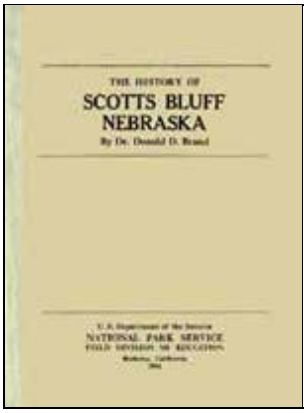
Field Division of Education



THE HISTORY OF
SCOTTS BLUFF NEBRASKA

by
Dr. Donald D. Brand

U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Field Division of Education
Berkeley, California

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The History of Scotts Bluff Nebraska

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FOREWORD

This paper, The History of Scotts Bluff, Nebraska, is one of many prepared by a special research group employed under the Civil Works Program of 1933-34 by the Field Division of Education, National Park Service, Berkeley, Calif. Its purpose is to satisfy certain specialized needs existing in the National Park Service and it must not, therefore, be judged or regarded as a complete statement of the subject with which it deals.

The objective of this paper is the compilation of such pertinent information as will be helpful in the preparation of museum exhibits illustrating the history of the area of which Scotts Bluff National Monument is the center and, more specifically, to outline the story to be interpreted by such exhibits and to aid museum preparators and Park Naturalists. Consequently it stresses those aspects of Scotts Bluff history which are most adaptable to simple and effective museum display and treats but lightly those phases which cannot be objectively presented in the museum. The paper does not pretend to be an original piece of research but is rather a compilation of existing work. Nevertheless, such interest has been manifested in the group of research papers of which this is a part that it seems worthwhile to make some of them available in mimeographed form. Certainly this paper should be of value as an introduction to Central Plains history, particularly in view of its extensive bibliographic references.

The format of the paper has been slightly modified from customary scholarly standards in order to save time and expense in mimeographing. The pertinent footnotes will be found at the conclusion of each section.

The author, Dr. Donald D. Brand, has been associated with the Department of Geography of the University of California and is now a member of the faculty of the University of New Mexico. He is the author of several monographs published by the University of California press.

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INTRODUCTION

The Scotts Bluff National Monument memorialized not so much the historic significance of the few square miles of actual monument area, but rather the numberless migrations that have passed, since time immemorial, over the many trails that converge on the North Platte. The history of the Scotts Bluff area is an epitome of the exploration, exploitation, and settlement of the Trans-Mississippi West. Here is one of the truly great corridors of the world. The headwaters of the Platte rise along the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains in Wyoming and Colorado. By means of the South Pass an almost imperceptible transition is made from Atlantic to Pacific drainage. This pass-route commanded the best lines of movement between California, the Oregon country and Utah on the west of the "continental backbone," and the great Missouri-Mississippi system, and the plains, prairies, and forests of the east.

Out of the West have moved the countless bands of the first great emigration to America -- small groups of primitive Asiatic nomads, who probably made a considerable use of this natural corridor into the "promised lands" of the south and east. The various bisons, elk, deer, and other grazing animals of the late Pleistocene had already marked out the many converging and diverging trails. As the generations of the ancestral Amerinds increased, the tribes were forced to fill up all of the land. Hunting grounds began to overlap, and the warpath often replaced the trails of migration and trade. Ere the White Man reached the Nebraska country, the European horse had become the servant of all the Great Plains tribes. Formerly agricultural Indians of the Mississippi-Missouri valleys became mounted nomad hunters of the buffalo, and wandered from the Mississippi to the Rocky Mountains.

The Great Plains Indian-horse-buffalo cultural complex had scarcely become formulated when French and Spanish traders and trappers invaded the country. By the accident of wars, these nationalities were replaced by Anglo-Saxon Britishers and Americans -- but the fur trader and trapper continued to dominate the western scene until the country had been thoroughly explored and trapped out. Then the fertile lands of the Pacific Coast began to draw a few hardy settlers over the prairie and mountain traces. Persecution pushed the Mormons into temporary exile in Utah. War and diplomacy gave California and Oregon to the American nation, and the emigrations increased. Soon the discovery of gold in California inspired a westward trek of many thousands. Scarcely had the "Forty-niners" become able miners and prospectors when new strikes of precious metals drew thousands into the "diggings" of Nevada, Colorado, Idaho, and Montana.

The rapidly growing population and states of the West demanded rapid and more certain communication with the East, and there came in quick succession: Overland Mail, Pony Express, the transcontinental telegraph, Overland Stage, and the transcontinental railroad. Feeding emigrants and laborers along the great overland route forced a sudden decimation of the buffalo, the Indian's "staff of life." In desperation the plains Indians arose in bloody concerted war, adding to the chaos of the Civil War. Gaining certain concessions, the Indians became warily peaceful until the rush of prospectors to the gold strikes in the Black Hills and Montana, together with the westward advance of the Northern Pacific, provoked the final flurry of resistance in 1876. Crushed by the American troops and moved to restricted reservations, the Great Plains Indians lost all power of opposing the White penetration.

In great waves of cattle and men the Platte country was overrun by the Texas cattle industry. For some ten years the stockman ruled the open range. But westward had been advancing the granger, with his recently acquired barbed wire fence. By the close of the '80's, granger fence, overstocked range, and a depression in the meat industry had combined to eliminate the great open ranges. Characteristic of this change, western Nebraska introduced irrigation wherever possible, new railroads came in, and small market towns sprang up all along the lines of communication. The era of colonization and rapid cultural mutations was over before the close of the Nineteenth Century. Such is the historic background of the great movements over the overland route.[1]

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[1] The history of the westward expansion is being told more voluminously and accurately with every year. Among the principal general works on this phase of American history are:

1. Frederick J. Turner, The significance of the frontier in American history, 1894.

2. Henry Inman and W. F. Cody, The Great Salt Lake Trail, 1898.

3. Edwin E. Sparks, The expansion of the American people, 1900.

4. Ellen C. Semple, American History and its geographic condition, 1903.

5. George P. Garrison, Westward expansion, 1841-1850, 1906.

6. Frederick J. Turner, Rise of the new West, 1819-1829, 1906.

7. Randall Parrish, The Great Plains, 1907.

8. Frederic Paxson, The last American frontier, 1910.

9. Edwin L. Sabin, Kit Carson days, 1809-1868, 1914.

10. Frederick J. Turner, The frontier in American history, 1920.

11. James C. Bell, Opening a highway to the Pacific, 1838-46, 1921.

12. Katherine Coman, Economic beginnings of the Far West, 1921.

13. Cardinal Goodwin, The Trans-Mississippi West, 1803-1853, 1922.

14. Frederick L. Paxson, History of the American frontier, 1763-1893, 1924.

15. Agnes C. Laut, The overland trail, 1929.

16. W. J. Ghent, The road to Oregon, 1929.

17. Robert E. Riegel, America moves West, 1930.

18. E. Douglas Branch, Westward - The romance of the American frontier, 1930.

19. W. J. Ghent, The early Far West, 1931.

20. Walter P. Webb, The Great Plains, 1931.

21. Rufus R. Wilson, Out of the West, 1933.

22. E. W. Gilbert, The exploration of Western America, 1800-1805, 1933.

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ARCHAEOLOGY

Little study has as yet been made of the earliest remains of man in western Nebraska. However, occasional finds of human artifacts, associated with the bones of extinct mammals, in the Pleistocene deposits of the Platte country have led trained archaeologists to estimate an antiquity of approaching 10,000 years for man in the Scotts Bluff area.[1]

Nebraska may be divided into five prehistoric provinces, the Western Plains region being equivalent to the Scotts Bluff area. The oldest non-agricultural finds occur in this region. At Signal Butte,[2] in the Wild Cat Mountains, some 22 miles southwest of Scotts Bluff town, an 13-foot vertical cross-section revealed three separate strata of human occupation in a site that may have been an old river channel, just above Brule clay. This is the most important Nebraskan find of the last few years. Arrowpoints (resembling the Folsom type of New Mexico) have been found associated with the extinct Bison Occidentalis six miles south of Grand Island, Hall County, and near Cumso, Custer County, the latter in Peorian loess. Finds of the Folsom-like points have also been made near Champion, Chese County, and in other Nebraskan localities.

At an uncertain date, later than that of the Signal Butte and Folsom cultures, agriculture entered Nebraska from the south along the Missouri. Seemingly here Algonquin peoples obtained an agricultural-pottery complex before the coming of the Caddoan tribes from the south, who introduced a higher culture characterized by semi-subterranean houses and abundant pottery. This southern or Caddoan complex spread as far west as Scotts Bluff and the Colorado border, where a few vestiges of this culture area found. Renaud[3] found the South Platte basin of Northeastern Colorado to comprise a major archaeological division, with many campsites (perhaps belonging to historic Indians) characterized by many flaked artifacts (chiefly quartzite and petrified wood scrapers, arrowheads, and hammerstones) and chips, tipi rings and fireplaces, sub-rectangular or oval manos, sandstone metates, and plain or stamped pottery. The pottery apparently represented a peripheral extension of Plains ceramics. In its origin, this may derive from the Caddoan culture, as a few semi-subterranean house sites exist in the Colorado-Wyoming-Nebraska border region. In general, however, the physical limitations of this dry country worked against any effective penetration of an agricultural culture from the more humid region of fertile loess to the east.

The sequence of cultures in Western Nebraska is yet obscure but may be sketchily described as follows:

1. The most recent is the historic Dakota-Arapaho-Cheyenne culture of normal Plains type.

2. Somewhat earlier the Caddoan Pawnees had a tenuous hold on this sub-agricultural area.

3. Prior to the differentiation of the northern Caddoan peoples, much of the middle and western Nebraska was occupied by people (presumably proto-Pawnee) of the so-called Upper Republican culture, which incorporated agriculture, semi-subterranean earthlodges, and abundant pottery.

4. The oldest well-represented culture is the non-agricultural Signal Butte type, with numerous stone artifacts, but no pottery.

5. Even more ancient may be the culture represented by the scattered finds of Folsom-type, medium-to-large dart points, often associated with the bones of fossil bison.

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[1] The summary of Dr. W. D. Strong's address, on p. 162 of the article, "Prehistoric Man in Nebraska," pp. 160-165, Nebraska History Magazine, Vol. 13, 1932; a paper on "Ancient Life in Nebraska and the Physical Environment," pp. 35-37, Nebraska History Magazine, Vol. 14, 1933; W. D. Strong, "The Plains Culture Area in the Light of Archaeology," pp. 271-297, Vol. 35, No. 2, 1933, American Anthropologist; articles in "Smithsonian Explorations," 1931 and 1932; Bertran Schultz, "Association of Artifacts and Extinct Mammals in Nebraska," Bulletin 33, Nov., 1932, Nebraska State Museum; E. B. Renaud, "Archaeological Survey of Eastern Wyoming," 1932, and E. B. Renaud, "Archaeological Survey of Eastern Colorado," 1931, Univ. of Denver, Dept. of Anthropology, comprise the chief published materials on the archaeology of this region. After earlier sporadic archaeologic work, E. E. Blackman was employed in 1901 by the Nebraska State Historical Society to make a preliminary archaeological survey of the state. Since about 1917 Dr. Harold Cook has been making intensive studies in western Nebraska. The organized study of the archaeology of the Great Plains was not initiated until 1930, under Dr. Guthe, general director for the Mississippi Valley field. Since then there have been annual conferences of Plains Archaeologists. Dr. W. D. Strong, now with the Smithsonian Institution, led a number of field parties from the University of Nebraska, 1929-1932.

[2] Discussed by W. D. Strong in projected Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin, "An introduction to Nebraska archaeology"; in another paper by W. D. Strong and M. E. Kirby, "Signal Butte, a stratified site in Western Nebraska", now in preparation; and in the 1931 and 1932 volumes of Smithsonian Explorations.

[3] Op. cit.

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EARLY INDIAN MIGRATIONS

By some unknown date, probably several centuries before Columbus reached America, peoples belonging to the Caddoan stock had spread over and occupied much of the country from the Red River into South Dakota, and from the Missouri nearly to Scotts Bluff.[1] This was probably at the expense of Algonquin tribes along the fertile Missouri bottoms. It is doubtful if there was ever any considerable Indian population of the Great Plains prior to the introduction of the horse, which greatly facilitated the hunting of buffalo and extensive migrations in search of water, fuel, and shelter.

After the Caddoan occupation of the trans-Missouri region, there occurred an influx of Siouan peoples, also agricultural, from the north and east.[2] The Dakota division of the Siouan stock, defeated in disastrous wars with the Algonquin Chippewa (who were aided by newly-acquired firearms from the French), around the beginning of the 18th century began to emigrate southwestward from Minnesota. This movement forced the Algonquin Cheyenne and Arapaho ahead of them into the Black Hills and Cheyenne river country[3] of South Dakota. The migrations and displacements continued until, by 1800, the Dakota Sioux were in possession of most of South Dakota.

The westward migration of tribes had by this time become greatly accelerated through the use of the horse. The horse (strayed or stolen from the early Spaniards) had reached the Pawnees by 1700, and the Dakotas by 1740.[4] Goaded by enemies on the east and attracted by the herds of buffalo swarming over the Great Plains of the Platte country, the Tetons (most western branch of the Dakota Sioux) drove the Cheyenne and Arapaho before them, and had occupied all of western Nebraska to the North Platte by 1830. Therefore, when white men began to enter Nebraska in numbers, they found the Kansas, Omaha, and Ponca Sioux in the Missouri Valley; the Caddoan Pawnees restricted to south central Nebraska, along the middle Platte and Loup rivers; and the Ogallala and Brule divisions of the Teton Dakotas over all the remainder of the state. The Arapaho and southern Cheyenne normally held the southern Platte country.

The Arapaho, Cheyenne, and Dakotas were normally at peace with each other, but constantly warred against the Pawnees on the east and the Shoshone on the west. The Kiowa and Comanche had presumably drifted out of Wyoming southeastward across western Nebraska, in the early 18th century, to establish themselves in western Kansas, Oklahoma,

and Texas. This set-up in the first half of the 19th century made the forks of the Platte and wild battleground between the Cheyenne-Arapaho-Tetons and the Pawnees. Until about 1835 the Pawnees dared to have villages on the North Platte, but a decisive defeat in that year near Ash Hollow[5] caused them to retire far down the river to the Loup country.

When these northwestern Plains Indians were first visited by Europeans in the 19th century, they possessed a nearly uniform culture. This culture was based on use of the horse and hunting of the bison, and conditioned to an exceedingly nomadic life. Agriculture was practically unknown (except among the Pawnees and other tribes to the east); very little pottery was made; and the bison provided everything from fuel and food to shelter and raiment. These nomadic hunting horsemen naturally became great horse stealers and far-raiding warriors. Such were the inhabitants of the Scotts Bluff area when the white man arrived. In numbers they may have approached a total of 40,000-50,000 souls, divided: Dakotas, 25,000; Pawnees, 10,000; Cheyenne, 3,500; and Arapaho, 3,000. As yet, smallpox, cholera, and drunkenness had not taken a toll of these highly susceptible aborigines.[6]

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[1]W. E. Connelley, "Notes on early Indian occupancy of the Great Plains," pp. 438-470, Vol. 14, 1915-1918, Kansas Historical Collections. Mr. Connelley has used Indian traditions, the reports of early travelers, and the evidence of artifact distribution in working up his material and two distributional maps. W. D. Strong, op. cit., in American Anthropologist, discusses some of the archaeological evidence for his postulated spread of Caddoan stock.

[2]Map in Connelley, op. cit., shows Siouans to the Niobrara and lower Missouri by 1540. Plate 33, Indian tribes and Linguistic Stocks, 1650, compiled by Dr. J. R. Swenton, in the Paullin: Atlas of the Historical Geography of the United States, 1932, shows a further encroaching of the Siouans into the fertile trans-Missouri lowlands of Kansas and Nebraska.

[3]The various movements of the Dakota, Cheyenne, Arapaho, and adjacent tribes are outlined in:

1. David Bushnell: Villages of the Algonquin, Siouan, and Caddoan Tribes West of the Mississippi, Bureau American Ethnology, Bull. 77, 1922.

2. Doane Robinson: A Comprehensive History of the Dakota or Sioux Indians, S. Dak. Hist. Coll., Vol. 2, 1904.

3. George B. Grinnell: The Cheyenne Indians, Vol. 1, 1923.

4. James Money: Ghost-Dance Religion, pp. 653 et seq., 14th Annual Report, Bureau American Ethnology, 1896.

5. A. L. Kroeber: The Arapaho, Vol. 18, Part 1, 1902, Bull. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.

6. W. McGee: The Siouan Indians, 15th Annual Report, Bureau American Ethnology, 1897.

[4]C. Wissler: The Influence of the Horse on the Development of Plains Culture, pp. 1-25, Vol. 16, n. s., "American Anthropologist," 1914.

[5]R. Sage: Wild Scenes in Kansas and Nebraska, p. 50.

[6]Among the best early descriptions of Plains Indians are those to be found in:

1. George Catlin: Letters and Notes, 1841.
2. Prince Maximilian von Wied: Travels, 1841.
3. Original Journals of Lewis and Clark.
4. E. James: Long's Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains, 1823.

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THE EUROPEAN ADVANCE

When the first white men saw western Nebraska will probably never by exactly determined. Scandinavians in the 14th century may have been the first to set foot in the valley of the Mississippi. Coronado, in 1541, advanced into northern Kansas, or possibly southern Nebraska. The French -- Nicolet in 1639, Radison in 1654-60, Joliet and Marquette in 1673, Hennepin in 1679-80 and Letueur in 1683 -- explored the Mississippi region north of the Ohio. Not, however, until 1720 was there an authenticated exploration by white men on Nebraska soil. In that year a Spanish expedition, under Lt. General Pedro de Villasur, was massacred by Pawnees at the forks of the Platte.[1] This was the most northeastern point ever attained by a Spanish expedition in the Great Plains.

Soon after, in June of 1739, the Mallet brothers and six other Frenchmen traversed Nebraska from a camp near the mouth of the Niobrara across to the Platte, and by the South Platte south to Santa Fe.[2] On this trip the Platte received its name, which is a translation of the Siouan name, "Nebrathka," meaning "shallow." A few years later, about 1743, the Verendryes advanced through the Dakotas, perhaps to the Rocky Mountains, the white man's farthest west in that latitude.

During the succeeding years of Spanish and French occupation of the Great Louisiana province, undoubtedly a number of European or halfbreed trappers and voyageurs penetrated the western Great Plains, up such rivers as the Arkansas, Kansas, and Platte, but no record has endured. Not until the American purchase did recorded parties, such as those of Lewis and Clark, Pike, and Long, traverse this region. A young American captive among the Indians[3] did claim to have wandered with the Indians into the Rocky Mountains prior to 1816, but his story is open to doubt.

