in persuading the emigrants of 1843 that wagons could be successfully brought from Fort Hall to Walla Walla and to the Willamette Valley.



Whitman and his wife and 12 other persons were massacred by the Indians at the Walla Walla mission November, 1847, while engaged in acts of mercy for the savages. Thus passed out two great characters who gave up their lives in the pursuit of their duties and in the carrying out of their Christian ideals.

#### WAGON TRAIN OF 1843

Then came the celebrated pilgrimage from Fort Hall to Walla Walla and the Willamette Valley in 1843, the migration which brought 1,000 men, women, and children to the "Oregon country" and clinched forever the right of the United States to it by actual occupation of bona fide settlers.

Regarding this expedition which made history for America, John Cradlebaugh, an Oregon poet, thus graphically and beautifully described as follows:

"Dreamers they were those pioneers  
Of the forties, three and four,  
Who braved the hardships of the plains  
In search of an untried shore.  
Brave of soul were the women folk,  
And the bearded men were strong,  
Who reckoned not how rough the trail  
Nor cared that the way was long.  
Week after week, month after month,  
Steadily, surely, but slow  
They journeyed on 'til they came to the stream  
Where the waters westward flow.  
And there they beheld the mountains,  
Where night drew its curtain of blue,  
And they knew that beyond lay the land that they sought  
The land where dreams come true."

In 1847 the Mormons traversed a portion of the trail on their continuous procession of covered wagons and ox teams traverse its length until the iron horse supplanted it.

In 1847 the Mormons traversed a portion of the trail on their pilgrimage to the great Salt Lake. In 1849 came the great rush for gold fields in California, and the gold seekers left the old trail at the Raft River in Idaho and the Malheur in Oregon and headed south. In 1852-53 there came the greatest migration of homeseekers and home builders that the world has ever seen. Just why they came, who can tell? But some restless spirit which has kept mankind on the move ever since the dawn of creation impelled men from the various walks of life, women unused to the rigors of the trail, children of tender years, and babes in arms to leave the comforts of and established home and to hazard the perils of the wilderness to make new homes in the "Oregon country."

#### THE OLD OREGON TRAIL

There were two principal outfitting points in the early days, one at Independence, Mo. the route from there passing through what is now Kansas City (formerly Westport), on into Kansas, to Gardner, where the Santa Fe and Oregon Trail parted, thence past what is now Topeka, thence northwest into Nebraska, through the present town of Hebron and reaching the Platte River near the present town of Grand Island, keeping to the south bank of the river until it reached what is now North Platte, where the crossing was made to the north side of the river.

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Council Bluffs (formerly Kanessville), Iowa, was another starting point, the route from that point following the north bank of the Platte and continuing on up that stream into Wyoming, past the famous old towns of Fort Laramie and Fort Douglas, through the present city of Casper, on past Independence Rock, a great landmark of the trail where the emigrants carved their names or initials on the great sandstone face of the rock, which was called the register of the trail. The Rocky Mountains were crossed at the famous south pass, where the town of Pacific is now located.

Two routes led from here, one making a bend to the south, past what is now Kemmerer, the other known as the Sublette Cut-off, both coming together at a point which is now called Border.

Thence on into Idaho, through the present towns of Montpelier, Soda Springs, and on to Pocatello, near where old Fort Hall was located at the junction of the Port Neuf and the Snake Rivers.

The route then followed the south bank of the Snake River, passing by what are now known as American Falls, Burley, Twin Falls, Filer, and Buhl, where the trail took to the hills and came out on the river again near the present town of Glenns Ferry. Here the Snake River was forded for the first time. From here the trail passed what are now Mountain Home, Boise, Nampa, Caldwell, and Parma near where old Fort Boise was located and where the second crossing of the Snake was made, thence past vicinity of Vale and Ontario and on through Huntington at the mouth of the Burnt River Canyon, thence up that canyon and on into the Powder River Valley near the present city of Baker, then over the hills into the Grande Ronde Valley past what is now La Grande, thence over the Blue Mountains past the town of Meacham and on to the Umatilla, past the present site of Pendleton and on to the Columbia. At The Dalles the emigrants took to boats and rafts or to the difficult Barlow Road on through to Oregon City and Portland and from thence scattering to points in the Willamette Valley, the Clatsop Plains, and into Washington.

