

THE GRANDE RONDE VALLEY AND BLUE MOUNTAINS:
IMPRESSIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF TRAVELERS AND EMIGRANTS,
THE OREGON TRAIL, 1812-1880



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Report submitted to

Wallowa-Whitman National Forest
La Grande Ranger District
La Grande, OR 97850

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Research in the narratives of nineteenth century travelers and emigrants through northeastern Oregon has involved the exploration of special library resources. This project has used the collections of the following institutions:

Oregon Historical Society, Portland, Oregon
Aubrey Watzek Library, Lewis and Clark College, Portland, Oregon
Department of Special Collections and Northwest Collection, Knight
Library, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon
Oregon State Library, Salem, Oregon
Multnomah County Library, Portland, Oregon
Lake Oswego Public Library, Lake Oswego, Oregon
Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, California
Washington State Library, Olympia, Washington
Northwest Collection, Sauzallo Library, University of Washington,
Seattle, Washington
Lilly Library, University of Indiana, Bloomington, Indiana
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New
Haven, Connecticut

Research is often carried out with elements of good fortune and friendship. Both were at work in this project. I would like to thank Wanda L. Cox for her assistance in typing and proofreading, Michael Teskey for his swift penmanship during our research visit to the Lilly Library, the labors of Nathan McKenzie Tyler in obtaining the diary of Samuel Dexter Francis at the Beinecke Library, and Margaret Shannon of the Library of Congress for her cheerful help in helping me track down every Oregon Trail narrative we could find on the shelves of the Western Americana section in the Jefferson Building.

This project was made possible by the interest of Deb Barrett, Larry Monical, and George Meade of the La Grande Ranger District. I thank them for their asking: "can you do this?" The response was "yes." The documents which follow are the "here it is."

Stephen Dow Beckham

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Elizabeth Wood, September 9, 1851

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INTRODUCTION

The following pages present a representative sample of impressions and experiences of travelers and emigrants who passed through northeastern Oregon in the years 1812-1880. The cast of characters was mixed. First to follow the well-established Indian trails in the region were fur seekers. Wandering members of the overland Astoria expedition were the first Euro-Americans to view the region. Robert Stuart, headed east across the continent in 1812, wrote a detailed account of his passage over the Blue Mountains and impressions of the Grande Ronde Valley. Other fur seekers followed. In the 1820s Peter Skene Ogden mounted five brigades to the Snake River watershed. His diaries chronicle travels through the region. In the 1830s the American fur competitors, Nathaniel Wyeth and Captain Benjamin L. E. Bonneville, followed these same traces, and, for a few days, camped together in the Grande Ronde Valley.

The missionaries came next. In 1834 Rev. Jason Lee, Cyrus Shepard, Daniel Lee, and others of the Methodist missions to the Indians of the Pacific Northwest crossed the Blue Mountains in the company of Wyeth's second overland expedition to Oregon. Two years later Marcus and Narcissa Whitman and Henry and Eliza Spalding accompanied another fur trapping party in its journey to Oregon. The travels of the first white women beyond the Rockies suggested that American expansion would likely follow. It soon did.

Starting as a trickle of single men crossing to Oregon in 1839 and 1840, the stream turned into a flood over the next six years. An estimated 900 emigrants crossed the Oregon Trail in 1843; more than 3,000 arrived in western Oregon in 1845. Dozens of these travelers viewed their transit of the continent as a landmark experience. Many, for the first time, took up pen or pencil and kept a daily record of their experiences. They wrote about basic concerns: wood, water, and grazing conditions. Some also wrote their impressions of nature, the Indians, and each other. Occasionally the travelers were accomplished writers. The military explorer, John C. Fremont, turned over his notes to his wife, Jessie, who crafted them in 1845 into a highly popular book printed by the thousands of copies by the Government Printing Office. Overton Johnson and William Winter's joint diary of 1843 was published in 1846; Joel Palmer's 1845 diary appeared as a book in 1847; and that of William J. Watson penned in 1849 appeared in 1851.