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[1]A. B. Thomas: "The Massacre of the Villasur Expedition at the Forks of the Platte River, Aug. 12, 1720," in Nebraska History Magazine, 1925. Some authorities place this at the Loup-Platte junction.

[2]Journal, published in de Margry: Decouvertes.

[3]John D. Hunter: Memoirs of a Captivity among the Indians of North America, 1823.

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THE EARLY FUR TRADE PERIOD

The active exploration of the Scotts Bluff area began with the western extension of the fur trade into the upper Missouri and Rocky Mountain regions. With the trapper and trader came the beginnings of the history for western Nebraska.[1] Although such Spanish and French traders as Lisa and Choteau had already been trading in the Missouri country, it remained for John Jacob Astor and his Pacific Fur Company (organized in 1810) to open up the rich fur country of the American Rockies and the Oregon country. A party, under W. P. Hunt, was sent overland to the mouth of the Columbia, and another party, on the "Tonquin," went by sea. Astoria was founded and the region claimed for America scarcely before some British traders appeared on the scene out of Canada. The Second War for Independence (1812-15) came on, and control was lost temporarily until an agreement between Britain and America made the Oregon country (42°-54°40' N. Lat., and west of the Continental Divide) open to joint exploitation.

Meanwhile, in 1812, an overland party had started east with dispatches for Astor. Robert Stuart, Ramsay Crooks, Robert McLellan, Joseph Miller, F. Leclerc, A. Veller, and B. Jones made up the party that laboriously followed up the Snake, crossed the Continental Divide at or near the famous South Pass, and started down the Sweetwater. The party lost their horses to some Indians while west of the Rockies, so they concluded to winter until foot or boat traveling should improve, as they had no idea of their location or the distance to St. Louis. Being disturbed by some Indians, the returning Astorians decided to attempt farther progress. They trudged along down the North Platte (with most of their dunnage on the back of a poor old horse obtained from some friendly Snake Indians) until they had advanced many miles into the cold, desolate plains. Confronted by a lack of fuel and food, they retraced their steps "to a place where they had remarked there was a sheltering growth of forest trees and a country abundant in game. Here they would once more set up their winter quarters and await the opening of the navigation to launch themselves in canoes."[2]

At this site the seven wanderers set up a new winter lodge, which was completed a few days after New Year's Day, 1813. They were able to kill an abundance of buffalo, and soon had an ample stock of winter provisions. Part of their leisure time they utilized in making two large dugout canoes, hoping to launch them with the spring flood of the river. On the 8th of March the river seemed sufficiently deep, and they departed from their winter's quarters.[3] However, this initial attempt to

navigate the upper Platte failed miserably, as the river expanded into a wide but extremely shallow stream, with many sandbars, and occasionally various channels. They got one of their canoes a few miles down it, with extreme difficulty, but at length had to abandon the attempt and resume their journey on foot with their faithful old pack-horse. Finally they got down to Grand Island, where a canoe was obtained from some Indians, and the remainder of the journey was made with comparative speed and ease.

This good direct trail between the settlements and the mountains now was forgotten for a number of years. During this time the Missouri Fur Company (motivated by Manuel Lisa, Joshua Pilcher, and other St. Louis men) and several minor companies had continued to work the upper Missouri region via the Missouri river. In 1822 William Ashley and Andrew Henry organized a fur company that planned greater activity in the Rocky Mountains than ever before. An advertisement for men was answered by a group that developed such famous mountainmen as Jedediah Smith, William Sublette, and Jim Bridger. A series of disastrous encounters with Aricara and Blackfeet Indians in the upper Missouri region, 1822-1824, nearly wrecked Ashley financially, and turned the attention of his men to more southern fields. At this time occurred the much-disputed discovery or rediscovery of the South Pass by Provot and Bridger in 1823 or Smith and Fitzpatrick in 1824.[4]

The concentration of Ashley's men in the Rocky Mountain area back of the Platte headwaters resulted in two innovations in the fur business. The various bands of trappers working for Ashley were given a time and place to meet a caravan which would bring needed supplies and trade goods, and would then take back to St. Louis the skins acquired by trapping and trade. This rendezvous and caravan system was initiated in the summer of 1825. At the same time the direct Platte overland route was put into effective use. In the summer of 1824 Fitzpatrick and two others had attempted to come down the Sweetwater and North Platte by bullboat, but had been wrecked and forced to cache their beaver skins. Then the three walked the entire distance in to Ft. Atkinson on the Missouri. There they found James Clyman, who had become separated from his party and had wandered the 600 miles in eighty days, arriving shortly before them. The party got horses, returned to the cache at Independence Rock, and was back at Ft. Atkinson in less than two months. Thus were furs first brought down to the Missouri by the Platte route. This route was probably along the north bank.[5]

At first the pack animals used were horses, but soon mules became the favored animals because of their greater endurance. The caravan in 1826, under Ashley, W. Sublette, and Smith, was composed of 300 pack mules. This was Ashley's last trip into the mountains, as he sold his active interest to W. Sublette, Smith, and David Jackson in July of 1826. The pack trains of 1827, and 1828, and 1829 were of the accustomed type, but in the summer of 1830 W. Sublette led a caravan of 10 wagons (each drawn by 5 mules, 2 dearborns drawn by a mule each, 12 head of cattle, one milch cow, and 80 men mounted on mules.) This train went from St. Louis up the Platte to the head of the Wind River, being the first wagons to reach the Rocky Mountains north of the Santa Fe Trail. In 1827, however, Ashley had sent a party of 60 men, with a four-pound

cannon on a carriage drawn by two mules, which went as far as the Great Salt Lake.

"Pack horses, or rather mules, were at first used; but in the beginning of the present year (1830), it was determined to try wagons; and in the month of April last, on the 10th day of the month, a caravan of ten wagons, drawn by five mules each, and two dearborns, drawn by one mule each, set out from St. Louis. We have eighty-one men in company, all mounted on mules; and these were exclusive of a party left in the mountains. Our route from St. Louis was nearly due west to the western limits of the State, and thence along the Santa Fe trail about forty miles; from which the course was some degrees north of west, across the water of the Kansas, and up the Great Platte river, to the Rocky Mountains, and to the head of the Wind river, where it issued from the mountains. This took us until the 16th of July, and was as far as we wished the wagons to go, as the furs to be brought in were to be collected at this place, which is, or was this year, the great rendezvous of the persons engaged in that business. Here the wagons could easily have crossed the Rocky Mountains, it being what is called the Southern Pass, had it been desirable for them to do so, which it was not for the reason stated. For our support, at leaving the Missouri settlements, until we should get into the buffalo country, we drove twelve head of cattle, beside a milk cow. Eight of these only being required for use before we got to the buffaloes, the others went on to the head of Winder river." (Letter of Jackson, Smith, and Sublette, page 21). On the return trip the dearborns were left behind. Thus, in 1827 and 1830, the embryonic Oregon Trail (yet known only as the Great Platte route to the mountains) was blazed to a wheeled trace.[6]

At the summer rendezvous of 1830, W. Sublette, Smith, and Jackson sold out to Fitzpatrick, Bridger, M. Sublette, Fraeb, and Gervais, who constituted the first Rocky Mountain Fur Company, properly so entitled. This company was dissolved in 1834, when it was temporarily reconstructed under Fitzpatrick, M. Sublette, and Bridger. However, these traders marketed through the American Fur Company, and after 1835 became employees of the latter company. During the five-year period, 1830-35, there ensued certain events and results that brought the first, or "romantic," period of the fur trade to an end.

In the period 1810-1830, fur trappers and traders had quite thoroughly explored and trapped the entire Rocky Mountain area from British Canada to the Mexican Interior Provinces. Most of the entrepreneurs (borgeois, factor, artisan, or free trader) were Scotch, Irish, or of pioneer Virginia and Kentucky stock. The engages and free trappers were a motley crew of French-Canadian, American, Mexican, and mixed breeds. Scarcely a one hesitated to take one or more Indian wives, in the easy "mountaineer" style. Through such alliances tribal trade was attracted to the various individuals and outfits.[7] By 1830 there was literally scarcely a locality or an Indian band that had not been contacted by the mountaineer trappers. This had resulted in a perceptible "trapping out" of the beaver country. By 1834 the reduction of the beaver output (the main fur shipped down the Platte route) was quite visible, and John Jacob Astor withdrew from the American Fur Company. At the same

time the decree of "Dame Fashion" had shifted from beaver to silk hats.

Contributing agents to the trapping out of the beaver and the introduction of a new order in the fur business were the invasions of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company "preserves" by numerous independent outfits, such as those of Bonneville, Wyeth, Gant, and Bent-St. Vrain. Captain Bonneville, an army officer on leave, brought an elaborate wagon-train outfit into the mountains, in 1832, over the North Platte route by Scotts Bluff. In the same year Nathanial Wyeth, a New England ice dealer, came into the mountains (by the same route) on a reconnaissance trip, which resulted in a serious business attempt in 1834. Accompanying Wyeth in 1834 were the first prospective permanent settlers of the Oregon country, Jason and Daniel Lee, Methodist missionaries to the Northwestern Indians. The competition among the many trapping and trading outfits, the need for central posts to which the fruits of methodic trapping and hunting might be brought and exchanged for commodities, and the prospect of regular movements across the mountains between the Missouri and the Columbia all led to the founding of permanent trading posts. Ft. William (Ft. Laramie), some 60 miles above Scotts Bluff, and Ft. Hall, on the upper Snake, were built in 1834. Although the annual rendezvous continued into its sixteenth year (1840), it decreased steadily in importance. There was to ensue a period, 1835-1848, when the westward movement of missionaries and colonists bound for the fertile valleys of Oregon and California filled the historic picture, and the reduced ranks of the trappers contributed as much to progress through guide service at by the production of beaver and buffalo skins for the eastern markets.[8]

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[1]The history of western Nebraska has been dealt with, in varying degree, in:

1. Grant Lee Shumway: The History of Western Nebraska and its People, 1921.
2. A. E. Sheldon: Nebraska, 1931.
3. J. Sterling Morton: History of Nebraska, 1907.
4. Addison E. Sheldon: History and Stories of Nebraska, 1913.
5. Johnson's History of Nebraska, 1880.
6. R. T. Andreas: History of Nebraska.
7. W. A. Goodspeed: The Province and the States, Vols. 1, 5, 1904, 1907.
8. G. L. Shumway: "First Settlements of the Scotts Bluff Country," Nebraska State Hist. Soc. Pub., Vol. 19, 1919.
9. A. Watkins: "Historical Sketch of Cheyenne Country," Nebraska State Hist. Soc. Coll., Vol. 17, 1917.

Washington Irving's "Astoria" (1836) is the principal authority for the entire narrative of the returning Astorians. The May 15, 1813, "Missouri Gazette" carried the first published account (extracted in John Bradbury: Travels in the Interior of America, 1817) of this journey that defined nearly the entire length of the future Oregon Trail. The "Journal of Robert Stuart" has been edited recently by P. A. Rollins.

[3]The exact location has never been determined. The local historians of Scotts Bluff presume it to have been in the Cottonwood Grove, near the town of Scotts Bluff. W. J. Ghent, in "The Road to Oregon," p. 250, locates the camp near Henry, Nebraska, near which town an Oregon Trail stone was dedicated 100 years later. Irving, op. cit. pp. 320-321, made no attempt to place the camp. Grace Hebard, "The Pathbuckers from River to Ocean," 6th ed., p. 72, located the Astorians near Torrington. Addison Sheldon, "History and Stories of Nebraska," p. 43, carries the Astorians down to Bridgeport. The historic evidence of topography, vegetation, and abundance of buffalo would indicate any one of the above-mentioned sites, with the greatest probability resting with the Henry site.

[4]The best works covering the history of fur trade between the Missouri and the Wyoming-Colorado Rockies are:

1. J. C. Alter: James Bridger, 1925.
2. T. D. Bonner: The Life and Adventures of James P. Beckwourth, 1856.
3. C. L. Camp: James Clyman, 1928.
4. Hiram M. Chittenden: The American Fur Trade of the Far West, 1902.
5. Katherine Coman: Economic Beginnings of the Far West, 1921.
6. H. C. Dale: The Ashley-Smith Exploration, 1918.
7. W. J. Ghent: The Early Far West, 1931.
8. W. J. Ghent: The Road to Oregon, 1929.
9. E. W. Gilbert: The Exploration of Western America, 1933.
10. L. R. Hafen and W. J. Ghent: Broken Hand, 1931.
11. A. Henry: Manuscript Journals, 1897.
12. W. Irving: Astoria, 1836.
13. W. Irving: The Adventures of Captain Bonneville, 1837.
14. Chas. Larpenteur: Forty Years a Fur Trader on the Upper Missouri, 1898.
15. Narrative of the Adventures of Zenas Leonard, 1839.
16. N. Murney: The Life of Jim Baker, 1931.
17. Neb. State Hist. Soc. Pub., Vol. 20, "Adventures of the Fur Trader Founders of St. Louis . . . selected from newspapers," 1922.
18. John G. Neihardt: The Splendid Wayfaring, 1920.
19. Francis Parkman: California and Oregon Trail, 1856.
20. Osborne Russell: Journal of a Trapper, 1914.
21. G. F. Ruxton: Life in the Far West, 1849.
22. R. Sage: Wild Scenes in Kansas and Nebraska, 1846.
23. E. L. Sabin: Kit Carson Days, 1914.
24. C. A. Vandiveer: The Fur-Trade and Early Western Exploration, 1929.
25. F. F. Victor: The River of the West, 1870.
26. A. Wislizenus: Trip to the Rocky Mountains, 1839.

27. Sources of the History of Oregon: The Correspondence and Journals of Captain Nathaniel Wyeth, 1899.

[5]Hafen and Ghent: Broken Hand, p. 47, and Camp: James Clyman, pp. 35-37, give the details of these marathon walking trips.

[6]United States Senate Executive Document 39, 21st Congress, 2nd Session, 1831, contains a letter from Gen. W. H. Ashley to Gen. Macomb, in which, p. 7, Ashley describes the expedition of 1827. In the same document there is a letter from Smith, Jackson, and Sublette which (p. 21) narrates the wagon journey of 1830. Chittenden, op. cit., p. 279, has twisted this into a six-pound cannon going to the mountains in 1826 under Ashley. Hafen and Ghent, op. cit., pp. 63, 65, 69, 70, 71, and 76, mention the summer caravans led by W. Sublette to the annual rendezvous.

[7]Alter: James Bridger; Bonner: The Life and Adventures of James P. Beckwourth; and Brisbin: Belden, the White Chief, give excellent accounts of the life of a "squawman."

[8]The story of the 1830-35 transition period was almost contemporaneously made public by the publishing of:

1. John B. Wyeth: Oregon, or a Short History of a Long Journey, 1833, which narrated some of the events on the N. Wyeth expedition of 1832.
2. W. Irving: The Adventure of Captain Bonneville, 1837, whose easy style entertained thousands with their first authentic picture of life in the central Rocky Mountains. This work is still basic for the history of the period, as well of the hero.
3. Narrative of the Adventure of Zenar Leonard, 1839, which recounted adventures while with Gant and other mountaineers.
4. John K. Townsend: Narrative of a Journey Across the Rocky Mountains, 1839, which relates happenings on Wyeth's 1834 trip.

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THE STORY OF SCOTTS BLUFF

Bonneville's journal, through the pen of the gifted Irving, also preserved for posterity the name and garbled history of Hiram Scott -- one of the hundreds who sacrificed their lives in the search for the animal wealth of the mountains. According to Bonneville's account (pp. 34-35):

> "On the 21st (June, 1832) they (Bonneville's party) encamped amid high high and beetling cliffs of indurated clay and sandstone, bearing the semblance of towers, castles, churches, and fortified cities. At a distance it was scarcely possible to persuade one's self that the works of art were not mingled with these fantastic freaks of nature. They have received the name of Scott's Bluffs from a melancholy circumstance. A number of years since, a party were descending the upper part of the river in canoes, when their frail barks were overturned, and all their powder spoiled. Their rifles being thus rendered useless, they were unable to procure food by hunting, and had to depend upon roots and wild fruits for subsistence. After suffering extremely from hunger, they arrived at Laramie's fork, a small tributary of the north branch of the Nebraska, about sixty miles above the cliffs just mentioned. Here one of the party, by the name of Scott, was taken ill; and his companions came to a halt, until he should recover health and strength sufficient to proceed. While they were searching around in quest of edible roots they discovered a fresh trail of white men, who had evidently but recently preceded them. What was to be done? By a forced march they might overtake this party, and thus be able to reach the settlements in safety. Should they linger they might all perish of famine and exhaustion. Scott, however, was incapable of moving; they were too feeble to aid him forward, and dreaded that such a clog would prevent their coming up with the advance party. They determined, therefore, to abandon him to his fate. Accordingly, under pretence of seeking food, and such simples as might be efficacious in his malady, they deserted him and hastened forward upon the trail. They succeeded in overtaking the party of which were in quest, but concealed their faithless desertion of Scott; alleging that he had died of disease.
>
> "On the ensuing summer, these very individuals visiting these parts in company with others, came suddenly upon the grinning skull of a human skeleton, which, by certain signs

> they recognized for the remains of Scott. This was sixty long miles from the place where they had abandoned him; and it appeared that the wretched man had crawled that immense distance before death put an end to his miseries. The wild and picturesque bluffs in the neighborhood of his lonely grave have ever since borne his name."

This is the first notice that we have of this tragic event, although the individual involved has been identified with the Hiram Scott (one of Ashley's men) who served as a captain under Colonel Leavenworth in the August, 1823, attack upon the Arikara.[1] According to William A. Ferris, (who served as a clerk for the American Fur Company from 1830-35), in his series of articles entitled "Life in the Rocky Mountains," which were published in the "Western Literary Messenger," Scott was a clerk of the American Fur Company.

> While returning from the mountains he fell ill, and the leader of the party was compelled to leave him in order to push on and overhaul another party. The leader agreed to wait at these bluffs until Scott should come along. He left Scott with two men to be brought down in a bullboat, but the boat was soon wrecked and lost with everything in it, even the arms and ammunition. The two men then forsook their companion and overtook the main party several days later. The leader had not stopped where he agreed. Scott's bones were found the following spring near the agreed place of waiting.[2]

Townsend, who accompanied Wyeth on his 1834 expedition, differed little from the accounts given by Bonneville and Ferris, who were in the region at approximately the same time. He states that

> "These are called 'Scott's Bluffs'; so named from an unfortunate trader, who perished here from disease and hunger, many years ago. He was deserted by his companions; and the year following, his crumbling bones were found in this spot."[3]

Townsend's only disagreement is in placing the event "many years ago," when writing in the period 1834-9.