In 1862, when gold was discovered in eastern Oregon and southern Idaho, Olds Ferry was established on the Snake River a few miles above the present town of Huntington and the course of traffic passed through the present towns of Weiser and Payette, and for years that route was heavily traveled and the ferry did a big business. To-day bridges span the Snake at both towns and the old ferry has about passed into history.

The wagons in which these early settlers came to the "Oregon country" were called "prairie schooners," and were made wide and deep and bowed at the sides and ends, and were used not only as wagons when on the road but as boats in crossing the many streams encountered. Each wagon was usually drawn by two or more yoke of oxen or teams of horses or mules, with a milk cow and some loose stock trailing along, and carried an average of five people to the wagon.

#### THE PATHWAY OF THE PIONEER

There are two great trails in the history of America—the Santa Fe and the Oregon. Both of them left Independence, Mo., then followed the same track for 40 miles to where Gardner, Kans., is now located, where the Santa Fe veered to the southwest and the Oregon to the northwest. At the forks was a sign, "Road to Oregon." It pointed the way 2,000 miles; there were no other signs and none were needed, for the iron wheels of the wagons, the myriad feet of the cattle, and the footsteps of the pioneer had worn a pathway 6 to 10 feet in depth, 50 to 150 feet in width, the fine dust of the desert being ground out by the traffic and blown away by the fierce winds which came from

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time to time. It crossed Nebraska, Wyoming, Idaho, and Oregon, and entered portions of Missouri, Iowa, Kansas, and Washington. The Santa Fe was a trade route while the Oregon was the route of the homeseeker who came with his plow tied to his wagon and his household effects inside to make a home for his loved ones.

The old Oregon Trail was not laid out by engineers; no grades were established; no streams were bridged, but it wound its way as best it could across the hills and through the gullies and across the streams.

In the springtime, when the hills were green with verdure, when the streams were full and fresh, the game plentiful, the old trail was one of adventure, romance, and hope; but when the torrid sun of summer beat down, the grass all withered, the game departed, the streams dry and alkaline, the old trail lost its glamor and became a way of hardship, suffering, and death.

In the words of Joaquin Miller—

"Then dust arose, a long, thin line like smoke  
From out of riven earth, the wheels went groaning by,  
Ten thousand feet in harness and in yoke,  
They rent the ways of ashen alkali,  
And desert winds blew sudden, swift, and dry.  
The dust it laid upon and filled the train,  
It seemed to fill and fret the very sky.  
Lo, dust upon the beast, the tent, the plain,  
And dust, alas, on breasts that rose not up again."

#### SACRED SOIL

Every foot of the way of the Old Oregon Trail is sacred soil, made sacred by the lives that were lost on the way, made sacred by the blood that was shed, by the broken dreams and ambitions of those who carried on after having laid to rest the loved ones who fell by the way. It is a sacred heritage handed down to us by a brave ancestry to revere and cherish and perpetuate. Let us profit by the wisdom of King Solomon and let us have the "vision" to hand down to our posterity the history and romance of the Old Trail in a way that they can not forget it. As the Burlington was building its line along the Platte, a crew of engineers stumbled upon a lonely little grave out in the sagebrush and across it was a wagon tire, rusted and crusted with time, and on it rudely carved were these words: "Rebecca Winters, age 50 years."

"Boys, said the leader, we'll turn aside,  
Here, close by the Trail, her grave shall stay,  
For she came first in this desert wide,  
Rebecca Wright holds right of way."

A touching bit of sentiment in a hard-boiled world. And so the line of a great railroad was turned to the west that she might lie in peace in the little grave she had occupied these many years, for she was one who came with the Mormon migration in 1847.

It was an army of peace which came to subdue the wilderness, but its casualties were greater than those of many a battlefield. It has been estimated that for each mile of the 2,000-mile course of the Trail, 17 people per mile paid the price of the winning of the "Oregon Country."

#### STATES CREATED OUT OF "OREGON COUNTRY"

The provisional government was established in Oregon, May 2, 1843. George Abernathy was elected first provincial governor and Joe Meek first marshal.

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Oregon was made a Territory August 14, 1848. Gen. Joe Lane was appointed first territorial governor and Joe Meek first United States marshal.

Washington was carved out of Oregon and made a Territory in 1853 and a State in 1889.