Some writers sent their notes back for installment publication in newspapers. Parts of Peter Hardeman Burnett's 1843 diary appeared in the New York Herald in 1844 and the remainder in George Wilkes' History of Oregon in 1845. George Gibbs' 1849 diary likewise was published in the newspapers. Unfortunately the section for northeastern Oregon was lost somewhere between the hands of the diarist and the eastern publisher; it has never been found.

The most comprehensive and useful source for further exploration of the experiences of travelers and emigrants in northeastern Oregon was

published in February, 1991. John W. Evans' Powerful Rocky: The Blue Mountains and the Oregon Trail, 1811-1883 is an ambitious examination of the literature and sites associated with nineteenth century Euro-American activity along the Oregon Trail. Evans' coverage reaches from the Burnt River region on the east to the Umatilla Valley on the west.

The special subjects identified in the Table of Contents draw upon diaries examined by Evans as well as others which did not drift into his net. The focus of this project was to lift up potential storylines and subjects for interpretive opportunities and to assist the staff of the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest to enhance its programs in recreation and interpretation, especially as related to the Oregon Trail. All materials are organized chronologically and, except in rare cases of east-bound diarists, are set in a east-to-west order. The Appendix to this report contains complete texts of primary sources from Mile 1625 (Ladd Hill) to Mile 1669 (Cayuse) in the Umatilla watershed. All materials are cited in the bibliography.

Responses to Nature (Grande Ronde Valley): Positive

Travelers who passed through the Grande Ronde Valley articulated a variety of positive responses. Some lifted up the aesthetic concepts of the "picturesque" and "sublime" aspects of nature. Immanuel Kant had explored these ideals in essays early in the nineteenth century. Painters working in the general tradition of Romanticism and in the Hudson River School of American art in the 1820s and the 1830s expressed these ideals. They emphasized the play of light and dark, sunshine and shadow, the majesty of nature, and the awesome qualities of the earth exhibited in forest glens, mountains, canyons, waterfalls, sunsets, and storms. These ideas, found in art, literature, and philosophy had entered popular thinking by the 1830s and the 1840s. They helped shape the perceptions of some who visited northeastern Oregon. Others merely expressed their own delight at the momentous change from the great sagebrush-steppe biotic province through which they had traveled since leaving the Sweetwater region near South Pass.

° John Kirk Townsend wrote on August 31, 1834:

Our route this morning, was over a country generally level and free from rocks; we crossed, however, one short, and very steep mountain range, thickly covered with tall and heavy pine trees, and came to a large and beautiful prairie, called the Grand ronde (Townsend 1978:161).

° Washington Irving wrote in 1836 about Captain Bonneville's visit to the Grande Ronde Valley in 1834. Irving based the account on notes and interviews with the fur seeker.

This is a beautiful and very fertile valley, about twenty miles long and five or six broad; a bright cold stream called the Fourche de Glace, or Ice River, runs through it. Its sheltered situation, embosomed in mountains, renders it good pasturing ground in the winter time; when the elk come down to it in great numbers, driven out of the mountains by the snow. The Indians then resort to it to hunt. They likewise come to it in the summer time to dig the camash root, of which it produces immense quantities. When this plant is in blossom, the whole valley is tinted by its blue flowers, and looks like the ocean when overcast by a cloud (Irving 1868:330-331).

° Narcissa Whitman wrote on August 28, 1836:

[August] 28th We decend a very steep hill in coming into Grand Round at the foot of which is a beautiful cluster of pine trees, pitch and spruce, but no white pines like that I have been accustomed to see at home. Grand Round is indeed a beautiful place. It is a circular plain, surrounded with lofty mountains & has a beautiful stream coursing through it, skirted with timber quite large timber. The scenery while passing through it in some places is delightful & the soil rich, in other places we find the

Positive Responses: Grande Ronde Valley

white sand & sage as usual, so peculiar to this country. We nooned upon the Grand Round River (Drury 1963[1]:90).