Romantic Sage, who traversed the region in 1841, built up a very fanciful picture:

> "This lovely valley had before this witnessed the death-scene of one who left his bones to blanch within its limits. His name was Scott, from whom the neighboring eminences derive their present appellation. Attracted by the enchanting beauty of the place and the great abundance of game the vicinity afforded, he wandered higher alone and made it his temporary residence. While thus enjoying the varied streets of solitude, he became the prey of sickness and gasped his life away;- and none was there to watch over him, but the sun by day and the stars by night; or fan his fevered brow,

> save the kindly breezes; or bemoan his hapless fate, other than the gurgling stream that sighed its passing sympathy beside the couch of death!"[4]

Johnson, who followed the Platte route in 1843, eliminated the traditional wandering of the sick Scott from near the Laramie River mouth. In his accounts:

> "They receive their name from a melancholy circumstance, which happened at them, several years ago. A small party of trappers were returning from the mountains to their home in Missouri. Owing to the hostility of the Indians who inhabited the country, (the Sioux) it was necessary for their safety, that they should not be seen. To prevent this, required the greatest precaution in their movements. A few days before they reached this place, one of their number, named Scott, was taken sick and continued to grow worse, until he was unable to proceed. His companions carried him to these bluffs, and supposing that he could not recover, they left him. Others passing that way, some years after, found his bones a short distance from where he had been left. From this circumstance, these hills have been called, since that time, after the name of that unfortunate adventurer."[5]

Palmer, who passed Scotts Bluff in 1845, also reduced the mileage traveled by the sick man, and blamed the Indians for the party's loss of equipment:

> "A melancholy tradition accounts for the name of this spot. A party who had been trading with the Indians were returning to the States and encountering a band of hostile savages, were robbed of their peltries and food. As they struggled homeward, one of their number, named Scott, fell sick and could not travel. The others remained with him, until the sufferer, despairing of ever beholding his home, prevailed on his companions to abandon him. They left him alone in the wilderness, several miles from this spot. Here human bones were afterwards found; and, supposing he had crawled here and died, the subsequent travelers have given his name to the neighboring bluff."[6]

Edwin Bryant, on his way to California in 1846, obtained an account which is perhaps as authentic as any:

> "A party of some five or six trappers, in the employment of the American Fur Company, were returning to the 'settlements,' under the command of a man -- a noted mountaineer -- named Scott. They attempted to perform the journey in boats, down the Platte. The current of the river became so shallow that they could not navigate it. Scott seized with a disease which rendered him helpless. The men with him left him in the boat, and when they returned to their employers, reported that Scott had died on the journey, and that they had buried him on the banks of the Platte. The

> next year a party of hunters, traversing this region, discovered a human skeleton wrapped in blankets, which from the clothing and papers found upon it, was immediately recognized as being the remains of Scott. He had been deserted by his men, but afterwards recovering his strength sufficiently to leave the boat, he had wandered into the bluffs where he died, where his bones were found, and which now bears his name."[7]

Later versions of Scott's story ring the changes on the above-related seven, which were written by men who visited the area prior to 1847, and whose accounts were all published before 1849. Among variations introduced by later writers are:

1. That he was taken sick and put ashore ("Journal of Joseph Hackney, 1849," in Elizabeth Page: Wagons West, p. 142).

2. That he was a solitary trapper who had lost his way, and died of starvation (William Kelly: Across the Rocky Mountains, p. 112.)

3. That he was left, at his own request, to perish alone (Franklin Langworthy: Scenery of the Plains, Mountains, and Mines, pp. 42-3).

4. That Scott was put ashore by his boat's crew, who had a grudge against him (R. F. Burton: The City of the Saints, p. 78).

5. That, about 1825, a party wrecked on the Sweetwater wandered past the bluffs where the ill Scott was abandoned at his request (W. S. Brackett: "Bonneville and Bridger," pp. 180-181, in Contrib. to the Hist. Soc. Montana, Vol. 3).

6. That Hiram Scott, 1828, was one of the founders of the 2nd Northwestern Fur Company (R. F. Wilson: Out of the West, p. 86 -- source not cited).

The date of Scott's demise is uncertain, although usually given as 1828. The first published account is that of Captain Bonneville (op. cit.) in 1837. No published map showed Scotts Bluff until Robert Greenhow's "Memoir, Historical and Political, on the Northwest Coast of North America" appeared in 1840.[8] This map compiled in 1840, shows Scotts Bluff down stream from Chimney Rock. The map in Lt. Fremont's report of 1843[9] has Scots Bluff in correct position. This map and report were basic for most of the western maps and guides that appeared in the next few years. The form of the name is varied, appearing as: Scottsbluff, Scott's Bluff, Scott's Bluffs, Scotts Bluff, and Scotts Bluffs. It has even appeared, through a printer's mistake, as Scotch Bluff.

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[1]Recorded by Dale, op. cit., p. 79, from Col. Leavenworth's official report of Oct. 20, in "Missouri Intelligencer," December 2, 1823.

[2]Abstracted from Ferris by Chittenden, op. cit., pp. 468-9. Chittenden gives a brief history of Ferris on p. 395.

[3]Townsend: Narrative of a Journey Across the Rocky Mountains, pp. 178-9.

[4]Rufus B. Sage: Wild Scenes in Kansas and Nebraska, p. 63.

[5]Overton Johnson and Wm. H. Winter: Route Across the Rocky Mountains, p. 13.

[6]Joel Palmer's Journal of Travels over the Rocky Mountains, p. 57.

[7]Edwin Bryant: What I Saw in California, pp. 104-5.

[8]Senate Document 174, 26th Congress, 1st Session.

[9]Senate Document 243, 27th Congress, 3rd Session.

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NAVIGATION OF THE NORTH PLATTE

The trials of river navigation on the North Platte, as brought out in Scott's story, were always great. This river could be navigated by small craft without much difficulty in the upper stretches, but became very shallow, braided, and full of sandbars in the neighborhood of Scotts Bluff. The first attempted navigation was by the returning Astorians in 1813.[1] Their two dugout canoes got only a few miles downstream, due to the extreme shallowness. The next recorded attempt was by Fitzpatrick, Stone, and Branch, who, in 1824, started down the upper North Platte with a cargo of beaver skins. This venture also ended in disaster, and the men were forced to walk in.[2] Eventually, successful trips were made with mackinaws and bullboats down the entire Platte to Missouri stations. After the establishment of Ft. Laramie, at the Laramie-North Platte junction, in 1834, numerous voyages were made in the spring of each year by parties of the American Fur Company and various independent traders and trappers.

The bullboat was the favorite because of its ease of manufacture, lightness, and extremely small draft. These boats were of ancient use among the Missouri river Indians. They varied in size from small "one-man" conveyances (commonly used by the squaws) up to the large boats, sometimes over 30 feet long, developed by the fur traders. Dunbar gives the following description of a bullboat:

> "The bull-boat of the Missouri and other western rivers was a type of craft unknown except on those streams. It resembled an enormous shallow oval basket, and in size it was ordinarily about 25 feet long and 12 or 15 feet wide. Its sides stood two or three feet above the surface of the stream on which it was navigated, and when full laden it never drew more than a foot of water. The framework of the bull-boat consisted of long and pliable poles, some of which extended along the greater dimension of the craft, with the others lying at right angles to the first and securely fastened to them. All the poles were bent upward at the edge or circumference of the framework and secured in that position, thus producing the basket-like shape of the fabric. The frame was covered with dressed buffalo hides (for this purpose the skins of bull buffaloes were used exclusively; hence the name "bull-boat") which had been sewed together with sinews from the same animals and then soaked. After being placed on the poles in their soaked condition the hides soon shrank to a considerable degree and thus formed a very tight

> covering. The seams between the hides used in making a bull-boat were made water-tight by a mixture of melted buffalo fat and earth or ashes, and the final result was a craft of extreme lightness which floated on the water almost like a bubble. A large contrivance of this sort could carry a burden of three tons in a stream whose depth did not exceed ten inches, and its propulsion by poles was a comparatively easy matter. The two principal objections to the bull-boat were the ease with which it was penetrated or reduced to a leaky condition by rubbing along a snag or rock, and its helplessness on a stretch of river wherein the water was too deep for the poles to be used. In a situation of that sort it was at the mercy of the wind and current. Bull-boats were the favorite vehicles for downstream transportation of furs.[3]

The mackinaw (often referred to as a barge) was occasionally used down stream. On the shallow Platte there was probably used a modification of the type described by Dunbar:

> "The mackinaw was a flat-bottomed affair, but instead of being rectangular in shape it was elliptical, and usually about four times as long as it was wide. A large boat of the sort was 50 or 60 feet long. From the edge of the raftlike structure which constituted the bottom of the mackinaw rose a gunwhale several feet high, so that the hold of the specimen was four or five feet deep. The oarsmen sat on benches near the forward end of the craft, and a seat eight or ten feet up in the air, reached by a ladder, was provided for the helmsman in the stern. From his elevated throne of authority the steersman kept watch for trouble ahead, manipulated his rudder and shouted his orders to the crew in the bow. The central section of the mackinaw was used for cargo purposes, and was separated from the rest of the boat, both fore and aft, by strong water-tight partitions. The cargo hold was also elevated a foot or two above the actual bottom of the hull, so that an invasion of water might not damage whatever goods were stored there. The freight frequently rose high above the sides of the boat, and in all weathers was protected by a huge tarpaulin of skins made after the fashion in which the covering for a bull-boat was put together. Four men besides the steerman usually constituted the crew of a mackinaw. They worked from earliest dawn to nightfall, and sometimes moved more than a hundred miles a day, though the average speed of a mackinaw was four or five miles an hour. After such a boat reached St. Louis it was sold as lumber a few dollars."[4]

Sage relates his experience while going down from Ft. Laramie in 1842 in the following words:

> "The boat was freighted with some 60 packs (a pack of robes generally embraces ten skins, and weighs about 80 pounds) of robes, and provisions for four weeks. A barge belonging to another company, also in readiness, started with

> us, and we all flattered ourselves with the hope of a speedy and pleasant trip.
>
> "The two boats numbered a united crew of 11 men,--mine consisting of five, and that of our consort counted six.
>
> "Moving along prettily during the day--sometimes floating with the current then again plying oars,--we reached the mouth of Horse Creek; and passing on a short distance, lay to for the night.
>
> "The day following we again pushed off, but, after proceeding 10 or 12 miles, the water became so shallow, we were compelled to lay by to await a further rise, and struck camp in a small grove of cottonwood upon the right bank of the Platte, a short distance above Scott's Bluff. Here we remained about two weeks."

Sage's party eventually were forced to abandon their barges several hundred miles below Ft. Laramie and proceeded on foot.[5]

In the 1840's, travelers along the Platte route often noted the descent of fur batteaux, Joseph Williams saw "6 flat bottomed boats coming down, loaded with buffalo robes and skins." Overton Johnson recorded a shipment of furs stranded in low water at Ft. Laramie in July, 1845. Francis Parkman recorded a group of 11 boats with buffalo and beaver skins, rowed by Mexicans, which ran aground 50 times a day. A Missouri newspaper in 1846 stated that eight mackinaw boats, laden with buffalo robes, etc., with a company of 36 men, arrived July 2 at Ft. Leavenworth from Ft. St. John at the junction of the Laramie and Big Platte, although three boats were abandoned en route because of low water.[6]

Despite the extreme shallowness and treachery of the shifting channels, there has been reported one ascent of the North Platte by steamboat, in 1853. Edward Hale, in his "Kansas and Nebraska" (Page 2), stated that the steamboat El Paso ascended the North Platte above Ft. Laramie in the spring of 1853. Francis Parkman corroborates this, in his "California and Oregon Trail" (page 519), by stating that the El Paso steamer ascended the Nebraska in the spring of 1853 to the distance of 400 or 500 miles. This spring of 1853 must have been one of exceptional high water, although the El Paso was noted for its high ascents of the Upper Missouri. (The El Paso was 180 feet long, by 28 feet wide, and operated from 1850 to 1855, when it was sunk below Booneville, on the Missouri.)

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[1]Op. cit., p. 321.

[2]Hafen and Ghent, op. cit., p. 47.

[3]Seymour Dunbar: History of Travel in America, Vol. 4, pp. 1143-4.

Dunbar, op. cit., pp. 1144-1145.

[5]Sage, op. cit., pp. 139-140. Also see Fremont's report (1843), p. 15.

[6]Joseph Williams: Narrative of a Tour, p. 36. Johnson I. Winter: Route Across the Rocky Mountains, p. 151. Francis Parkman: The California and Oregon Trail, p. 93. Pub. Neb. State Hist. Soc., Vol. 20, p. 159.

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EARLY VISITORS TO SCOTTS BLUFF

The appearance of Scotts Bluff was so striking that it was an object for comment by nearly all who passed within view of it. Unfortunately, most of the early trappers were illiterate, or did not leave journals or accounts for the benefit of history and posterity. Jim Bridger was illiterate; Kit Carson did not learn to write until late in life; Jedediah Smith kept journals, but they were destroyed in a St. Louis fire -- and so the story goes. Due to these factors, our first description of the bluffs is that of Bonneville, as written by Irving (op. cit.).

Many of the accounts were couched in superlative terms. Myra Eels commented on the "grand scenery" of the bluffs in 1838.[1] Sage (1841) expressed himself: "At Scott's Bluff these hills crowd themselves abruptly towards the Platte, where they present a most romantic and picturesque scenery.[2] Crawford (1842) wrote of the bluffs as "presenting the most romantic scenery I ever saw."[3] Clyman (1844) wrote in his diary, "encamped in the midst of Scotts Bluffs by a cool spring in a romantic and picturesque valley."[4] Loomis (1850) wrote that the bluffs presented a "sublime view."[5]

One of the most enthusiastic visitors was the artist Frederick Piercy, who voyaged, in 1853, to the United States in order to sketch the outstanding scenes along the route of Mormon emigration to Utah. He referred to Scott's Bluffs as "certainly the most remarkable sight I had seen since I left England." His sketch of the Scott's Bluffs, with emigrants hunting the buffalo in the foreground, is the first published sketch of the bluffs, and is also the most popular one for reproduction. Exception as to priority of publication, however, must be made for a crude small sketch by Benjamin Ferris.[6]

A complete roll-call of all the notable people who journeyed past Scotts Bluff in the early days (1812-1834) is, of course, impossible to construct. However, one may glean from varied journals, reports, biographies, and histories the names of the following men who made history in the mountains (see appended biographies):

(The year given refers to the first known year of passage through Scotts Bluff region.)

1812-1813	Robert Stuart, Ramsay Crooks, Robert McLellan, Joseph Miller, Ben Jones, Francis Leclerc, and Andre Vallar -- the returning Astorians. Irving: Astoria, op.

	cit.
1824	Thomas Fitzpatrick, who first tried to navigate the North Platte. Fitzpatrick made the North Platte trip again in 1831, and thereafter many times. Hafen and Ghent, op. cit., pp. 47, et seq.
1824	James Clyman. Camp: James Clyman, pp. 35-7, et seq.
1824	James Beckwourth. Bonner: The Life and Adventures of James P. Beckwourth, p. 60; Dale: The Ashley-Smith Explorations, p. 92; Hafen and Ghent, op. cit., p. 48.
1824 or 1825	Robert Campbell. Hafen and Ghent, op. cit., p. 57; Dale, op. cit., p. 92.
1826	William Sublette. Hafen and Ghent, op. cit., p. 57.
1826	Jedidiah Smith. Hafen and Ghent, op. cit., p. 63.
1826	William Ashley. Dale, op. cit., p. 165.
1826	Etienne Provost (Provot). Chittenden, op. cit., p. 280.
1827	Joshua Pilcher. Chittenden: American Fur Trade of the Far West, p. 156.
1828	James Bridger. J. C. Alter: James Bridger, p. 104.
1829	Joseph Meek. Frances Victor: River of the West, p. 43.
1830	David Jackson. Dale, op. cit., p. 288.
1831	Zenas Leonard. Narrative of Zenas Leonard, p. 64; Chittenden, op. cit., p. 409.
1832	Captain Benj. Bonneville. Irving, op. cit.
1832	John Ball. Autobiography of John Ball, p. 69.
1832	Nathaniel Wyeth. John Wyeth: Oregon, p. 52.
1833	Louis Vasquez. Chas. Larpenteur: Forty Years a Fur Trader, p. 15.
1833	Captain William Stuart. Chittenden, op. cit., p. 300.
1833	Charles Larpenteur. Larpenteur, op. cit.
1833	Dr. Benj. Harrison. Chittenden, op. cit., p. 300.
1834	Thomas Nuttall. J. K. Townsend: Narrative, p. 178.
1834	Osborne Russell. O. Russell: Journal of a Trapper, p. 7.
1834	John K. Townsend. Townsend, op. cit.
1834	Jason Lee and Daniel Lee. Townsend, op. cit.

The appearance of most of the early visitors to Scotts Bluff must have been quite picturesque, to judge by the descriptions that have come down to us of the mountain men. Bonneville (op. cit., pp. 63-4) describes them in the following words:

> "You cannot pay a free trapper a greater compliment than to persuade him you have mistaken him for an Indian brave; and in truth the counterfeit is complete. His hair, suffered to attain to a great length, is carefully combed but, and either

> left to fall carelessly over his shoulder, or plaited neatly and tied up in otter skins of parti-colored ribbons. A hunting-shirt of ruffled calico of bright dyes, or of ornamented leather, falls to his knee; below which, curiously fashioned leggins, ornamented with strings, fringes, and a profusion of hawks' bells, reach to a costly pair of moccasins of the finest Indian fabric, richly embroidered with beads. A blanket of scarlet, or some other bright color, hangs from his shoulders, and is girt around his waist with a red sash, in which he bestows his pistols, knife, and the stem of his Indian pipe; preparations either for peace or war. His gun is lavishly decorated with brass tacks and vermillion, and provided with a fringed cover, occasionally of buckskin, ornamented here and there with a feather. His horse, the noble minister to the pride, pleasure, and profit of the mountaineer, is selected for his speed and spirit and prancing gait, and holds a place in his estimation second only to himself. He shares largely of his bounty, and of his pride and pomp of trapping. He is caparisoned in the most dashing and fantastic style; the bridles and crupper are weightily embossed with heads and cockades; and head, mane and tail are interwoven with abundance of eagles' plumes which flutter in the wind. To complete this grotesque equipment, the proud animal is bestreaked and bespotted with vermillion, or with white clay, whichever presents the most glaring contrast to his real color."