Idaho was next taken from Oregon and made a Territory in 1863 and a State in 1890.

Montana was established as a Territory in 1864 and made a State in 1889.

Wyoming was made a Territory in 1868 and achieved Statehood in 1890.

#### THE RUSH FOR GOLD

In 1862 came the great gold rush to eastern Oregon and southern Idaho, and the Old Trail was again the scene of great activity.

Then came into being the pony express. When we think of the pony express, what a vision of romance and adventure it conjures up for us. We think of those swift, tireless horses, those brave, hardy men, enduring the hardships of the trail, evading or fighting the Indians, carrying the news of the world out to the lone frontier. Those were the days when man and horse were supreme.

Then in order to care for the traffic of the country the Concord coach came into being, with its sturdy, swaying body on long leathern springs and stout wheels, hauled by four to six horses, and being the chief mode of transportation for many years.

What a flood of recollections the old Concord coach brings to the old-timer. He thinks of those days and nights on the trail; he thinks of those wonderful horses, matched for speed, for color, and for weight, ready to go until their great hearts ceased to beat; he thinks of those rugged, skillful men who piloted these coaches over the hills and across the valleys from the nearest railroad point to the farthest frontier. Brave days those were, and now but a memory.

Freight in those days was hauled in great wagons drawn by from 12 to 20 mules or horses, driven with a jerk line, the driver riding one of the wheel horses and managing his long team with a single line running through the bridles of all the animals of the near side. Many of the teams sported a semicircle of metal, which was fitted on the collars and on which were strung bells, which lent a softened and romantic air to the rude outfit which traveled over the roads which to-day would seem impassable.

The teamster in those days had a varied personality. The life he led was necessarily rough and laborious and the care of handling and attending to his large team gave him a vocabulary varied and picturesque and at times not fit for polite society.

But he and his teams supplied the needs of the communities and did their part in building an empire and developing the resources of the great Northwest. Freight was carried in boats up the Columbia River as far as Umatilla Landing, where it was transferred to the freight wagons and hauled over the Blue Mountains to the gold fields of eastern Oregon and southern Idaho.

Then came the railroad in the early eighties, and the Old Trail, with all of its heroic associations, almost forgotten. We say "almost," for the memory of it could never be effaced from the minds of those who traversed it in the brave old days.

#### MARKING THE TRAIL

And so it came to pass that in 1906 another man with a vision appears upon the scene. Ezra Meeker, then 76 years of age, who came across

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in 1852 as a young man with his bride, outfitted himself with an ox team and prairie schooner and set out from his home in Puyallup, Wash., to go back over the trail he had traversed as a boy. And as he went he marked the way clear through to the Missouri River with substantial stone monuments. He proceeded on and drove his oxen down to Fifth Avenue in New York City and to Washington, D. C., where he was met with outstretched hand by Teddy Roosevelt, then President of the United States, who welcomed him to Washington and congratulated him on the vision which prompted him to make a trip across a continent in a slow moving prairie schooner to try and awaken in the minds of the people a love and veneration for the deeds of those who faced and conquered the desert and the wilderness, made history for America, and saved to the United States a vast territory. Meeker duplicated his trip in 1910, and to-day at the age of 93, he is still active and working for national recognition of the Old Oregon Trail and endeavoring to have the story of the old trail preserved to posterity in a great moving picture which will depict historically correct the scenes and characters of the greatest migration of all time.

What an unselfish devotion to duty is his and what an inspiration he should be to the younger generation, for he is doing all this without hope of financial gain but only from a desire to do something really worth while, to awaken a love for real American history, and to preserve the traditions and lore of the trail for all time to come.

#### OLD OREGON TRAIL ASSOCIATION

In February, 1922, the Old Oregon Trail Association was organized for the purpose of perpetuating the name of the Old Oregon Trail from the Missouri River to the Pacific coast, to permanently mark it with the insignia of the ox team and the covered wagon, and to advertise it for what it is, the world's most historic highway, the road leading to nature's scenic wonderland, the shortest route to the Great Northwest, a route traversing a populated country with the greatest variety of scenic grandeur of any route and one with the best roads and accommodations by the way. What a wonderful opportunity we have to combine the historic, the sentimental, and the commercial without detracting from either. In order to carry on this work, we have opened our membership to the world and are asking all those who are interested in this movement, or who will profit by the added tourist traffic, to take out memberships at from \$1 per year up. The revival of the history and sentiment of the Old Oregon Trail has touched a responsive chord in the breasts of everyone, whether located on its exact route or not. The old pioneers are passing fast and in a few years they will be numbered with those who were laid to rest beside the trail as they came across.