- ° Eliza Spalding wrote on August 30, 1836:

August 30, 1836 Passed through the G[rand] Round to day -- this is a large & very beautiful plain, -derived its name from its appearance, it is circular, surrounded by sloping mountains covered with Pines & Spruce - a beautiful river well timbered passes through it - the soil has the appearance of fertility & to the eye of the traveler who for many weeks has seen nothing by rugged & barren deserts, it presents a very grand appearance (Drury 1963[1]:196).

- ° Mary Richardson Walker wrote on August 26, 1838:

Grand Round is a Grand Round (Drury 1963[2]:115).

- ° Thomas Jefferson Farnham noted on September 20, 1839:

From high swells, over which ran the trail, we saw an extensive valley, deeply sunken among the lofty mountains in the north-east. It appeared to be thickly coated with grass, some portions dry, others green. The meadow lark made its appearance to-day. Toward night, we came again into the valley which we had entered at mid-day, and encamped under a majestic yellow pine. Freezing breezes swept down from the woody mountain around us, and made our fire, blazing high under the dark groaning boughs, extremely agreeable. Travelled twenty-five miles (Farnham 1843[2]:119-120).

- ° Peter Hardeman Burnett wrote on October 1, 1843:

October 1st. We this day came to the "Grand Round," the name of an immense valley, one hundred miles in circumference, which will vie in fertility with the valley of the Missouri, or indeed, with any spot in the world. Trees of all kinds are sprinkled throughout its surface; shrubs, flowers, brooks and singing birds, meadow lark, and other winged game, diversify it, with many other of the attractions of more lavish regions, and its general temperature is guaranteed by the evidence of its prodigal vegetation. The Grand Round is nearly circular in its form and lies embosomed in the Blue Mountains, which here, like their predecessors before described, are covered from bottom to top with lofty pines in studded forests. The bottom of this magic circle is rich, level prairie land, trelliced with crystal springs issuing from its surrounding mountain border, which, with but slight assistance from the art of man, could easily be made to irrigate the whole surface of the valley (Wilkes 145).

- ° Peter Hardeman Burnett wrote about the Grande Ronde Valley in October, 1843, as he penned his recollections:

Positive Responses: Grande Ronde Valley

On October 1st we came into and through Grande Ronde, one of the most beautiful valleys in the world, embosomed among the Blue Mountains, which are covered with magnificent pines. It was estimated to be about a hundred miles in circumference. It was generally rich prairie, covered with luxuriant grass, and having numerous beautiful streams passing through it, most of which rise from springs at the foot of the mountains bordering the valley (Barnett 1880:125).

- ° James W. Nesmith wrote on September 29, 1843:

Friday, September 29. Trailed sixteen miles and encamped in Grande Ronde, a beautiful bottom prairie about six miles across and surrounded by mountains capped with snow (Nesmith 1906:353).

- ° John C. Fremont wrote on October 17, 1843:

October 17. About two in the afternoon we reached a high point of the dividing ridge, from which we obtained a good view of the Grand Rond--a beautiful level basin, or mountain valley, covered with good grass, on a rich soil, abundantly watered, and surrounded by high and well-timbered mountains; and its name descriptive of its form--the great circle. It is a place--one of the few we have seen in our journey so far--where a farmer would delight to establish himself, if he were content to live in the seclusion which it imposes. It is about 20 miles in diameter; and may, in time, form a superb county (Fremont 1970:545).

- ° John E. Howell wrote on September 12, 1845:

12, Friday. Trav. across the Grand Round a beautiful and rich valley of land probably containing one thousand square miles surrounded by the Blue Mountains which appear to be rich grass clover and is abundant here The mountain scenery is grand Camp at the foot of the Mt. on a branch (Howell 1907:150).

- ° Joel Palmer wrote on September 11, 1845:

September 11. Grand Round is a valley, whose average width does not exceed twenty miles, and is about thirty miles in length; a stream of water of some twenty yards in width passes through this valley, receiving considerable addition to its volume from the many rivulets that pour down their waters from the mountains, by which this valley is enclosed. The bottoms are of rich friable earth, and afford grass of various kinds, among others that of red clover (Palmer 1847:53).