Sage (op. cit., p. 18) expands the picture somewhat in the following description:

> His dress and appearance are equally singular. His skin, from constant exposure, assumes a hue almost as dark as that of the Aborigine, and his features and physical structure attain a rough and hardy cast. His hair, through inattention, becomes long, coarse, and bushy, and loosely dangles upon his shoulders. His head is surmounted by a low crowned wool-hat, or a rude substitute of his own manufacture. His clothes are of buckskin, gaily fringed at the seams with strings of the same material, cut and made in a fashion peculiar to himself and associates.
>
> The deer and buffalo furnish his the required covering for his feet, which he fabricates at the impulse of want. His waist is encircled with a belt of leather, holding encased his butcher-knife and pistols--while from his neck is suspended a bullet-pouch securely fastened to the belt in front, and beneath the right arm hangs a powder-horn transversely from his shoulder, behind which, upon the strap attached to it, are affixed his bullet-mould, ball-screw, wiper, awl, etc. With a gun-stick made of some hard wood, and a good rifle placed in his hands, carrying from 30 to 35 balls to the pound, the reader will have before him a correct likeness of a genuine mountaineer, when fully equipped."

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[1]Journal of Myron Eells, p. 72, in Oregon Pioneer Assn., Trans. 1839.

[2]Sage, op. cit., p. 61.

[3]Journal of Medorem Crawford, p. 10, in Sources of the History of Oregon, Vol. 1.

[4]C. L. Camp: James Clyman, p. 82.

[5]Leander V. Loomis: A Journal of the Birmingham Emigrating Co., p. 27.

[6]James Linforth and Frederick Piercy: Route from Liverpool to Great Salt Lake Valley (1855), pp. 91-92. Benjamin G. Ferris: Utah and the Mormons (1854), p. 21.

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THE OREGON TRAIL

The first indication of a great transcontinental trek through Scotts Bluff and over the Rocky Mountains to Oregon was the Nez Perce or Flathead deputation (1831), which came to St. Louis and asked that missionaries be sent to their country. Although the Catholics paid no heed at this time, the "Christian Advocate" gave this request publicity in 1833, and in 1834 the Methodists sent out Jason Lee and his nephew, Daniel Lee.[1] These men traveled west with Wyeth.

In the following year the Presbyterians sent out the Rev. Samuel Parker and Dr. Marcus Whitman, who accompanied the American Fur Company trapper, Lucien Fontenelle, over the north side of the North Platte route. In 1836 the Rev. Henry Spalding, Dr. Marcus Whitman (who had returned to the East in the winter of 1835), and their wives (the first white women to cross the Rocky Mountains), and Rev. William Gray made the long trip westward. They were guided up the Platte north bank route by Thomas Fitzpatrick and Moses Harris. The Rev. Cushing Eells' party went through in 1838. In 1841, Methodist Rev. Joseph Williams and Jesuit Father De Smet and his associates (the first Catholic missionaries to enter the Northwest, outside of a brief visit by De Smet in 1840), journeyed along the Overland Trail with the Bidwell-Bartleson party. This was the fist California-Oregon emigration train (with Thomas Fitzpatrick and Jim Baker as guides) to pass Scotts Bluff. The next year Methodist Dr. Elijah White, on his way to Oregon, passed through Ohio and picked up young Lansford Hastings, who was to write one of the first guides for western emigrants. By this time the missionary pioneering in the Oregon country was well under way, and secular migration was increasing rapidly.[2]

Secular settlement in Oregon actually began with John Ball, who accompanied Wyeth, in 1832, to become the first permanent settler in the Oregon country who had come via the Overland Route. Ball represented the first fruit of the many years of propagandizing for Oregon, carried on by Hall Kelley.[3] The exhortations of Kelley and the glowing reports from the Oregon missionaries soon attracted an increasing number of settlers, but there was no migration of any size until the Great Migration of 1843, which was the first to go through all the way to the Pacific Coast with wagons. Earlier than this, Rev. Eells' small party of 1838 had counted in its number Captain John Sutter, who later was to become famous in California. (James Marshall, the actual discoverer of California gold, likewise passed by Scotts Bluff, in 1844). The Bidwell-Bartleson party of 1841, mentioned above, had started for California --

upon the eloquent representations of a trader, Robidoux -- but the party divided at Ft. Hall, half going on to California and the remainder striking on to Oregon. This split was caused by the uncertainty regarding the trail to California, which these 32 bold pioneers safely reached via Carson Sink and the Stanislaus river, to be the first Overland party into the state.[4]

In the meantime, while emigrants were increasing in number with every year (1832-1843), the fur business continued to decline. As related previously, buffalo robes replaced beaver skins as the staple of business; trading posts increased in number until the rendezvous was abandoned after the 16th one, held in 1840; and trappers and traders turned more and more into servants of the great emigration through guide and supply service. The old mountaineer days were coming to an end, and the majestic heights of Scotts Bluff soon were to become one of the most noted landmarks of the entire transcontinental route. Its peaceful days were numbered.

Scientific exploration now also entered the field. A few careful observers, such as Bonneville, Townsend, Parker, and Wislizenus, had recorded brief notes on the Overland Route; but it remained for Lt. John Fremont (the "Pathfinder," but more properly the "Mapmaker") to scientifically observe, map, and record along the great Overland corridor that passed by Scotts Bluff. The reconnaissance of 1842 (recorded in Published form in 1843) gave the emigrants their great emigration "guidebook." In rapid succession there appeared publications by Hastings, Johnson and Winter, Palmer, Clayton, Bryant, and Ware that served as Baedeckers for the increasing throngs of westward-pushing pioneers.[5]

Not only were maps and guidebooks produced, but critical comments on the geology, paleontology, etc., of the country all along the Overland Route began to appear. One of the first comments (1843) on the paleontology of western Nebraska is incorporated in Overton Johnson's statement:

> "In the extreme point of these hills (Scotts Bluff), near the River, and about 50 feet above high water, are found great numbers of semi-petrified Turtles, from one to two feet across, imbedded in the sand and many of them entirely perfect. There are no animals of this kind now in the Platte River, or elsewhere in the country, for several hundred miles around.[6]

Parker, Wislizenus, Palmer, and Sage wrote frequently of the geology of the country, as did Stansbury somewhat later. Stansbury's report of his reconnaissance trip to the Rocky Mountains in 1849 is one of the classics in American geography.[7]

Along the Overland Route, or Great Platte Route, as it was known to the mountaineers, there were a number of outstanding landmarks which included Courthouse Rock, Chimney Rock, and Scotts Bluff, along the south side of the North Platte. Chimney Rock received its name earlier

than did the other natural landmarks, and was perhaps the most noted. This towering natural monument, visible from Scotts Bluff, lost a considerable portion of its height sometime between 1841 and 1849. Bidwell, in his "First Emigrant Train to California," comments that about 50 feet fell of Chimney Rock sometime after their passage in 1841. Stansbury (op. cit., p. 51) quotes Jim Bridger that it was reduced in height "by lightning, or some other sudden catastrophe, as he found it broken on his return from one of his trips to St. Louis, though he had passed it uninjured on his way down." Albert Dickson recorded in his journal of 1864 that "We are told that some years earlier a company of soldiers out on target practice had turned a small cannon upon it, breaking off about thirty feet."[8] This story is not improbable, as cannons were moved along the North Platte by U. S. soldiers in 1845 and thereafter.

As emigration increased along the Great Platte route, trading stations, ferries, and "guideposts" increased number. The varied destinations of the emigrants caused a multiplicity of names to be attached to the route which led from numerous points along the Missouri river but attained approximate unity along the Platte river near Ft. Kearny. The route had been merely "Platte Trail" or "Great Platte Trail" for the trappers. In the period 1834-1848 it was known as the "Emigrant Road," "Road to Oregon," "Oregon Trace," "Oregon and California Trail," "Great Medicine Road of the Whites," "White-Topped Wagon Road," "Mormon Trail," and "Great Salt Lake Trail." Later on, events would introduce the terms "Overland Trail," "Central Route to the Pacific," "Pony Express Trail," "Overland Mail Route," etc.[9]

Beginning with the emigration of 1841, which saw some 80 people pass along the North Platte corridor of the Oregon Trail, the numbers increased by leaps and bounds. Although 1842 had only 110 overland emigrants, the Great Emigration of 1843 counted over 1,000 souls. In 1844 some 1,200 passed Ft. Laramie, and the count exceeded 3,000 in 1845. The year 1846 saw an emigration of perhaps 1,7000 (the diminution due, in part, to the troubles with Mexico), of whom perhaps 300 went to California -- the largest percentage yet to reach that region. This year also saw the United States obtaining clear title from England to the Oregon Country, June 17, 1846. These first six years of organized Oregon-California migration were the real years of the Oregon Trail, as the great majority of the emigrants settled in Oregon.[10]

Great changes in travel conditions along the Platte were brought about by the large numbers of emigrant trains -- mainly composed of great lumbering wagons, canvas-topped, and drawn by four to ten yokes of oxen -- that wound along the overland traces. The buffalo that formerly had infested the Platte region, between the forks and the Laramie plains, in herds of thousands, had been frightened away from the emigration routes and were now divided into two great herds -- one north and the other south of the Platte river. Not only did the emigration thus make food for man rather scarce, but the endless flow of wagon trains in the spring and summer caused a serious shortage in forage for the draft animals. Some of the smaller springs, such as that at Scotts Bluff, were unable to supply the demand and many emigrants sickened from

drinking alkali water.

The pleasures and privations of these Oregon-California emigrants have been recorded in numerous journals and diaries, many of which have been published. They paint a picture of mingled romance and tragedy. Courtships ripened into marriages, and the gay tunes of "Zip Coon," "Buffalo Gals," "Old Dan Tucker," "Lucy Neal," and the other favorites of the Forties were often fiddled to dancers within the evening circular encampment of wagons. Hunting, card-playing, and argumentation provided recreation for the soberer spirits. Occasionally, Indians (Pawnees, Dakotas, or Cheyennes, usually) would swoop down, run off all the livestock possible, and perhaps leave death and grief in the caravan. However, the Indian depredations did not become excessive until the Sixties. Bad water, quicksand fordings of treacherous rivers, buffalo stampedes, breakdowns of wagons or livestock, and thirst and starvation all played grim roles that commenced the great unmarked graveyard of the Overland Route that totaled perhaps 20,000 inmates during the period 1830-1870.[11]

One of the outstanding events of the period 1841-1846 was the march of Colonel Kearny with 250 men, Thomas Fitzpatrick as guide, from Ft. Leavenworth to South Pass and return in 1846. This trip, made to reconnoitre the country and intimidate the Indians, was the first advance of the United States Army into the Upper Platte country. Scotts Bluff was passed June 12, on the up trip.[12] Lt. Fremont's expedition of 1842 (on which Kit Carson was one of the guides) was a scientific rather than a military movement, and the same is true for his later expeditions insofar as they affected the Platte country. Of morbid interest is the passage past Scotts Bluff of the Donners. The outstanding tragedy of the entire early history of the Overland Trail was the Donner disaster of 1846. These poor souls took a little-known cut-off to California, became snowbound in the Sierra Nevadas, and had a high mortality from starvation and cannibalism.[13]

Among other noted Oregon-California parties -- more fortunate, however -- were those of Cornelius Gilliam, John Thorp, Elisha Stephens, and Nathaniel Ford in 1844. These and other parties of the period were under the guidance of such mountain men as Moses Harris, Thomas Fitzpatrick, John Gautt, William Sublette, Joseph Walker, Stephen Meeks, and James Clyman. The roster of emigrants included such men as Peter Burnett (first governor of California), James Nesmath (to become a senator from Oregon, Jesse Applegate, John Minto, Joseph Chiles, Joel Palmer, Edwin Bryant, and William Case. The Thorp party was unique in following the north bank of the Platte as far as Ft. Laramie. This route had scarcely been used since the small parties of Oregon missionaries had moved over it. Soon, however, it was to be the route for thousands of wagons.

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[1]Chittenden and Richardson: Life, Letters and Travels of Father De Smet, pp. 21, 23, 26.

[2]Authorities on the early missionary movements are:

1. Rev. Samuel Parker: Journal of an Exploring Tour, 1838.
2. Joseph Williams: Narratives of a Tour, 1843.
3. Journal of Myra Eells, Oregon Pioneer Assn. Trans., 1887.
4. Chittenden & Richardson: Life, Letters and Travels of Father De Smet, 1905.
5. Rev. Myron Eells: Marcus Whitman, 1909.
6. Ezra S. Warren: Memoirs of the West - The Spaldings, 1917.
7. John M. Canse: Pilgrim and Pioneer, 1930.
8. Cornelius Brosnau: Jason Lee, Prophet of the New Oregon, 1932.
9. C. H. Carey: Lansford W. Hastings' Emigrants' Guide, 1932.

[3]Autobiography of John Ball, compiled by his daughters, Fred W. Powell: Hall J. Kelley on Oregon.

[4]For accounts of the beginning of emigration, viz Scotts Bluff, to California and Oregon, see:

1. W. J. Ghent: The Road to Oregon.
2. C. L. Camp: Narrative of Cheyenne Dawson.
3. C. C. Royce: John Bidwell.
4. John Bidwell: Journal of a Journey to California.

[5]The more important works that served as reference and guide books for the emigrants are listed below, with page citation for references to Scotts Bluff:

1. Irving: The Adventures of Captain Bonneville (1837), pp. 34-5.
2. Parker: Journal of an Exploring Tour (1838), pp. 66.
3. Townsend: Narrative of a Journey (1839), pp. 179-179.
4. Bidwell: Journal of a Journey to California (1842 or 1843), p. 9.
5. Fremont: Report, op. cit., (1843), p. 36, and map.
6. Hastings: The Emigrants Guide to Oregon and California (1845).
7. Johnson & Winter: Route Across the Rocky Mountains (1846), pp. 13, 187.
8. Palmer: Journal of Travels over the Rocky Mountains (1847), p. 57.
9. Bryant: What I Saw in California (1848), p.104-5.
10. Clayton: Latter-Day Saints' Emigrants' Guide (1849), p. 11.
11. Ware: The Emigrants' Guide to California (1849), p. 19.
12. Wislizenus: A Journey to the Rocky Mountains, appeared only in German (1840) in the early days.

[6]Johnson & Winter, op. cit., p. 13.

[7]Howard Stansbury: Exploration and Survey of the Valley of the Great Salt Lake of Utah (1852), especially pp. 31-52.

[8]Arthur J. D. Cleve: Covered Wagon Days, p. 72.

[9]An excellent discussion of the various trail ramifications along the Platte will be found in Archer Butler Hulbert: The Crown Collection of American Maps, Series IV, Vol. 1, The Platte River Routes: Vol. 2, North and South Platte Routes (1925), especially Vol. 2, plates 14 and

15, for Scotts Bluff area. J. Sterling Morton: Illustrated History of Nebraska (1906), Vol. 2, note on pp. 73-78, gives a minute locating of the old emigrant roads in Nebraska. Ledyard, in Utah Historical Quarterly, Vol. 4-6 (1931-1933) discusses the leading western American posts. Critical comments on fur trading posts are to be found in Chittenden, op. cit., especially pp. 457-482. Among the best maps showing the Platte routes are:

1. G. K. Warren: Memoir, General Map (1857).
2. G. K. Warren: Map of Nebraska and Dakota (1867).
3. Map of Military Department of the Platte - Nebraska (1872).
4. G. P. Garrison: Westward Extension (1906)- several maps.
5. W. J. Ghent: The Road to Oregon (1929) - opp. p. 8.
6. Hafen and Ghent: Broken Hand (1931) - map.
7. C. O. Paullin: Atlas of the Hist. Geog. of the U. S. (1932) - plate 39.
8. E. W. Gilbert: The Exploration of Western America (1933) - several maps.

[10]W. J. Ghent: The Road to Oregon, pp. 48-96, has the best discussion of these movements.

G. R. Hebard: The Pathbuckers from River to Ocean, 6th ed. (1932), contains an excellent series of illustrations from paintings by W. H. Jackson.

[11]Some of the best accounts of Oregon Trail life are found in:

1. John Bidwell, op. cit.
2. C. L. Camp, op. cit.
3. Joel Palmer, op. cit.
4. Edwin Bryant, op. cit.
5. Maude Rucker: "The Oregon Trail and Some of Its Blazers," which contains Jesse Applegate's classic, "A Day With the Cow Column."

[12]Report of Col. Kearny, Senate Document 1, 29th Congress, 1st Session, 1846.

P. St. G. Cooke: Scenes and Adventures in the Army, pp. 328-329.

[13]McClashan: History of the Donner Party.

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THE MORMON REGIRA

As a result of manifold persecutions east of the Missouri river, most of the American Mormons began a great western trek in 1846. The Mormons encamped for the winter on the Missouri at Kanesville (Council Bluffs) and Winter Quarters (Omaha). It is believed that Brigham Young, in 1846, sent out a small party guided by Wiggins and Beckwourth, to examine the Salt Lake region. In the spring of 1847 a well-organized pioneer party of 144 people went through to the future site of Salt Lake City via the old trappers' route along the north bank of the Platte. The mileage was carefully recorded, notes were kept of the entire route, and was mile stakes were installed. Although this and the future Mormon migrations kept on the north bank, there were many comments made in journals and diaries of landmarks visible along the southern bank, especially Courthouse Rock, Chimney Rock, and Scotts Bluff,[1] which was passed (472 miles from Winter Quarters) on May 27.

The Mormons quickly became established at Salt Lake City, got out a guidebook (to replace Mitchell's map of 1846, which Brigham Young had ordered in numbers), established ferries, and set up the first mail connection between the Rocky Mountains and the East. Advertisements in Europe and America produced an enormous emigration that passed over the Platte route with very little trouble or comment. The one outstanding tragedy was that of the Handcart Migration of the fall of 1856. These carts, drawn by hand, afforded cheap transportation for nearly 3,000 people (1856-60) who hauled 662 of them all the way from Missouri to Utah. However, the last company to start out for the mountains in 1856 ran short of provisions on the Upper Platte and nearly four score died of starvation and exposure.[2]

The vicinity of Scotts Bluff has a monument to the pioneer bravery of the Mormon migrations in the marked grave of Rebecca Winters (1-1/2 miles east of Scotts Bluff, by the Burlington & Missouri tracks), who died there in August of 1852. This event has given rise to the naming of several features in this region: Winter Creek Precinct, Winter Springs, and Winter Canal.