#### OFFICIAL RECOGNITION

To-day the States of Oregon and Idaho have officially recognized and named their east and west highways the Old Oregon Trail. The State of Wyoming has marked the route across the State with substantial stone monuments, and considerable work of this kind as been done in the State of Nebraska. It is expected that these States will also fall in line with Oregon and Idaho in officially recognizing the Old Oregon Trail, for the history of all four States is closely and inseparably linked with the history of the old trail. In fact it was the Old Oregon Trail which started the movement by which these States were populated and was the germ from which sprang their present development.

#### ALL ROADS LEAD TO THE OLD OREGON TRAIL

Whether from North, South, or East, all roads lead to the Old Oregon Trail. Good roads lead north from Denver and Salt Lake to the old trail, and the road south from the west entrance of the Yellowstone National Park is a good one, running through the productive upper Snake River Valley, past the towns of Ashton, St. Anthony, Rexburg, Idaho Falls, and Blackfoot on to Pocatello.

The picturesque North and South Highway in Idaho taps the trail at Weiser; the John Day Highway touches the trail at Ontario and again at Arlington; Washington connects with the trail near Pendleton with a paved highway from Walla Walla; the Pacific Highway, stretching from the Canadian to the Mexican borders, connects with the trail at Portland.

The Old Oregon Trail is the logical route to California from eastern points. Though the distance may be a little greater, one has the advantage of the best roadbed in the West, has no deserts to cross, passes through a populated and cultivated country with varied scenic attractions, with modern conveniences on every hand, and over a road that is kept open the entire year.

#### THE TRAIL OF TRAILS

The old Oregon Trail is not simply a highway which leads from one place to another; it is not simply a mixture of earth and gravel and cement over which traffic might easily go; it is not simply a convenience to be used and then forgotten. It is not a "paper" road down across the map of this country for commercial or advertising purposes or to satisfy the ambition of some individual.

It is the highway which carries with it and represents the hopes and ambitions, the vision and faith, the endurance and perseverance of brave men and women who dared the terrors of the long, weary way that an empire might be won for the United States of America.

It is the "home trail," the trail of those whose greatest ambition was to establish homes and to live in peace with their neighbors, and for that reason, if for none other, the Old Oregon Trail has a place in history greater than all others, for it is in the homes of this land that the fate of the Nation rests.

Its foundation is laid deep in the hearts of men and women and it is paved with the sentiment which attaches itself to every brave and noble deed unselfishly performed. It will live forever in the annals of history as a living thing breathing of heroic self-sacrifices and devotion to duty. It is the trail which leads to the rainbow's end, the trail of all trails, your trail and mine.

#### BEST ROAD TO THE WEST

To-day the Old Oregon Trail has none of the perils or the discomforts of the past, but is a route which can be followed with ease and pleasure in an automobile, taking but days to traverse a distance which formerly took many weary months.

Through the States of Idaho and Oregon there is a continuous stretch of good road for over 1,100 miles, being all graded and either paved or gravelled. The streams are bridged and it passes through a populated, cultivated, and prosperous country. There are comfortable camp grounds in every town and there are scenic attractions along the route unsurpassed by any other route in America. The great Snake River produces a greater variety of scenic grandeur than any other stream in the United States. There are the great Shoshone Falls, higher than Niagara and rival it in grandeur. Then there are lesser falls, all beautiful and inspiring. The Valley of a Thousand



Springs nestle quiet and restful between the grim walls of the canyon. The trail passes through beautiful, productive valleys and picturesque winding canyons and past industrial centers, lending an ever changing, ever interesting panorama of mountain, stream, city, and field.

The road over the Blue Mountains, once to be dreaded by the pioneer and the tourist, is now a modern, scenic highway and a pleasure to travel. Along the Columbia River the scenery surpasses that of any other highway in the world, with a panorama of waterfalls, river, mountain, and forest which beggars description. At Seaside you come to the Trails End where the Lewis and Clark and Oregon Trail meet the ocean, where the breezes of the forest and the gales of the sea mingle, and where thousands come to bask in the sunshine and revel in the surf.