- ° William Findley wrote on October 5, 1845, about the Grande Ronde Valley:

This is one of the most beautiful valleys we've seen on the trip. Mr. Hastings in his description doesn't more than give appearance

Positive Responses: Grande Ronde Valley

in point of quality, though I think the valley is not quite so large from East to East as he describes but from North to south is about right. [He wrote describes.] (Findley 1845:10).

- ° Absalom B. Harden wrote on August 29, 1847, about the Grande Ronde Valley:

then we came to the grand round valley at the foot of this hill hear is a beautiful valley suerrounded with mountains on Every side these changes of mountains is very high this grand round valley is as beautiful a countery as to the site and the Land but the timber is scarce and what there is in pine and white fur tho this valley is clothed with grass in abundence and good water. . . . this grand round valley is as leavel as a house flor (Harden 1847).

- ° Honore-Timothee Lempfrit wrote on September 6, 1848, about the Grande Ronde Valley:

At last we arrived in the middle of this famous plateau called "Le Grand Rond." It is really one of the loveliest places in the whole world. Just imagine an enormous arena measuring about fifteen miles wide by twenty-five miles long, entirely surrounded by the most beautiful wooded mountains and watered by two lovely rivers. The extremely fertile soil supports a luxuriant vegetation and to the south there are some lovely rolling hills that seem to beg to be put under cultivation, being fatigued by producing nothing but trees whose branches fall to the ground from old age (Lempfrit 1984:129).

- ° William J. Watson wrote on August 17, 1849:

. . . we came to the Grand Rond, which is one of the few places in which the white man who is fond of a retired life could make his home. It has a splendid soil, and various small creeks running through it thickly set with bushes of various kinds, and surrounded by high and picturesque mountains, covered with lofty pine trees, and about fifteen miles in diameter. It has a very rich soil covered with grass (Watson 1851:39).

- ° Osborne Cross wrote on September 8, 1849:

We travelled until about 2 o'clock, p.m. over an uneven country, then descended a mountain for a mile and a half, which brought us into the Grand Ronde, a beautiful valley, or more properly a basin, for it is entirely surrounded by the Blue mountains on the north and northwest, and spurs of mountains to the east, one of which we had travelled over during the day. At the base of the mountain we crossed a small brook, which came from the deep gorge to our left, and, after running along at the base of one we had just ascended, passes through the Grand Ronde valley, and falls into the Grand Ronde river, which is a delightful cold stream, that comes immediately from among the mountains. We continued our march

Positive Responses: Grande Ronde Valley

through the valley until we reached a small stream near the head of the valley, where the road ascends. Here we stopped for the day, intending to remain a day or two, before attempting to cross the Blue mountains.

This valley is a fine, dark soil, very level; and as water issues from the base of the mountains which completely surround it, it may be easily irrigated, and is, for a settlement, the prettiest place I have passed on the route. The range among the hills and in the valley is very fine for grazing, while it is well protected by the mountains against the northern winds in winter. The thick wood would give shelter to cattle and all other stock, while the valley and mountains would supply them abundantly with grass to subsist on during the winter. The only objection, therefore, which can be made to this section of country is the great difficulty of getting produce to the Columbia river; but this could be easily remedied, and the day is not far distant, no doubt, when a railroad will overcome these objections, as the distance between here and the Dalles is but 205 miles, as the road now runs, passing through the Eumatilla valley, which would avoid the high hills, and present not the least obstruction, while there is timber enough to be found here and at the Dalles to build a railroad to the Atlantic ocean (Cross 1850:95-96).

- ° Samuel James wrote on August 6, 1850, about the Grande Ronde Valley:

The best of land, grass and water, An enchanting place (James 1850).

- ° David Maynard wrote on September 2, 1850, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

in the Ronde found the best grass we have seen since we left home. Here we began climbing the Blue Mountains . . . (Maynard 1906:60).