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[1]W. Clayton Journal: 1921.
Major Howard Egan's Diary, 1917, pp. 50-51.
Private Journal of Orson Pratt (L.-D S Millennial Start), 1849, p. 98.

[2]W. A. Linn: The Story of the Mormons (1902), pp. 362-394, 410-427.

Neff: The Mormon Migration to Utah, 1830-47 (1918).

L. R. Hafen: "Handcart Migration" in Trans-Mississippi West, pp. 103-121.

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TRANS-CONTINENTAL COMMUNICATION

The rapid growth of population along the Pacific Coast, especially in central California, led to insistent demands for more frequent and speedier communication with the eastern states. The 1847 Post Route Act had authorized stamps, and an oceanic mail service to the Pacific Coast had been established, but the service was very slow. In the same year the Mormons initiated a mail service over the Platte route between Salt Lake City and Winter Quarters. This mail was carried privately by the Mormons for three years. Finally, in July of 1850 the first mail contract for monthly service each way between the Missouri river and Salt Lake City was awarded to Samuel Woodson, of Independence. His route followed the Oregon Trail, past Scotts Bluff, and was made by one team going the entire distance, about a month's trip. Woodson held this contract from 1850 to 1854. The Californians were not successful in getting a through mail until May of 1851. From 1854 to 1856 W. M. F. Magraw held a monthly contract for mail service, in four-horse coaches, between Independence and Salt Lake City.

In 1856, Hiram Kimball, a Mormon of Utah, obtained the contract for monthly service with wagons or carriages. In the spring of 1857 the Mormons initiated a few rude stations along the mail route, but the contract was canceled in the summer of 1857 because of anti-Mormon feeling arising out of the Mountain Meadows Massacre. The resulting "Utah" or "Mormon War" cut off mail service until the close of 1858. While government troops, under Albert Sidney Johnston, were in Utah, great quantities of supplies were hauled out from Missouri on contract. The freighting firm of Russell, Majors and Waddell got most of the contracts and developed a huge business, using thousands of yokes of oxen and hundreds of wagons and drovers. Nearly all of this freighting went up the North Platte by Scotts Bluff.[1]

Mail service to Salt Lake City over the Oregon Trail was resumed in the winter and spring of 1858, by S. B. Miles, who carried the mails by pack mules in the winter. The firm of Hockaday and Liggett held a weekly service (in four-mule wagons, making the trip in 22 days) contract between Independence and Salt Lake City, but sold the contract, in May, 1859, to Jones, Russell & Company. At that date the mail service between Independence and Placerville, California, was changed to a semi-monthly basis. By 1860 the Russell, Majors, Waddell, et. al., interests (incorporated as the Central Overland California and Pike's Peak Express Co.) had acquired the mail contracts for the entire stretch

between the Missouri and the Pacific. Stock and supplies were installed along the Platte route and many stations thus came into being.

The line of stations was especially well-organized because Russell (probably at the suggestion of Senator Gwin of California and General Superintendent of Freighting Ficklin) had consented to experiment with a rapid transport of first-class mail matter by the so-called Pony Express. The Pony Express began April 3, 1860, over a well-equipped route via St. Joseph, Ft. Kearny, Old Julesburg, Scotts Bluff, Ft. Laramie, etc. Stations were about 15 miles apart, usually built of sod or adobe, with two men at each station. Half-breed California mustangs were used, about 75 for the complete run, requiring approximately 10-1/2 days between St. Joseph and California. Each rider made from 75-100 miles, doing his round-trip twice a week for $50 to $150 a month, depending upon the dangers and difficulties of his sector. The mail was carried in four packs or cantinas sewed to a leather skirt or mochila (macheir) which was slung over the saddle. Maximum weight of each load was 20 pounds. The charges at first were $5 a half ounce, plus regular 10 cent government postage, but this was ultimately reduced to $1.

The stations in the Scotts Bluff region were at McArdle's ranch at Mud Springs (near modern Simla), the Chimney Rock Station 10 miles west of Bridgeport, Scotts Bluff Station five miles east of the bluff, and Lower Horse Creek Station. The Scotts Bluff Station was 20' x 50', and had sod walls thirty inches thick. It ultimately became the Mark Coad ranch house in 1871. Very few records have been preserved of the brief Pony Express history in the Scotts Bluff area. It is known that Jim Moore first started to ride Pony Express out of Mud Springs, and this station eventually became his ranch. It is also on record that Charles Cliff had a miraculous escape after a fight with some Indians at Scotts Bluff.[2]

The Pony Express continued to function until the completion of the Pacific Telegraph in October of 1861. During the 19 months of its existence there were employed a total of perhaps 200 riders. The only one to win lasting fame was "Buffalo Bill" Cody. Though a financial failure, the Pony Express had demonstrated successfully the need and feasibility of rapid communication across the continent.[3]

The telegraph line that terminated the life of the Pony Express was constructed by Edward Creighton, who in 1860 had gone over the proposed routes on horseback and had selected the old Oregon Trail. The active construction, under the direction of Creighton, took only a few months, and the eastern wire was in Salt Lake City on the 24th of October, 1861, two days before the Pacific wire was completed. The whole line, from the Missouri to the Pacific, was known for a time as the Pacific Telegraph Company, under the superintendency of Creighton. Trouble was had occasionally from the Indians, who yanked down the wires and destroyed the poles. Although stations were few in the early days, the Scotts Bluff area had one in Ft. Mitchell (at the western base of Scotts Bluff) after its construction about 1863.[4]

Despite the completion of the telegraph line there was still need for stage and mail service overland between Missouri and California. The Butterfield Overland Mail Company, that formerly had run over the

southwestern route, was awarded the contract in 1861, and moved to the central route because of the imminent Civil War. Russell, Majors and Waddell, however, sub-contracted the Missouri-Utah service. Beginning July 1, 1861, a daily mail covered the Overland Route between St. Joseph and San Francisco. This daily mail coach only ran past Scotts Bluff for a year, as Benj. Holladay purchased the C.O.C. & P.P. Express Company in March of 1862, and transferred route and equipment (in July of 1862) from the North Platte to the Cherokee Trail (South Platte, Lodgepole Creek, Cheyenne) on account of Indian troubles to the north. Holladay's Overland Mail and Express Company, which operated the famous "Overland Stage," never ran a single one of their Concord stages over the North Platte route. Therefore, Scotts Bluff must forego all the melodrama and fame connected with the drivers, passengers, and holdups of this famous western institution. Instead were substituted the Indians troubles of 1862-8.[5]

The Overland Stage had a brief life of only six years, as the westward advancing Union Pacific soon ran the stage out of business. After the many arguments and surveys of the Fifties came the Civil War, which decided the route in favor of the northern choice. This route (favored by Lincoln, Sherman, Dodge, and others) ran from Omaha westward along the Platt route and over the Rocky Mountains into the valley of the Great Salt Lake. General Dodge, in August of 1865, reconnoitred the Upper Platte country on horseback, and on this trip located the Cheyenne Pass that predicated the Lodgepole Creek, rather than North Platte, route. Thus Scotts Bluff was again excluded from the favored line of communication. The only recognition obtained by Scotts Bluff was a sketch, drawn on the 27th of August by General Dodge, of the defile through Mitchell Pass.[6]

Once under way, the Union Pacific was laid at a record-breaking rate, being opposite Ft. Kearny in 1866, to Julesburg in the spring of 1867, to Cheyenne in the fall of 1867, and completed to a juncture with the Central Pacific on May 10, 1869. Then was ended the romantic period of uncertainties, fatalities, and tedious delays; the modern age had arrived with the "iron horse." Yet Scotts Bluff was under the shadow of Indian warfare.

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[1]Accounts of the Mormon War and the early freighting business will be found in:

1. Letters of Captn. Jesse A. Gore, The Utah Expedition (1928).
2. T. S. Kenderdine: A California Tramp (1888), esp. pp. 64-66.
3. Col. W. F. Cody: An Autobiography of Buffalo Bill (1920).
4. Alexander Majors: Seventy Years on the Frontier (1893).

[2]Most of the information available on the Pony Express in the Scotts Bluff is in:

1. Neb. State Hist. Soc. Collections, Vol. 17.
2. Root and Connalley: The Overland Stage of California (1901), p. 131.

3. Grant Shumway: "First Settlements of the Scotts Bluff Country," in Neb. State Hist. Soc. Pub., Vol. 19 (1919), pp. 103-106.

[3]The chief histories of the Pony Express are:

1. Root and Connelley: The Overland Stage to California (1901).
2. W. L. Visscher: A Thrilling and Truthful History of the Pony Express (1908).
3. Glenn Bradley: The Story of the Pony Express (1913).
4. L. R. Hafen: The Overland Mail (1926).
5. Arthur Chapman: The Pony Express (1932).

[4]The scanty history of the telegraph in the Scotts Bluff area may be read in:

1. James Reid: The Telegraph in America (1886), p. 493.
2. Hebard & Brininstool: The Bozeman Trail (1922), Vol. 1, p. 78.
3. Morton: History of Nebraska (1907), Vol. 1, pp. 98-99.

[5]Leading references on the Overland Mail and Stage are:

1. Root & Connelly: The Overland Stage to California (1901).
2. Le Roy Hafen: The Overland Mail 1849-1869 (1926).
3. W. Banning & G. Banning: Six Horses (1928).
4. R. F. Burton: The City of the Saints (1862), gives the best account of stage travel over the Platte route in 1860, especially pp. 70-79. The stage stations then were at Lodge Pole, 25 miles to Mud Springs, 25 miles to Chimney Rock, 24 miles to Scotts Bluff, and 16 miles to Horse Creek.

[6]J. R. Perkins: Trails, Rails and War (1929); sketch, "The Gorge, Scotts Bluffs, line of U. P.," opposite p. 144.

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LAST STAND OF THE INDIANS

When the white trapper and trader (Frenchman, Englishman, and Spaniard) first invaded his lands, the Indian of the Great Plains was contemptuous of their insignificant numbers. These white men were too few to become powerful enemies, they brought desirable trade goods (including "firewater"), and there was enough of Nature's bounty for all, anyway. In time the traders intermarried with the Indian tribes and coalitions arose. These opposing combinations often resulted in a few traders and trappers losing their lives, or at best their livestock and supplies, but the total loss of life and property at Indian hands was quite small throughout the period of 1800-1840.

Only with the coming of the Oregon-California emigrants did the Indians begin to realize the power and future of the conquering whites. The buffalo became a little less numerous, and various epidemic diseases began to take an increasing toll of the aborigines. It was not, however, until the throngs of the California emigration, 1849-59, pushed across the plains, slaughtering countless buffalo, stripping the forage along the migration routes, and filtering out into the Indian country, that the Red Man began to take positive action. By that time the Pawnee had relinquished all rights (1833) to lands south of the Platte and east of the Forks. North and west of that line were the restless and powerful Teton Dakota, with their allies, the Cheyenne and Arapaho.

The United States Government had placed these Indians, in 1846, in the Upper Platte and Arkansas Agency, under the able old mountaineer, Thomas Fitzpatrick. During his period of office until his death in 1854, there was comparatively little trouble with these Indians. In fact, in 1851 there was engineered, through Fitzpatrick, Father De Smet, Jim Bridger, Robert Campbell, D. D. Mitchell, and some others, the greatest Indian peace council ever held in the Plains. In September of 1851 between 8,000 and 12,000 Dakota, Cheyennes, Arapaho, Crow, Snakes, Rees, Assiniboines, and Gros Ventres assembled at Ft. Laramie, then moved down to camping grounds at the mouth of Horse Creek, a few miles from Scotts Bluff. The Arapaho, Cheyenne, and Dakota camped along the north bank of the Platte; the American Commissioners occupied the peninsula between the streams; and the troops and visiting tribes encamped around the treaty ground south of Horse Creek. Due in part to the presence of De Smet and Fitzpatrick (the two most trusted white men on the Great Plains), the Treaty Council went smoothly and the Indians promised peace and free passage of emigrants through their lands in return for annual allowances. This treaty was evidently entered into in good faith by all.[1]

In August of 1854 an unfortunate misunderstanding over an emigrant's cow led to the slaughter of Lt. Gratten and 30 men at a spot about eight miles below Ft. Laramie. This massacre was dreadfully revenged the next year by the decimation of a Brule band on the Blue Water Creek, a few miles north of Ash Hollow, in September of 1855 by forces under General Harney. Thereafter the Indians were more wary, but their hatred increased steadily. Solemn treaties and promises of the government to the Indians were repudiated, invalidated, forgotten, or calmly broken by crooked agents, scheming politicians, and egotistical whites who held that an Indian had no inherent rights.

In 1861 the Arapaho and Upper Arkansas Cheyenne were requested (or forced) to cede their lands in Nebraska south of the North Platte. This opened wide the roads west, but put fear into the hearts of the Indians, who wondered when the Great Father in Washington would cease to take their lands away. Already the buffalo was perceptibly reduced in numbers, and starvation often stared the Plains Indians in the face. The Civil War among the whites gave the Indians their chance, and the Sioux broke out in Minnesota and Dakota. The movement spread and soon embraced all of the northern Plains Indians. In the fall of 1863 there was held in Horse Creek Valley, not far from Scotts Bluff, the greatest war council in the history of Plains Indian tribes. During the following years, 1863-1865, the Dakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapaho terrorized the entire Kansas, Nebraska, Dakota country, the Brule and Ogallala bands of the North Platte country doing the most damage.

At the end of the Civil War the army was sent in some force to the Indian frontier, and a council was called for Ft. Laramie in June, 1866. Red Cloud (an Ogallala, born on the North Platte) and some others bolted the conference, which was leading toward a cession of road rights (The Bozeman Trail) through the Dakotas' western hunting grounds. So capably did Red Cloud (one of the greatest warriors in American Indian history) wage battle that in April, 1863, the Ft. Laramie treaty resulted in complete victory for the Dakotas. After this year Red Cloud never fought again against the Americans. During the period July, 1871 - August, 1873, Red Cloud and his followers had an agency opposite the mouth of Horse Creek, about one mile west of modern Henry, Nebraska. In September, 1872, there was lodged here (at what became known as the Old Red Cloud Agency) 6,320 Tetons, mainly Ogallala and Upper Brule; 1,515 Cheyenne; and 1,342 Arapaho. When the agency was moved north in 1873, the Scots Bluff area saw the last of her Indian children.

The further story of the Indian in the northern Great Plains simmers down to two events. Rumors of gold in the Black Hills (known for a generation to De Smet and certain other ethical white men) led the government to send Custer to reconnoitre them in 1874, and Lt. R. I. Dodge and Prof. Jenney to survey them in 1875. The assurance of great riches led many American prospectors to invade the Black Hills, despite Army and Indian prohibitions. The final upshot of the matter was that several American forces were sent into the field. These forces were out-maneuvered severally by Crazy Horse, Gall, Sitting Bull, and Black Moon, and Gen. Custer's forces were wiped out at the Little Big Horn in June, 1876. The Indians, lacking munitions and food, could not resist for

any length of time, and they soon capitulated. By treaty of October, 1876, the Dakotas became reservation Indians, and the Black Hills were thrown open. Years later, in 1890, the Ghost Dance, or Messiah War, involved a few misguided Indians in the Dakotas. That ended the last of Indian influence upon the history of this region.[2]

The chief effect the Indian wars (1862-76) had upon the Scotts Bluff area, outside of the Indian removal from the Agency to a distant reservation, was the creation of Ft. Mitchell as an adjunct of Ft. Laramie. In 1863 or 1864 Captain Shuman of the 11th Ohio Cavalry built Camp Shuman, three miles west of Scotts Bluff gap (Mitchell Pass), in the NE corner of SW 1/4 Section 20, Township 22 N, Range 55 W. Its name was changed to Ft. Mitchell, in honor of General Robert B. Mitchell, then commander of the district. Mrs. Carrington, going up the Bozeman Trail with her husband, Colonel Carrington, commented in 1866 on its situation at the very foot of Scotts Bluff.[3] Bozeman trail is controversial. Hebard and Brininstool (op. cit., II, p. 114) cite Col. Carrington to the effect that the Bozeman Trail began at Ft. Sedgewick and led north through Ft. Mitchell, Ft. Laramie, etc.

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[1]See

1. Hafen and Ghent: Broken Hand, pp. 191-245.
2. Lowe: Five Years a Dragoon, pp. 77-92.
3. Senate Document 1, Pt. 3, 32nd Congress, 1st Session (1851), p. 325.

[2]The Indian history, 1850-1890, is discussed in:

1. Morton: History of Nebraska (1906), Vol. 2, pp. 139-262.
2. Doane Robinson: A Comprehensive History of the Dakotas (1904).
3. Articles on Fight at Ash Hollow, in Neb. State Hist. Soc. Coll., Vol. 16 (1911).
4. Indian Cessions, in B.A.E., 18th Annual Report.
5. E. S. Curtis: The North American Indian, Vols. 3, 6, 19 (1907-1930).
6. A. H. Abel: Indian Consolidation West of the Mississippi, in Amer. Hist. Assn. Ann. Report (1906).
7. A. Watkins: Red Cloud Agency, in Neb. State Hist. Soc. Pub., Vol. 19, pp. 108-109 (1919).
8. E. A. Brininstool: Fighting Red Cloud's Warriors (1926).
9. "Chief Crazy Horse," in Neb. History Magazine, Vol. 12, No. 1 (1929).
10. C. E. De Land: The Sioux Wars (1930), pp. 32-38.
11. Alban Hoopes: Indian Affairs and Their Administration (1932).

[3]Frances Carrington: My Army Life (1910), pp. 41-43.

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THE BLACK HILLS GOLD RUSH

As related above, the Black Hills were thrown open to prospectors in the fall of 1876 (the Army had discontinued its prohibition in the summer of 1875). Like the rush of the Forty-niners, the Black Hills rush followed a financial panic, that of 1873' "Black Friday." From all sides the would-be-miners poured in, usually from points on the Union Pacific and Northern Pacific railroads. The two leading outfitting points were Sidney (Sidney Barracks, established in 1867 as a sub-post for Ft. Sedgewick on the South Platte; independent in 1870, until abandoned in 1874), and Cheyenne. The Sidney route was a few miles shorter, but somewhat rougher, than the Cheyenne road. After 1876 Sidney throve rapidly as an outfitting town for the mines (205 miles distant). The road, known as "the agencies route," was improved; Clarke built a toll bridge over the North Platte at Camp Clarke (now Bridgeport), and stages and freight wagons pulled out daily for the northern diggings. This was the last gold strike to affect the Scotts Bluff area.[1]

[1]R. I. Dodge: The Black Hills (1876), p. 143.
Morton: History of Nebraska (1907), Vol. 1, p. 86.