A branch of the trail runs north from Portland through Vancouver, Wash., and on to the State capital at Olympia, in the vicinity of which many of the pioneers carved their homes out of the wilderness.

#### THE LAND OF TO-DAY

Gone are the buffalo herds and the other wild game which frequented the valley of the Platte, gone are the Indians which made a constant vigilance the price of safety.

Gone are the raids on the wagon trains and the livestock which marked the course of the trail from the Missouri to the sea.

Gone is the spectre of the lonely graves by the way and the anxiety of what the morrow might bring forth.

The natural resources of the country adjacent to the old trail have been developed and we see great coal mines and oil wells paying tribute to the brain and brawn of mankind, providing comforts and luxuries as though in compensation for the misery and hardships wrought in days gone by. We see the desert made to bring forth its fruits under the magic caress of the water of the harnessed streams, which formerly brought worry and disaster to the traveller of old.

We see the hills and mountains carved out and modern highways made where formerly a rough trail marked the way.

We see modern homes and cities mark the site where once was the tepee and the Indian village. We see herds of fat cattle where once roamed the buffalo, and we camp in modern camp grounds with every comfort where once we bivouacked within the circle of the covered wagons, and we sense no more the pungent smell of the buffalo-chip fire, but we cook our meals on an electric range or a gas jet.

We fear no more a night attack or the stampeding of our cattle, for the vehicles we travel in to-day are not subject to stampede.

Eighty-one years ago the first wagon train came over the old trail, and it has been 81 years of progress and development which has seen a wild land tamed and made to pay handsome returns at the hand of man.

There is still pioneering to do in the development of our resources and in the preservation of our treasured traditions and in peopling the great big out-of-doors of the magnetic, romantic West.

It is becoming in us to be humble when thinking of them and incumbent upon us to perpetuate their memories in the permanency of the Old Oregon Trail, which knew their presence.

#### OLD OREGON TRAIL PAGEANT

On July 3 and 4, 1923, an Old Oregon Trail pageant was staged at Meacham, Oreg., on the Blue Mountains, commemorating the eightieth anniversary of the coming of the ox teams and covered wagons to the Oregon country and celebrating the completion of the new Old Oregon

Trail over the Blue Mountains for 80 years a barrier to be dreaded by the pioneers of old and the auto tourist.

On July 3 Warren G. Harding, President of the United States, accompanied by his adorable wife and a large party of Cabinet officers, attachés of the White House, motion-picture operators, and newspaper men, arrived in a special train on their tour of the West and spent the greater part of the day participating in the pageant.

Thirty thousand people, including the governors of three States, gathered from all parts of the Northwest to do homage to our President and to pay honor to the intrepid pioneer men and women who had blazed the way 80 years before.

July 3 dawned clear and bright, with a light breeze blowing to cool the warm rays of the sun. There, 'Top o' Blue Mountains, a scene was presented the likes of which will not be seen for many a year to come. Against the background of the evergreens the tepees of the Indians stood out in bold relief; in the foreground were the covered wagons drawn into the defensive circle of old; on the green meadow, studded with wild mountain flowers, was built the frontier town with its dance halls, its saloons and gambling houses; across the trail were picketed hundreds of horses; along the banks of Meacham Creek were scores of camps of those who came early to avoid the rush; in the background were parked thousands of automobiles which had come long distances to attend the pageant.

President and Mrs. Harding were conducted to the reviewing stand in a Concord coach of the old stage days, escorted by a troop of cavalry attired in the uniforms of the early frontier days.

And then over the brow of the hill and down the old trail itself there passed in review before the distinguished guests a panorama of the colorful old West, bringing back the explorer, the trader, the missionary, the Indians in all the gorgeous panoply of the savage days; the covered wagons and ox teams, the jerk-line freight outfits, the pack trains, the Concord coaches, the buckboards, phaetons, cowboys, and interspersed among it all were the characters who made history for the United States and for the Oregon country when it took real men and women to conquer the savage tribes, the wilderness, and the desert.

After the pageant the presidential party partook of a bear meat and chicken banquet, spread under the folds of a large tent, and prepared and served by pioneer ladies.