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THE CATTLE RANGE

The last period before the modern one might properly be termed that of the open cattle range. It had its beginnings back in the days of the early Oregon emigrations, as a result of the necessities of emigrants along the Oregon Trail. Trading posts, often equipped with "fodder and hay" ranches, would replace two worn-out cattle with one that had been fattening on the ranch or nearby range. These "road ranches" were the first ranchers of the northern ranges. Their surplus was often sold in California. This parasite type of cattle-ranching endured from about 1843-1857.

As early as 1853, however, Seth Ward began to winter cattle in the valleys of the Cheywater and Laramie. In 1854, Majors commenced to winter his freighting oxen in the Laramie valley, and continued to do so for ten years. It is claimed that at the height of the Russell, Majors and Waddell freighting business (to supply troops in Utah), in the winter of 1857-8, this firm had over 15,000 head of cattle on a range in Wyoming-Nebraska just south of the Oregon Trail.

Orthodox cattle-ranching in the northern Great Plains began with J. Iliff in northwestern Colorado. New markets had developed in the Colorado gold fields, so Iliff stared up a large range cattle business by stocking with train oxen and stock of the gold-seekers. In time, Iliff became the first northern cattle king, ranging his stock over the South Platte country. The boom in Montana mining, in 1862-5, increased the market for cattle and attracted more men into the cattle business. Soon the cattlemen of the Colorado-Wyoming-Nebraska ranges could not get enough cattle to stock their ranges. This lack was quickly remedied.

During the Civil War the cattle in Texas had multiplied, unmarketed and unmolested. After the war there was not a suitable market within a thousand miles of Texas. The Texas ranchers were land and cattle poor. About 1866 the Southerners began to dream of northern markets. Nelson Story, in 1866, drove a small herd of 600 head of Texas Longhorns from Dallas to Montana; and a drive was made from Texas to Sedalia, Missouri, on the Missouri Pacific. The idea spread and more drives went north in 1867, which is the year that the great Texas drives may properly be said to have begun. Difficulties with the Indians and farmers of the Indian Territory and eastern Kansas shifted these drives westward to a terminus at Abilene, on the Kansas Pacific. In 1867 Iliff began to buy Texas cattle from Goodnight.

The following year, 1868, Texas drives reached stations all along the K.

P. in Kansas and the U. P. in Nebraska. The principal trails into Nebraska, terminated at Schuyler, Ft. Kearny, North Platte, Ogallala, and Pine Bluffs. With the settlement of eastern Nebraska, Ogallala became the great Nebraskan cattle depot. Out of Ogallala cattle were shipped to the eastern stock yards, and driven to western ranges. As yet, since north of the North Platte was Indian, the cattle-ranching in the Scotts Bluff country took place mainly in Horse Creek Valley. By 1871 there 12,800 head on Horse Creek, and before the close of the year Creighton and Alsop turned 45,000 head loose in this valley. During the years 1876-81 the Sioux country was opened up, and thousands of head of cattle were driven out of Ogallala as stockers for the ranges of Northwestern Nebraska, Wyoming, Montana and the Dakotas. In 1883 the huge Swan Land & Cattle Company was organized by combining three cattle properties between Ogallala, Nebraska, and Steele, Wyoming, and from the U. P. to the North Platte.

Rapid inflation of the cattle business was going too far, however. The range became overstocked, barbwire was introduced in 1874-77, and western Nebraska was invaded by grangers in 1885-87. The year 1887 saw the bottom drop out of the cattle business, which had reached its peak two or three years earlier. Since about 1887 or 1888 the cattle ranchers of the Scotts Bluff area have broken up their holdings, fenced in their lands, and turned to scientific and intensive cattle-raising. The day of the open range and gamboleering cowboy has gone forever.[1]

Somewhat linked with the cattle business was that of buffalo hunting. In early times the buffalo was hunted for immediate food or hide demands. The thoughtless thousands of emigrants in the period 1849-69 slaughtered wantonly, far beyond need. The Indians and hunters had been levying a constant toll on the herds for marketable hides and tongues. By the time of the coming of the railroad the buffalo was already losing ground and numbers rapidly.

In the building of the western railroads there arose a demand for fresh meat that was supplied by hiring buffalo hunters, armed with Sharps Buffalo Rifles that used ammunition costing 25 cents a piece. The decimation of the buffalo was well started, in the years 1866-76, by such food hunters as the famous "Buffalo Bill" Cody. With the railroads at hand, the hunters went wild. It has been estimated that in the years 1872-4 alone railroads hauled out of the Great Plains hides, robes, meat, and bones representing over 3,000,000 dead buffalo. Between 1868 and 1881, $2,500,000 worth of buffalo bones were sold in Kansas. These bones, at $6 per ton, and 100 buffalo to the ton, would represent 31,000,000 buffalo. No wonder the bison is nearly extinct in his original haunts. The buffalo deserted the Scotts Bluff area at a comparatively early date, as the great and continuous emigrations frightened them out of the North Platte Valley. For this reason, probably there was not so much bison slaughtering and bone hunting in this area as elsewhere in the Plains.[2]

With the coming of the Grangers, around 1885, the Scotts Bluff area entered its modern period. The history of this area since then is still vivid in the memory of hundreds.

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[1]The best references for the northern cattle range history are:

1. J. McCoy: Historic Sketches of the Cattle Trade of the West and Southwest (1874).
2. P. A. Rollins: The Cowboy (1922), for local color.
3. James Cook: Fifty Years on the Old Frontier (1923) is the autobiography of a west Nebraska cattleman.
4. Granville Start: Forty Years on the Frontier (1925).
5. J. Marvin Hunt: The Trail Drivers of Texas.
6. E. S. Osgood: The Day of the Cattleman (1929).
7. W. P. Webb: The Great Plains (1931).

[2]Reference on buffalo hunting in the northern Great Plains are:

1. R. I. Dodge: The Plains of the Great West (1877), pp. 140-142.
2. Harry Inman: Buffalo Jones' 40 Years of Adventure (1899).
3. John Cook: The Border of the Buffalo (1907).
4. W. F. Cody: Autobiography (1920).
5. E. A. Brininstool: Fighting Red Cloud's Warriors (1926), pp. 211-14.

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APPENDIX: CHRONOLOGIC OUTLINE

1720	Villasur (Spaniard) attained Platte forks, via South Platte.
1739	Mallet brothers went up South Platte to Santa Fe. Named the Platte river.
1804	Louisiana officially occupied by U.S.; Lewis and Clark began Rocky Mountain explorations.
1812-13	Returning Astorians, down North Platte -- opened Oregon Trail.
1820	Long up South Platte.
1823-24	South Pass discovered. Ashley's men extend operations into Upper Platte country.
1824	Smith discovers Great Salt Lake. Fitzpatrick first attempts navigation of upper Platte. Furs taken overland down Platte route to St. Louis.
1825	First rendezvous in the mountains.
1827	Four-pound wheeled cannon -- first wheeled vehicle to ascend Platte route and cross the Rocky Mountains.
1830	W. Sublette and large party take first wagons over the Oregon Trail, into the Rocky Mountains.
1832	Invasion of the mountains by independent fur traders -- Bonneville, Wyeth, et al.
1834	First missionaries and scientists over the Trail into the Oregon country. Founding of several famous forts: Laramie, Hall, etc.
1835	First march of Army to the mountains, under Col. Dodge, up South Platte. Presbyterian missionaries enter Oregon (Whitman and Parker).
1836	More missionaries to Oregon -- first women over the Oregon Trail.
1840	Last rendezvous. Jesuit Father De Smet entered the mountains.
1841	First Oregon-California emigrant train.
1842	Lt. Fremont's first expedition.
1843	The Great Emigration to Oregon. First wagons to reach the Pacific -- 120 wagons, 694 oxen, 200 families, 775 loose cattle.
1844	Five Oregon-California parties.
1845	Kearny's dragoons up North Platte. First regular military

campaign into the Great West.

1846 49° parallel boundary decides Oregon question with Britian. Bear Flag republic in California. War with Mexico. Donner disaster in California.

1847 Mormon "pioneers" reopen old Indian and fur trader route up north bank of the Platte. Salt Lake City founded. Post Route Bill passed.

1848 Gold discovered, January 24, in California. Treaty gives the southwest to the United States. Oregon territory created. Ft. Kearny founded.

1849 Overland rush to California. Government buys Ft. Laramie. Cholera on the plains. 25,000 use the Overland Trail. Roubidou's post founded at Scotts Bluff.

1850 California a state. First contract mail service over the Overland Trail to Salt Lake City.

1851 Great Indian Council of Ft. Laramie at mouth of Horse Creek.

1853 Overland Mail through to California. First of the five railroad surveys.

1854 Kansas-Nebraska Act opened the Indian country west of the Missouri, and abrogated Missouri Compromise. Gratten Massacre.

1855 Brule Dakota slaughtered near Ash Hollow by General Harney.

1856 Handcart Mormon migration began; one disasterous company.

1857 Mountain Meadows Massacre of Fancher's company by Mormons. "Mormon War." Overland hauling of freight commenced.

1858 Gold discovered in Pike's Peak area. Washoe silver strike in Nevada.

1859 Oregon a state. Movement to Colorado gold mines. Stages run to Salt Lake City, on contract. Comstock (Virginia City) silver strike in Nevada. The year of the "Fifty-niners."

1860 Central Overland California and Pikes Peak Express Company. Pony Express inaugurated. Gold strike in Idaho.

1861 Telegraph completed October 26. End of the Pony Express. Kansas a state.

1862 Gold found at Virginia City, Montana. Beginning of Civil War. Indian disorders. Overland Stage abandoned North Platte for South Platte "Overland Trail" roue.

1863 Great Indian War Council on Horse Creek.

1866 Union Pacific tracks opposite Ft. Kearny. "Bloody year on the plains". Fetterman Massacre.

1867 Union Pacific to Julesburg in spring; to Cheyenne in fall. Nebraska a state. Texas cattle drives to Abilene began.

1868 Ft. Laramie treaty. Victory for Red Cloud and his Teton Dakotas.

1869	Union Pacific-Central Pacific meet, May 10.
1871	Heavy cattle stocking of Horse Creek range.
1871-3	Red Cloud Agency at North Platte river, near Scotts Bluff.
1876	Final Indian treaty placing Dakotas on reservation and opening the Black Hills. Annihilation of Custer's troops.
1884	Peak of the range cattle business.
1886-87	Invasion of western Nebraska by Grangers.
1887	Deflation of an overcrowded range.
1888	Gering platted.
1899	Scotts Bluff platted.

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APPENDIX: BIOGRAPHIC CHECK LIST

A series of great movements through the Scotts Bluff area resulted in the passage of countless thousands during the period 1810-1870. Most of the migration took place between 1824 (when the Great Platte route was adopted by the fur traders) and 1862 (when Indian troubles forced the Overland mail and stage south into the South Platte "Overland Trail" proper). The extent of these movements prior to the coming of the railroad, 1866-69, has been estimated at many thousands. Most of the individuals who passed by Scotts Bluff have remained anonymous or inconspicuous. There were, however, a number who attained a lasting fame. This check list seeks to include only those whose outstanding achievements or historic connections with the Overland Route or with Scotts Bluff indicate a deserved need for special mention.

The biographic notes here presented have been obtained from standard biographic references and from the special histories of the region and times involved. Where possible the outstanding authority for each has been indicated. The general works of greatest value were:

1. American Council of Learned Societies: Dictionary of American Biography, 1928-33, Vols. 1-12, A - M.

2. National Cyclopedia of American Biography, James T. White Co., 1898-1932, Vols. 1-22.

3. Appleton's Cyclopedia of American Biography, 1887-1928, Vols. 1-11.

1. **Applegate, Jesse.** Born Kentucky, 1811. Surveyor in Missouri. Joined Oregon Great Emigration of 1843, and was captain of the "Cow-column," whose history he related. Farmed on the Willamette and had cattle ranch on the Umpqua in Oregon. Member of legislative committee of Oregon Provisional Government. Died, Oregon, 1888. (Rucker: The Oregon Trail and Some of its Blazers (1930) is a story of the Applegates, and contains portraits.)

2. **Ashley, William Henry.** Born Virginia, 1778. Mined Missouri lead and saltpeter with Henry. Lt. Governor of Missouri in 1820. General of Militia in 1822. Active fur trader 1822-26; instituted annual rendezvous; used mules and horses over direct Platte route. Congressman, 1831-37. Died, Missouri 1838. (Dale: Ashley-Smith Explorations (1918) has best account of Ashley's activities.)

3. **Baker, James.** Born, Illinois, 1818. Trapper, guide, and pioneer

rancher. Joined Bridger and the American Fur Company in 1838 and was trapper until 1853. Chief of Scouts for Gen. Harney at Ft. Laramie, 1855. Guided army against Mormons in 1857 and Marcy across Colorado, 1857-8. Settled in Wyoming in 1873. Died, Wyoming, 1898. (See Mumey: The Life of Jim Baker (1931) for biography and portraits.)

4. **Ball, John.** Born, New Hampshire, 1794. Attended Dartmouth. Accompained N. Wyeth in 1832. Lived with Dr. McLoughlin at Ft. Vancouver. Taught school and farmed in Oregon. Traveled extensively, and finally settled in Michigan. Died, Michigan, 1884. (Portrait as frontispiece in "Autobiography of John Ball," compiled by his daughters (1925).)

5. **Beckwourth, James.** Born, Virginia, 1798. Quadroon hunter, trapper, and squawman. Groom and horse-wrangler for Ashley, 1823. Lived with the Crows for a time. Under Kearney in California. Joined Colorado stampede in 1859. Died, Colorado, 1867. (Portrait as frontispiece in Bonner: Life and Adventures of James P. Beckwourth (several editions). Also in Hafen & Ghent: Broken Hand.)

6. **Bidwell, John.** Born, New York, 1819. Pioneer and politician. Teacher in Ohio and Missouri. Went to California with first overland party of 1841. Worked for Sutter; member of "Bear Flag" revolt of 1846; soldiered under Fremont and Stockton. Ranched at Chico. Congressman, 1864-66. Was Prohibition candidate for President, 1892. Died, California, 1900. (C. C. Royce: John Bidwell, has portrait and reprints of Bidwell's writings.)

7. **Bonneville, Benj. L. E. de** Born, France, 1796. U. S. Army officer, 1815-1866. At western posts 1821-30. Aide to Lafayette in 1825. Explored in the West, 1832-35. Fought in Mexican War. Commanded post of Ft. Kearny in summer of 1849. Retired as Brigadier-General in 1866. Died, Arkansas, 1878. (Best general account is Irving: Adventures of Captain Bonneville. Morton: History of Nebraska, has portrait and biogrphy; and Chittenden: American Fur Trade, gives brief biography.)

8. **Bridger, James.** Born, Virginia, 1804. Fur trader and scout. Rated with Fitzpatrick and Carson as greatest of the mountainmen of the period 1820-1860. Joined Ashley in 1822. Discovered Great Salt Lake in 1824. Built Ft. Bridger in 1843. Guided Stansbury 1849, A. S. Johnson 1857-8, Reynolds Yellowstone Expedition 1859-60, Berthoud party 1861, Powder River expeditions 1865 and 1866. Died, Missouri, 1861. (Best biography is Alter: James Bridger, which has portraits.)

9. **Bryant, Edwin.** Born, 1805. California pioneer of 1846, whose "What I Saw in California" was translated into several foreign languages and made known the riches of California to the world. His description of Scotts Bluff is excellent. Died, 1869.

10. **Burnett, Peter H.** Born, Tennessee, 1807. Missouri storekeeper and lawyer. Member of 1843 Great Emigration to Oregon. Went to California in 1848, where he became the first governor, 1849-1851. Recounted his trip west in "Recollections of an Old Pioneer." Died, California, 1895. (Portrait in Ghent: Road to Oregon).

11. **Burton, Richard F.** Born, 1821. Noted British knight, traveler, and author. Edited Marcy's "Prairie Traveler," and wrote up his own trip over Platte route, 1860, in "The City of the Saints." (His biography, with portraits, is given in Isabel Burton: "The Life of Captain Sir R. F. Burton" (1893); and F. D. Downey: "Burton, Arabian Nights Adventurer" (1931).)

12. **Campbell, Robert.** Born, Ireland, 1804. Trapper and capitalist. Joined Ashley in 1825. Partner with Sublette, 1832-42. Became Missouri banker and colonel of militia. Was Indian commissioner to Ft. Laramie in 1851. Died, Missouri, 1879. (Biographic note in Schaef's "History of St. Louis," and portrait in Neihardt's "The Splendid Wayfaring.")

13. **Carson, Christopher.** Born, Kentucky, 1809. Made most famous of mountain men by Fremont's reports. Carson began as "cavvy boy" on a Santa Fe expedition. Joined Fitzpatrick 1831-33. Guide for Fremont in 1842, 1843-1844; and for Kearney in 1846-7. United States Indian Agent 1853-60. Rose to brigadier-general of New Mexico volunters, 1861-65. Died, Colorado, 1868. (History recounted in Sabin: Kit Carson Days; Peters: Life and Adventures of Kit Carson; Vestel: Kit Carson; and Grant: Kit Carson's Own Story. Excellent portraits in Sabin, also original M.SS in Bancroft Library, University of California.)

14. **Chiles, Joseph B.** Born in Kentucky, 1810. Took part in the Florida war in 1836. In 1841 came overland to California. In 1843 he came to California with a party which bore his name. Did much to aid Fremont with supplies and information. In 1847 went east as a guide and hunter in Stockton's party. Died in Lake County, California, in 1885. (See Bancrofts Works - Vol XIX - Page 758.)

15. **Clyman, James.** Born Virginia, 1792. Trapper and California pioneer. Joined Ashley in 1823. Walked from the Sweetwater to the Missouri in 1824. Soldiered with Lincoln in Black Hawk War. Went with emigrant train to Oregon in 1844, and on to California in 1845. Guided emigrant train to California in 1848, where he settled. Died in California, 1881. (See C. L. Camp: James Clyman, for biography and portrait.)

16. **Cody, William F.** Born, Iowa, 1846. Scout and showman. Began as "cavvy boy" on Russell, Majors and Waddell supply train into Utah in 1857. Denver gold rush in 1859. Pony Express rider in 1860. Army Scout 1863-65. Supplied buffalo meat to Kansas Pacific, 1867-8. Chief of scouts, 5th Cavalry, 1868-72, 1876. On the stage, 1872-1883; and began "Wild West" exhibitions in 1883. Died, Colrado, 1917. (Best accounts are R. J. Marsh: The Making of Buffalo Bill, 1928; and Cody: Autobiography.)

17. **Cooke, Philip St. George.** Born, Virginia, 1809. Soldier and author. In many western campaigns and expeditions 1827-45. Served with Kearny in Mexican War, and commanded the Mormon Battalion, Utah expedition of 1857-8. Brigadier-General in Union forces, although his son-in-law was J. E. B. Stuart. Commanded successively the Army departments of the Platte Cumberland, and Lakes. Wrote "Scenes and Adventures," etc. Died, 1895. (See Dictionary of American Biography,

Vol IV: page 389.)

18. **Crazy Horse.** Born, 1841. Greatest military genius of the Sioux Confederacy. He was an Ogallala, and fought under Red Cloud, 1865-8. Commanded 1,2000 Ogallals and Cheyennes, 1876-77; won distinctions in battles of Rosebud and Little Big Horn. Killed when arrested at Ft. Robinson, Nebraska, 1877. (See Moorehead: The American Indian, page 184.)

19. **Creighton, Edward.** Born, Ohio, 1820. Telegraph builder and banker. Surveyed transcontinental telegraph routes in winter of 1860, and handled construction of Julesburg-Salt Lake City section of Pacific Telegraph, July-October, 1861. Died, Nebraska, 1874. (Best biography is P. A. Mullins: Creighton, 1901.)

20. **Crook, George.** Born, Ohio, 1829. Soldiered from 1852 until his death. Served in the northwestern plains, 1852-61; Major-General in Civil War; in Idaho 1864-7; campaigned against Apaches, 1871-5; commanded Platte Department, 1875-82; subjugated Apaches, 1882-6; and commanded Platte's Department 1886-88. Commander, Division of Missouri, 1888-1890. Died, Illinois, 1890. (J. Bourke: On the Border with Crook, 1891; and C. King: Campaigning with Crook, 1890, are two of the many books dealing with this great Indian fighter.)

21. **Crooks, Ramsay.** Born, Scotlnd, 1787. Fur trader. Parner 1810-12 in Pacific Fur Co., but sold out and returned with Stuart in 1812-13. Became general manager of American Fur Co., in 1817, and was president from 1834-59. He maintained that the Stuart party discovered the South Pass. Died, New York, 1859. (See Chittenden: American Fur Trade; and J. W. Ruckman: "Ramsay Crooks and the Fur Trade" in Minn. Hist., Vol. 7.)

22. **Cross, Osborne.** Quartermaster for the Western Army in 1849. Accompanied Mounted Rifle Regiment to Oregon in 1849, via Ft. Kearny, where he conversed with Colonel Bonneville, Scotts Bluff and South Pass. His journal report is quite valuable (31 Cong. 2 Sess; House Doc. 1, 1850.)

23. **DeSmet, Pierre Jean.** Born, Belgium, 1801. Jesuit missionary to Western America, 1838-73. During period 1840-46 Father DeSmet surveyed Catholic opportunities in the Northwest. This "Blackrobe" was the white man most trusted by the Indians. He was very influential at Ft. Laramie conference of 1851 and others. Died, Missouri, 1873. (Chittenden & Richardson: Life, Letters and Travels of Father Pierre-Jean DeSmet, 1905; E. Laveille: Life of Father DeSmet, 1915, are best biographies of this great traveler, writer, and peacemaker.)

24. **Dodge, Grenville M.** Born, Massachusetts, 1831. Soldier and civil engineer. Major General in Civil War. Chief engineer of Union Pacifc, 1866-70. Surveyed South Platte-Cheyenne Pass route after investigating North Platte route via Scotts Bluff (which he sketched). Associated with many railroads in later life. Died, 1916. (Best biography is J. R. Perkins: Trails, Rails and War 1929).

25. **Dodge, Richard.** Born, Huntsville, North Carolina, May 19, 1827.

Graduated from U. S. military academy, 1848, assigned to the 8th infantry, and after serving various posts was promoted to captain. Promoted to Lieutenant-colonel, Oct. 29, 1873. Afterwards served against hostile Indians in the west. Made colonel, 11th infantry in 1882. Published many books, such as "The Black Hills," and "Our Wild Indians." (See Appleton's Cyclopedia of American Biography, Vol. 2: Page 194.)

26. **Eells, Cushing.** Of Massachusetts birth; one of a family of clergymen. Settled at Forest Grove in 1848, and helped build up the Pacific University. He also did much to help build the Whitman Seminary at Walla Walla, Washington. He was last survivor of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to the Indians of the North-west Coast. (See Marcus Whitman; pp. 105; 291; 165; 184.)

27. **Fitzpatrick, Thomas.** Trapper, guide and Indian agent. He was born in County Canon, Ireland. He was sometimes called "Broken Hand" or "Three Fingers," because of an accident suffered from the bursting of a rifle. He was for many years the most capable of mountain men. He guided Kearny's army to California, and his skill as a guide was highly praised by DeSmet. He died Feb. 7-1854. (See Dictionary of American Biography, Vol. VI; also Hafen and Ghent: Broken Hand.)

28. **Ford, Nathaniel.** From North Carolina. A man of character and influence, leader of one of the parties to Oregon. He was supreme court judge for the districts south of the Columbia River in 1845, and State Senator for Oregon in 1866. Made his home in Polk County, Oregon. In 1870, Jan. 9, he died in Dixie, age 75. (See Bancroft's Works, History of Oregon, Vol. I; p. 450; 469; 496; Vol II; p. 666.)

29. **Fremont, John.** Born, Savannah Georgia, Jan. 21, 1813. Went to Charleston College, May 1829, remaining there until expelled. Went to South America in 1833. Fremont's first important exploration was a summer expedition in 1842 to the Wind River chain of the Rockies. In 1844 he went to California.

Fremonts third expedition was another trip to California. When he entered the heart of California, Mexican officials ordered him from the country. On July 10, 1846 he actively cooperated with Sloat and Stockton in the conquest of California. Fremont remained in California until the civil war.

In 1856 he ran for president, being defeated by Buchanan. At the outbreak of the Civil War he was in Europe. He returned and was appointed major general in charge of the department of the West in 1861. He was soon removed from office by Lincoln because of reckless expenditures.

Again nominated for president on May 31, 1864, in Cleveland by a convention of radical Republicans who disliked Lincoln, he later withdrew his nomination. After this Fremont played no further part in public life.

In 1887 he made his home in California, but death came to him July 13,

1890, while he as temporarily in New York. (See Dictionary of American Biography, Vol. VII: Page 18.)

30. **Gilliam, Cornelius.** Nothing is known of Gilliam's antecedents. He was brave, obstinate, impetuous, and generous, with good natural abilities, and but little education. Served in the Black Hawk war, and also in the Seminole war, Florida, as captain. Closely connected with emigration in Oregon. Died March 20th, 1848. (See Bancroft's Works: History of Oregon, Vol. 1,: p. 449; 725.)

31. **Hastings, Lansford.** Born 1819; native of Ohio. A lawyer, he was leader of a party which crossed the plains to Oregon in 1842 and came to California in 1843. A year later he published a worthless book called "Emigrants' Guide." An intelligent, active man, never without some grand scheme on hand. Hastings lived at or near Sacramento till 1857; then went to Arizona. Died in Brazil about 1870. (See Bancrofts Works, Vol. XX: Page 778.)

32. **Hickok, James.** Commonly known as Wild Bill. Born at Troy Grove, La Salle County, Illinois, May 27, 1837. As a youth was a hunter and best shot in his part of Illinois. In 1855 made his way to Leavenworth, Kansas. In 1856 became a driver for a stage company operating over the old Santa Fe Trail; later transferred to the Overland Stage, on the Oregon Trail. Here at Rock Creek Station, Jefferson County, Nebr., July 12, 1861, had his famous battle with the notorious McCanles gang, in which he killed McCanles and two of his men. During the civil war served as a Union Scout and spy. In 1836 appointed deputy U. S. marshall at Fort Riley, Kan.

Wild Bill was an exceptionally handsome and fascinating man. He never killed a man except in self-defense or in the line of official duty. Toured the East with Buffalo Bill in 1872, 73, afterwards going to Deadwood, Dakota Territory, where he was murdered by Jack McCall, April 2, 1876. (See Dictionary of American Biography, Vol. IX: Page 4.)

33. **Holladay, Ben.** Born, Carlisle County, Kentucky. In early boyhood removed with his parents to western Missouri. He had little schooling. With T. F. Warner as partner he launched a trade venture to Salt Lake City with fity wagon-loads of merchandise. Later re-organized, extended and improved the overland stage coach service until under him it reached its greatest extent. During Indian uprising in 1864-65, he suffered heavy losses. In 1867 formed the Northern Pacific Transportation Company from which he retired in 1876. Died, Portland, Oregon, on July 8, 1887. (See Dictionary of American Biography, Vol. IX: Page 141.)

34. **Johnston, Albert S.** Born at Washington, Mason County, Kentucky, Feb. 2, 1803. Appointed to the U. S. military academy in 1822. Upon graduation, brevetted second lieutenant of the 2nd Infantry. After his wife's death in 1835, enlisted as private in the Texan army. In 1836 appointed senior brigadier-general. In 1838 appointed Secretary of War for the Republic of Texas. On Dec. 2, 1849, commissioned paymaster, U. S. Army. During the Civil War, appointed by Jefferson Davis general in the confederate army. In many battles, on April 6, 1863 he was struck, an artery being severed in his leg, and he bled to death. (See Dictionary of

American Biography, Vol. X: Page 135).

35. **Kearny, Stephen.** Born, Aug. 30, 1794, Newark, New Jersey. Entered Columbia College in 1811, but on the approach of the War of 1812 joined the army. In 1813 was made captain. His service was on the western frontier. In 1825 took part in General Atkinson's expedition to the mouth of the Yellowstone. In 1845 led an expedition to South Pass, and next year he began the building of the first Fort Kearny (Nebraska City, Nebraska).

In 1846 placed in command of the army of the West. Soon he reached California where he had disputes with Stockton and Fremont. He then proceeded to Mexico where he was for a time civil governor of Vera Cruz. He then returned east, dying October 31, 1848 at St. Louis. (See Dictionary of American Biography, Vol X: Page 272.)

36. **Lee, Jason.** Methodist missionary. Born on June 28, 1803; in Quebec, then considered part of Vermont. In 1830-32 served as minister to Wesleyan Methodists in Stanstead, Vermont. Went to Oregon and christianized many savages. In 1841 formed the plan that resulted in the founding of Oregon Institute, later renamed Williamette University. In 1844 returned East, where he died March 12, 1845. (See Dictionary of American Biography, Vol. XI: Page 111.)

37. **Majors, Alexander.** Born near Franklin, Simpson County, Kentucky. October 4, 1814. In youth worked on a farm and served as a miller's boy. He later married and bought a farm, but he did not make enough so he left the farm and started a business carrying freight. In 1855 he went into partnership with other men, and in time he had a freighting business which required more than four thousand men, forty thousand oxen, and one thousand mules. He lived in Nebraska City part of his life. In 1860 he and his partners established the famous pony express. It lasted only a few months, proving a financial failure.

In 1861, he purchased the interests of his partners and continued freighting until 1866. From 1869 to 1879 he lived in Salt Lake City. In 1893 he published "Seventy Years on the Frontier." For several years before his death he lived in Kansas City Mo. Died, Chicago, Jan. 12, 1900. (See Dictionary of American Biography, Vol. XII: Page 214.)

38. **Marcy, Randolph.** Born Greenwich, Mass., April 9, 1812. Graduated from Military Academy in 1832. Became second lieutenant in 1835, first lieutenant in 1837, and captain in 1846. In 1845 went to Texas, serving there during the military occupation and in the battle of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma. For next twelve years he remained in the Southwest. Later was inspector-general of the Department of Utah. In 1859 he prepared a semi-official guidebook, called the "Prairie Traveler." IN 1866 he wrote a book called, "Thirty Years of Army Life on the Border". Appointed inspector-general of the army in 1878, serving in this capacity until his retirement to his death on November 22, 1887. (See Dictionary of American Biography, Vol. XII: Page 273.)

39. **Marshall, James.** Born Oct. 8, 1810, Hunterdon County, New Jersey. Marshall received a fair education. When of age, started west

seeking adventure and fortune. First settled at Fort Leavenworth, but fever and ague attacked him, and on advice of his physician he joined an emigrant train for the Far West. In July 1845 he arrived at Fort Sutter and started farming, later joining Fremonts' California Battalion. After being mustered out of service, he sought employment from Sutter and the two entered into partnership to build a sawmill near Sutter's Fort. It was there, on Jan. 24, 1848, that gold was discovered.

Discovery of gold brought only misfortune to Marshall. He lost most of his land, and his sawmill venture failed for lack of laborers. Marshall spent his later years as a gardener in the vicinity of Coloma, where he died Aug. 10, 1885. (See Dictionary of American Biography, Vol. XII: Page. 314.)

40. **Meek, Joseph L.** Born in Washington County, Virginia, in 1810. Claimed relationship with president Polk. A trapper and pioneer settler. Appointed by Polk as United States Marshal to Oregon. He lost his office when Pierce became president. His remaining years were mostly spent as a farmer on his Hillsboro tract, where he died June 20, 1875. (See Dictionary of American Biography, Vol. XII: Page 494.)

41. **Mitchell, Robert.** Born Mansfield, Richland County, Ohio, April 4, 1823 of Scotch-Irish parents. Studied law in the office of John K. Miller at Mount Vernon, Ohio, admitted to the bar, and began practice at Mansfield. In 1855 went to Kansas territory. Elected to lowoer house, territorial legislature, 1857. Apr. 8, 1862, President Lincoln commissioned him brigidier-general. At battle of Perryville, Ky., commanded the 9th Division. Late in 1865 President Johnson nominated Mitchell governor of New Mexico territory. The nomination was confirmed Jan. 15, 1866, and he took office on the 16th of the following July. In 1872 nominated for Congress by Liberal Republicans and Democrats, but was defeated. Moved to Washington, D.C., and died on Jan. 26, 1862. (See Dictionary of American Biography Vol. XIII: Page 60.)

42. **Palmer, Joel.** Born near foot of Lake Ontario, Canada, 1810, ofr Quaker parentage. Early life lived in Pennsylvania. Later went to Indiana, where he as a large canal contractor, and then a farmer; also member of the legislature, winter of 1844-45.

Author of Palmer's Wagon Train. He expected to have this book ready to sell to the immigration and to realize from it enough to pay most, if not all, the expense of his second journey to Oregon. He was badly disappointed for he only sold a few copies. A State Senator in Oregon in 1864. (See Bancrofts' Works, Vol. I: Page 522; Vol. II: P. 665.)

43. **Parker, Samuel.** Born in Ashfield, New Hampshire, April 23, 1779. Became a missionary in western New York, and subsequently was in charge of Congregational churches in Massechusetts and New York. Mr. Parker originated the mission of the American Board in Oregon. It has been said that he was the first to suggest the possibility of constructing a railroad through the Rocky mountains to the Pacific Ocean. Died, Ithaca, New York, March 24, 1866. (See Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography, Vol. 5: Page 654.)

44. **Parkman, Francis.** Born, Boston, Mass., Sept. 16, 1823. Graduate of Harvard, 1844. In 1846 set out to explore the Rocky mountains. Lived for several months among the Dakota Indians and the still wilder and remoter tribes, incurring hardships and privations that made him an invalid. Afterwards engaged in literary work almost exclusively, and notwithstanding impaired health, accompanied by partial blindness, attained high rank as historain and writer. Some of his publications are "The California and Oregon Trail"; "The Conspiracy of Pontiac"; and "Discovery of the Great West." (See Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography, Vol. 4: Page 658.)

45. **Pratt, Orson.** Born Hartford, New York, Sept. 19, 1811. Joined the Mormon Church in 1830; became one of 12 Apostles in 1835. Went on successful missions to Great Britian; twice president of the British and European missions; in 1865 went on a mission to Austria. In 1852, went on mission to WAshington, D.C., where he published "The Seer," eighteen monthly numbers. Member of the legislative assembly of Utah, first session. Wrote and published many books. Died Salt Lake City, Oct. 3, 1861. (See Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography, Vol. 5: Page 103.)

46. **Red Cloud.** Makh - piya - luta or Red Cloud, says in his pictographic history of his life, that he was born in the year of 1822. His parents were not prominent among the tribe. Nothing is known of Red Cloud's extreme youth. Not a hereditary chief, he arose to disctinction through merit. A great fighter, he soon won fame, becoming chief of the Sioux. After the 1868-69 treaty Red Cloud himself went to war no more, but instead became a distinguished councilman and treaty maker. Red Cloud was altogether a different Indian than Sitting Bull: Red Cloud believed in making peace with the white man; Sitting Bull wanted to die fighting the white man. Red Cloud possessed more human kindness than any of his red contemporaries. Died at Pine Ridge, South Dakota, 1909. (See Moorehead: The American Indian, Pages 173, 189.)

47. **Russell, William.** Native of Kentucy, prominent in local politics. In 1845 member of Kentucky Legislature; also a U. S. Marshal. Served in the Florida War. Somewhat active in the Fremont-Kearny controversy, and was Secretary of State of Los Angeles, during Fremont's rule as governor in 1845. In 1854 practised law at Sacramento and San Francisco, and about 1861-62 he was U. S. Consul at Trinidad de Cuba, but resigned and returned to Kentucky, where he died. (See Bancroft's Works, History of California, Vo. V: Page 708.)

48. **Ruxton, George.** Born Kent, England, 1820. Educated at Sandhurst Military College. Left at he age of seventeen, volunteered in Spanish service during Carlist War, 1833-9. Commissioned as lieuenant, British Army, went with his regiment to Canada, where he resigned and spent several years among Indians and trappers of the west. In 1847 returned to England, but set out on a second trip to the far west. Died on the way at St. Louis, Mo., Sept. 29, 1848. (See Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography, Vol. 5: Page 359.)

49. **Slade, Joseph.** Said to have come from Clinton County, Illinois. The most eminent desperado along the Oregon Trail. Real story of his career

unknown. Though greatly feared, could act at times the courteous and kindly man of peace. Mark Twain speaks of him as "the most gentlemanly appearing, quiet and affable officer we had yet found along the road in the Overland company's service," although at the time he bore the reputation of having kiled twenty-six men. Some were doubtless desperadoes who badly needed killing, but it is certain others were inoffensive.

Remained with the stage company about two years; but took to drinking and became quarrelsome, whereupon, sometime in 1862, he was discharged. He turned up afterward in Montana, and after a short but lively career was hanged by vigilantes at Virginia City, March 10, 1864. (See Ghent: The Road to Oregon, Page 210.)