Mrs. Harding entered into the spirit of the occasion and insisted on riding on the driver's seat beside Joe Woods, a veteran stage driver, from the reviewing stand to the headquarters tent, where the banquet was spread, and received a great ovation from the assembled crowd.

In the afternoon the program was resumed on the reviewing stand, where seats of honor were given the oldest of the pioneers and where the President and his party were greeted in a typical western manner. In his speech the President dwelt on the deeds of the early pioneers, special mention being given to Dr. Marcus Whitman, and of the need of preserving this pioneer history. A powwow was then held between the President and several of the Indian chiefs, who presented our distinguished guests with many valuable presents, expressing pleasure at having the great white father as their guests for a short time at least.

The Indians then started a spectacular attack on the wagon train, but were finally driven off by the cavalry, which came to the rescue of the beleaguered train, giving the spectators an idea of some of

the perils and hardships encountered by those who traversed the trail in the stirring days of old.

THE UNKNOWN DEAD OF THE "TRAIL"

When the modern highway was being built over the Blue Mountains three skeletons were uncovered at the town of Meacham, one of them being a military man, as evidenced by some Army adornments found with the remains. Some cast-iron nails, rusted almost entirely away, were also found, showing that the remains were very old and were no doubt those of some of the members of the early migrations. The remains were carefully and tenderly laid to rest again with military honors by the side of the trail on July 4, 1923, and a fitting monument erected to the memory of the "Unknown Dead of the Old Oregon Trail." That is but one grave, however, of the many thousands, unknown and unmarked, which lined the pathway of the old trail in the days of the great migrations, and which attaches a sentiment and sacredness to it which no other road in America possesses.

DEDICATION OF THE "TRAIL"

At Emigrant Springs, 3 miles from Meacham, at an historic spot long known as Lee's encampment, because of the fact that Jason Lee, the first missionary to come to the Oregon country, had made camp there in 1834, and where thousands of home seekers camped in later years, President Harding formally dedicated the Old Oregon Trail with a great granite monument erected to the memory of the intrepid pioneers who came with the first train of ox teams and covered wagons in 1843.

At this dedication President Harding was presented with a gold life-membership card in the Old Oregon Trail Association, a membership that terminated so tragically within 30 days.

President Harding made history for the old "Trail" that day and put its name on the lips of millions of people, and helped to revive an interest in the history and lore of the trail which helped make history for the United States and saved to it a vast territory.

MEMORIES

Oh, what men and women the Old Oregon Trail produced. When we think of the Old Oregon Trail, we think of men like Hunt, Lee, Whitman, Spaulding, Bridger, Kit Carson, Buffalo Bill, the Applegates, Joe Meek, Ezra Meeker, and hundreds like them. We think of women like Mrs. Whitman, Mrs. Spaulding, and Dorion, the Indian woman. We think of our own mothers who braved the perils of the hills to bring civilization and refinement to a wild and unbroken country; we think of the churches and schoolhouses that were built through their inspiration and of their unselfish devotion to the men of their choice and to their families.

"There are no new worlds to conquer,  
Gone is the last frontier,  
And the steady grind of the wagon train  
Of the sturdy pioneer.  
But their memories live like a thing divine,  
Treasured in heaven above,  
For the trail that led to the storied West  
Was the wondrous trail of love."

To Mrs. John Stack, a pioneer lady of Baker County, Oreg., one who came in 1859 and who has made the last trek across the Great Divide, we are indebted for these lines:

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"Hickory yoke and oxen red,  
And here and there a little towhead  
Peeping out from the canvas gray  
Of the Oregon Overland on its way,  
In Fifty-nine.

No sound save the creak of the axletree,  
And now and then a whoa, haw, gee,  
From the driver whose face with dust is gray  
Of the Oregon Overland on its way,  
In Fifty-nine.

Creeping along the mountain side,  
Fording rivers, deep and wide,  
From the earliest dawn 'til close of day,  
Rolls the Oregon Overland on its way,  
In Fifty-nine.

At ease in a home in some cosy nook,  
Near by the sound of a running brook,  
Or perhaps asleep beneath the sod,  
Forgetting forever the road they trod,  
Are the little towheads that peeped that day  
From the Oregon Overland on its way,  
In Fifty-nine."

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