50. **Spalding, Henry.** Born in Bath, New York, 1804. Graduate from Western Reserve college in 1833, and entered the class of 1837 in Lane Theological Seminary. Labored fourteen years among Indians, using his translations of the Scriptures, and also acting as commissioner of common schools for Oregon. Several thousand Indians were civilized through his efforts. Died in Lapwai, Idaho, Aug. 3, 1874. (See Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography, Vol. 5: Page 618.)

51. **Spotted Tail.** Chief of the Brule (Sioux) band. In youth fought with an Indian named Running Bear, over an Indian woman. Running Bear was killed and Spotted Tail nearly died. After this fight he won fame and was chosen band leader. Fought in many wars against the whites. He was captured, escaping after many months of imprisonment. Around 1880 he was killed by an Indian named Crow Dog. (See Seymour: The Story of the Red Man, Page 263.)

52. **Stansbury, Howard.** Born, New York City, Feb. 8, 1806. In early life became a civil engineer. In Oct. 1828, placed in charge of the survey of proposed canals to unite Lake Erie and Lake Michigan with the Wabash river. On July 7, 1836, he became first lieutenant of the U. S. topographical engineers. From 1849 till 1851 he was engaged in the Great Salt Lake expedition, and his report gave him wide reputation. Appointed Major on Sept. 28, 1861. Published "An Exploration to the Valley of the Great Salt Lake of Utah". Died in Madison, Wis., April 17, 1863. (See Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography, Vol. 5: Page 647.)

53. **Stuart, Robert.** Born in Callender, Scotland, February 19, 1785. At age of 22 came to the United States. In 1810 he went out as one of the founders of Astoria, Oregon. He was the leader of the third party to cross the continent north of Mexico. Stuart was appointed by President Harrison as commissioner for all the Indian tribes of the northwest. Later he became Treasurer of Michigan, and held other offices of public trust and importance connected with the development of the Great Lake region. He was known as "the friend of the Indian." Stuart died in Chicago, Ill., on Oct. 28, 1848. (See Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography, Vol. 5: Page 732.)

54. **Sublett, William L.** Born in 1799. The most distinguished of the four brothers, who engaged in the fur trade. In the fur trade with

Jedediah Smith and David Jackson and made a fortune from the trade. Sublette with 250 trappers almost annihilated the Bannock Indians (this bad of Indians lived mostly by plunder) on the Green River in August 1826. With Ashley at the Aricara fight, June 2, 1823, and held the rank of Sergeant-Major. Died in 1845. (See Chittenden, American Fur Trade of the Far West.-Page-254.)

55. **Sutter, John A.** Born Feb. 28th, 1803, at Kandern, Baden. Of Swiss parentage, his family name was originally Suter. Graduated from the military college at Berne in 1823. In 1834 emigrated to this country and settled in St. Louis. Crossed the Rocky mountains, settling first in Oregon. Later sailed along the Pacific Coast, and on July 2, 1839, was stranded in San Francisco Bay. He then went into the interior amid great difficulties, and founded in the same year the earliest white settlement on the site of Sacramento. He then received a grant of land from the Mexican government, and in 1841, built a fort. The Mexican government appointed him governor of the northern frontier country, but he favored the annexation of California to the U. S., and the Mexicans regarded him with suspicion.

During the Gold rush he lost most of his land, his homestead was burned and in 1873 he removed to Litiz, Pa. He died at Washington, D. C., on June 18, 1880. (See Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography, Vol. 6: Page 2.)

56. **Thorp, John.** Captain of a company in the immigration of 1844. From Madison county, Kentucky. Settled in Polk county, Oregon, where he followed farming. A member of the House of Representatives for Oregon in 1850. Around 1854 he was a commissioner for the Willamette Valley Railroad Company. (See Bancrofts Works, Vol. II, History of Oregon:-Pages 143; 696; Vol. I: Page 450.)

57. **Townsend, John.** Born Philadelphia, Pa. Aug. 10, 1809. Developed a fondness for natural history. During 1833-7 made extensive journeys in the western states and across the Rocky mountains with Thomas Nuttall. Also visited the Sandwich Islands and South America. While in Washington he practised dentistry, and so acquired the title of doctor. Member, Philadelphia academy of natural sciences, and a contributor to its proceedings. Author of many books: "Sporting Adventures in the Rocky Mountains," "A Narrative of journey across the Rocky Mountains to the Columbia River." etc. Died, Washington, D. C., February 16, 1851. (See Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography, Vol. 6 - Page 148.)

58. **White, Elijah.** Born in Jefferson County, New York, April 3, 1806. Came to the Oregon country in 1836, among the first emigrants. Helped establish the first Methodist Espiscopal Church in Oregon. In 1850, White essayed to build upon Baker Bay a town which he named Pacific City, but which enjoyed an existence of only a year or two. (See Bancrofts Works, History of Washington: Page 331; - Page 33.)

59. **Whitman, Marcus.** Dr. Marcus Whitman, born at Rushville, Yates County, New York. September 4, 1802. His father was a native of Massachusetts. Dr. Whitman practiced medicine for 8 years, later

becoming interested in the Northwest. He traveled to the Northwest many times, teaching the bible to the Indians. He also wrote many books on the Northwest. Died November 29, 1847. (See Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography; Vol. 6: Page 485.)

60. **Wislizenus, F. A.** Adolph Wislizenus, born May 21, 1810, Koenigsee, Schwarzburg-Rudolstadt, German Empire. In 1830 went to the University of Zurich. Took his degree as doctor of medicine, and after spending sometime in Paris hospitals, came to New York in 1835. In 1836 moved to Mascoutah, St. Clair County, Illinois, near St. Louis. After practicing as country physician for three years, made a trip to the Rocky Mountains. On returning, practiced medicine in St. Louis. In 1846 joined an expedition to Santa Fe. From Santa Fe pushed on to Chihuahua, where was attacked by some Mexicans; but was rescued. In 1848 went to Washington; in 1850 to Europe. He there married and after birth of his first child, went to California by way of Panama. Author of many books. Died St. Louis, Mo., Sept. 23, 1889. (See Wislizenus: A Journey to the Rocky Mountains, Page 5.)

61. **Wyeth, Nathaniel.** Born, Cambridge, Mass., Jan. 29, 1802. Given classical education, intending to enter Harvard, but decided to enter into business enterprises. In 1831, his attention was attracted to the great Northwest. On March 11, 1832, he left Boston with a company of twenty-one men, fully armed and equipped, by way of Baltimore, Pittsburg, Cincinnati, St. Louis, and Independence, Mo., and reached Oregon, Oct. 29, 1832. He was left alone after a few months, for his men deserted him. In 1833 returned to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and from there went to Boston to start another expedition. On Aug. 14, 1834, he was again in Oregon, and started to build Forts. Nathaniel Wyeth lived to see Oregon a territory of the U. S., although he died before its admission as a State in 1859. He died Aug. 31, 1856. (See National Cyclopaedia of American Biography, Vol. VI: Page 74.)

62. **Young, Brighman.** Born, Whitingham, Vermont, June 1, 1801. April 14, 1832 he began to preach the Mormon Religion, advancing rapidly in the church. Feb. 14, 1835, chosen one of the twelve apostles, becoming their president the next year. In 1838 he purchased land in Missouri. On April 7, 1847, Young, with 142 men, set out in search of a suitable place to settle. They entered Salt Lake Valley. Later returning with 2000 followers. Young encouraged agriculture, manufacturing, opening of roads, and construction of bridges in Utah. Died in Salt Lake City, August 29, 1877. His funeral celebrated with impressive ceremonies, in which more than 30,000 persons participated. (See Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography, Vol. 6: Page 645.)

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THE GOLD-RUSH PERIOD

In 1848 Marshall discovered gold in California, and by the spring of 1849 thousands from all over the world were hurrying to this newest and greatest of Eldorados. The American migration favored the old Oregon-California route, as it was shorter, cheaper, and took less time, normally, than did sailings via the Isthmus of Panama. The scenes of the Oregon emigration were repeated on a vast scale, with almost endless trains of "Forty-niners" departing from many posts along the Missouri, chiefly from Independence-Westport, Kansas City, Ft. Leavenworth, St. Joseph, Nebraska City, and Council Bluffs-Winter Quarters.

Most of these routes united near Ft. Kearny, the site of which had been selected by Andrew Sublette in 1847. This post, soon to become one of the most famous in the West, was founded in 1848 to protect the Platte routes. During the summer of 1849 it was commanded by our friend Captain (now Lt.-Col.) Bonneville.[1] Onward from Ft. Kearny the white-topped wagons (prairie schooners, or covered wagons) of the Forty-niners crawled like gigantic ants along both margins of the Platte, not finally uniting on one road until Ft. Laramie, founded by Robert Campbell in 1834 as Ft. William (for William Sublette), was taken over for the American Fur Company by Fitzpatrick in 1835 and renamed Ft. John (after John Sarpy), and then removed somewhat later (1846) to the present site, where adobe-walled Ft. Laramie (for Jacques Laramie, a French trader killed on this river by Indians about 1820) was erected. Here the fur-traders remained supreme until the fort was purchased for the United States Army in 1849.[2] In the region between the North and South Platte there were a number of alternative routes that varied in difficulty of river fords, steep descents, and water supply. All of these routes, however, were united south of the North Platte by the time Chimney Rock was attained. Therefore, the bulk of the gold-rush emigration passed by Scotts Bluff.

The position of Scotts Bluff blocking the route along the river margin forced the trail southward, away from the river for some thirty miles, and through the Scotts Bluffs by a narrow pass that went by several names: Scotts Bluff Pass, Roubidoux Pass (not to be confused with the pass by that name a few miles to the south), and finally Mitchell Pass. The exact route of this trail, in modern terms, would be skirting the city of Gering on the southwest corner, up the long slope (now badly dissected) to the spring at the base of Scotts Bluff, on by the National Monument headquarters building, and over Mitchell Pass. As a result of the movement through this locality, an enterprising Frenchman set up here -- a few rods away from the spring -- the first European post in the

immediate area.

The accounts left by travelers of this Frenchman agree only that he was a blacksmith, trader, and squawman. This Frenchman, Basil Roubidou (variations include Roubidoux, Rubedo, Robidoux, Rubidere, Rouberdeau, and even Thibbadoux), was evidently not a member of the great St. Louis family of fur traders, as he is always mentioned in menial positions. Our first account of Roubidou is in Parkman's mention (op. cit., p. 160) of a blacksmith by that name at Ft. Laramie in 1846. A number of forty-niners mention the establishment of Roubidou at Scotts Bluff as early as May of 1849. William Kelly (op. cit., pp. 112-113) states that "close under one of those fantastic cliffs we found a rustic log-hut, the country residence of a Mr. Rouberdeau, of St. Louis, a blacksmith by trade, who, foreseeing an active business from the overland emigration, settled himself in this sequestered nook . . . taking unto himself a Sioux spouse."

On June 10, 1849, Joseph Heckney wrote in his journal that near a spring of cold water, "there is a trading post . . . a man keeps it who has lived here for 15 (sic) years he has an Indian wife and 3 children he has a blacksmith shop and tin shop." This Roubidou had already counted 1,090 wagons past his place that spring.[3] John Brown, in his memoirs of 1849, clears up the matter of 15 years residence in this fashion: "By the spring at Scotts Bluff, there is a store and blacksmith's shop, kept by Rubedue, a trader who has resided among the Sioux Indians for 13 years. Grass is very good and water excellent."[4] Major Cross, in his journal of 1849, adds emphasis to description by remarking, "Here was a blacksmith's shop and trading-house, built in the true log-cabin style."[5]

One of the most detailed accounts is that of Stansbury (op. cit., p. 52). His account, for July 9, 1849, runs:

> "Three miles from the Chimney Rock, the road gradually leaves the river for the purpose of passing behind Scotts Bluff, a point where a spur from the main ridge comes so close to the river as to leave no room for the passage of teams. There was no water between these two points, a distance of more than twenty miles, and we were consequently obliged to go on until nine o'clock, when we encamped at the bluff, on a small run near a delicious spring . . . . There is a temporary blacksmith's shop here, established for the benefit of the emigrants, but especially for that of the owner, who lives in an Indian lodge, and had erected a log shanty by the roadside, in one end of which was the blacksmith's forge, and in the other a grog-shop and sort of grocery. The stock of this establishment consisted principally of such articles as the owner had purchased from the emigrants at a great sacrifice and sold to others at as great a profit. Among other things, an excellent double wagon was pointed out to me, which he had purchased for seventy-five cents. The blacksmith's shop was an equally profitable concern; as, when the smith was indisposed to work himself, he rented the used of shop and tools for the

> modest price of seventy-five cents an hour, and it was not until after waiting for several hours, that I could get the privilege of shoeing two of the horses, even at that price, the forge having been in constant use by the emigrants."

Dr. Tompkins, who journeyed past Scotts Bluff in 1850, commented in his diary: "The emigrant road passes to the left of Scott's Bluffs . . . At the west end of this valley lives a blacksmith by the name of Thibbadoux who has 3 squaws."[6]

James Bennett, another emigrant in 1850, helps clear up a problem in his Journal remarks. He states:

> "June, Saturday 22nd - Today at 9 o'clock we arrived at Scott's Bluffs. The road leaves the river at this point by a circuitous route for 30 miles. We met an Indian trader here who pointed out to us an excellent spring, 7 or 8 miles ahead. He also stated that there was a regularly established trading post 3 miles to our left, where we could see a herd of cattle grazing. Having reached the spring in the afternoon, we found here an encampment of near a 100 Sioux Indians. The village contained 13 lodges and a row of rudely constructed huts. Removed from these, perhaps 300 yards, were 2 Frenchmen with their Indian wife and children . . . We procured a good supply of wood and clear and cool water here and encamped 3 miles further in the bluffs."[3]

Bennett's reference to "a regularly established trading post 3 miles to our left" is undoubtedly the one projected in 1849 to which Stansbury (op. cit., p. 273) refers: "Robideau has a trading post and blacksmith's shop here (Scott's Bluff), but the post is to be removed to a creek south, and over the bluffs." That this was an American Fur Company post is evident from a Missouri newspaper story of August 1, 1849, "The American Fur Co., having sold Laramie, intend to erect a trading post of Scott's bluffs, some 40 miles below;"[8] and another news item, of February 10, 1851, "Pawnees recently dropped down on traders and Sioux at Scott's Bluffs and escaped with a large band of horses," (op. cit., p. 231). Our assumption is strengthened by a comment in Lowe's "Five Years A Dragon" (p. 70), who, in 1851, says, "Having crossed to the east side of Scott's Bluffs, about 50 miles east of Laramie, we turned south and camped near a trading post belonging to Major Dripps, who was or had been an Indian agent."

Apparently, the American Fur Company, after selling out Ft. Laramie to the government, obtained or took Roubidou's trading equity and set up a post in what is now known as Roubedeau Pass at the head of Cedar Valley. Vestiges are quite evident there, even at the present. The blacksmith, Roubidou, probably continued to carry on trade with the emigrants -- which would explain later references to the Scotts Bluff site as a trading post of Roubidou. Crawford, in 1851, does this very thing: "We reached the Bluffs at 9 o'clock at night; found water and wood; pitch pine and red cedar both grow here. Here we found a trading post belonging to Rubedo, a Frenchman."[9]

Dr. Thomas Flint, in 1853, has a more circumstantial account: "Came to a trading post and blacksmith shop run by a French Canadian living with Sioux wife or wives. The place is a little way below Scott's Bluff. His prices, $6 for shoeing an ox, $1 per pair (one foot) for shoes and and 4 cents apiece for nails.[10] As late as 1860 we have Burton mentioning Roubidou, "We passed a ranch called "Robidoux" Fort from the well-known Indian trader of that name; it is now occupied by a Canadian or a French Creole . . . with a Sioux squaw."[11]

The daily life of a gold-rush caravan was far more intense and hilarious than had ever been true of the preceding emigrations. Untold wealth awaited all in California -- so what mattered the daily toil with plodding oxen, the broken wheels and axles to be repaired, livestock to be protected from thievish Indians by weary night watches, the nightly chore of setting up the circular compound of echelon wagons, gathering the scanty fuel of driftwood of buffalo chips, or even the malignant cholera. Dull care was banished by the singing and playing of the countless refrains and parodies that sprang up overnight with the gold-rush of 'forty-nine.' The late forties were dominated by the Negro minstrels, and the works of Foster, Power, Christie, et al., were sung universally. "Oh! Susanna" was one of the favorites, with "California" substituted for "Alabama" as the place of destination. Equally favored were "Dearest Mae," by James Power, and the anonymous "Mary Blane." Dozens of other light pieces, such as "Crossing the Plains," "Seeing the Elephant," "Sweet Betsey from Pike," "The Happy Miner," and "I Get in a Weaving Way" helped enliven the evenings. So went the days and nights of the adventurous Forty-niners.[12]

The gold-rush to California had not yet abated when strikes of precious metals were made in Nevada and Colorado, then (1858-9) parts, respectively, of Kansas and Utah. These discoveries developed the slogans, "Ho! for Washoe," and "Pike's Peak, or bust." Soon after there came reports of gold in Montana, Idaho, and elsewhere in the Rocky Mountain region. The result was a ramification of the old Overland Trail, and a dissemination of prospectors over all of the West. These movements conditioned the next two great series of events affecting the Scotts Bluff area: the development of rapid trans-continental communication; and the Indian wars of 1862-77.

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[1]"The History of Ft. Kearny" in Pub. Neb. State Hist. Soc., Vol. 21, pp. 211-351.

[2]Hafen and Ghent, op. cit., pp. 112-114.

[3]Elizabeth Page: Wagons West (1930), p. 143.

[4]Memoirs of a Forty-niner, by his daughter, Mrs. Kate E. Blood (1907), p. 12.

[5]Major O. Cross: A report, in the form of a journal, House Document 1, 31st Congress, 2nd Session, (1850), p. 156.

[6]O. C. Coy: The Great Trek (1931) pp. 136-7.

[7]Edward Elberstadt: Overland Journey to California (1906), p. 20.

[8]Pub. Neb. State hist. Soc., Vol. 20, p. 208.

[9]Crawford: Journal of a Trip, in Ore. Hist. Quart., Vol. 25, p. 143.

[10]Diary of Dr. Thomas Flint, in Ann. Pub. Hist. Soc. S. Cal., 1923, p. 32.

[11]R. F. Burton: The City of the Saints (1862), p. 75.

[12]A. B. Hulbert's "Forty-niners" (1931) contains the most spirited account yet published of the life en route to the "diggings." An excellent contemporaneous account is that of A. Delano: Life on the Plains and Among the Diggings (1857), based on a trip across in 1849.

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