- ° John Johnson wrote on July 30, 1851, about the Grande Ronde Valley:

It appeared to be the most beautiful valley I had ever looked upon. The hills dressed in green, with springs of water running from the sides, with groves of willows and cotton wood, and thousands of ponies grazing, and Indians driving in all directions (Johnson 1851:18).

- ° Lucia Loraine Williams noted on August 9, 1851:

It is called the Grand Rond. It resembled an enchanted valley (Williams 1984:144).

- ° Harriet Talcott Buckingham noted on September 8, 1851:

Came down the mountain into Grand Ronde vall[e]y - a perfect gem - an oasis in a desert (Buckingham 1984:49-50).

Positive Responses: Grande Ronde Valley

- ° Elizabeth Wood noted on September 8, 1851, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

This valley is one of Nature's beauty spots. . . . This valley is very fertile, its area is about 10,000 acres, fenced in with very high mountains, covered with fine trees. Its fertile soil produces several kinds of luxuriant grass -- blue grass, timothy, clover, red top, and 'broom corn' grass, that looks like oats, only the head is not heavy enough (Wood 1984:176-177).

- ° E. W. Conyers wrote on August 28, 1852, at the edge of the Grande Ronde Valley:

This brought us to the summit of the mountain, overlooking the Grand Ronde Valley, one of the prettiest and most welcome sights seen on the whole route (Conyers 1906:492).

- ° John Tully Kerns wrote on September 1, 1852, about the Grande Ronde Valley:

This is the best and most beautiful place we have seen on the whole road or, in fact, in our lives, and is said to be a fair specimen of western Oregon. If so, our expectations will be more than filled. This is a valley nearly round in shape and has Powder river and Grand Ronde rivers, delightful waters uniting and coursing north through its center. Besides several spring branches which trinkle down the lofty mountain sides and make their way to the river, through it. It is about twenty-five miles in diameter and would give homes to 1,500 or 2,000 settlers. There are high mountains on all sides, most of them covered with forests of pine and fir timber. Game abound everywhere around (Kerns 1852:181-182).

- ° Samuel Dexter Francis wrote on September 7, 1852:

Grand Rond is a butiful place, thare is the handsomest land I ever saw (Francis 1852:105).

- ° Lydia Rudd wrote on September 10, 1852:

this is a very large valley probably 100,000 acres of rich land and is dead level with a number of branches runing through it and a plenty of good springs fine grass of several kinds with a mixture of the red clover It is eight miles across from east to west and (Rudd 1852)

- ° John Newton Lewis wrote on September 25, 1852, about the Grande Ronde Valley:

. . . we found it to be one of the best valeys in the world it is well watterd and cleare of gravel and just as ritch soil as the west can scare up this valey is in a cove in the Mountain and is somewhat of a round shape this is the rason of its name being Land

Positive Responses: Grande Ronde Valley

Round but it is not mis named for it is one of the Grandest valey's in the world there is no timber in the valey but the Mountains is covered with good timber it is 8 m. across the valey the way we rode goes . . . (Lewis 1852:29).

° Dr. Thomas White, an emigrant of 1852, wrote on April 19, 1853:

. . . the Grand Round is a beautiful vally, shut in by mountains, on all sides, except a gap at the west, for the ingress & another at the east for the egress of the Grand round River, which runs nearly through the middle of it, carr[y]ing with it a belt of cottonwood timber. this vally lys at the east base of the Blue mountains, & contains not less than 6 Townships of the very best Land watered in all directions by springs, & spring brooks, & the grand round River, with timber all around the vally on the mountains, & in great abundance in the Blue mountains, out of which comes the Grand Round River, a stream larger than the Pegion, with fine oppertunities for milling (White 1964:18).

° Henry Allyn wrote on August 14, 1853, about the Grande Ronde Valley:

The valley here is from 10 to 15 miles wide and very fertile, surrounded by high mountains, the sides, coves and hollows covered with towering pines (Allyn 1924:428).

° Maria A. Parsons Belshaw wrote on September 1, 1853:

While on the hill we had a view of Grand Round Valley. A beautiful high mountain, tall pine trees, a beautiful location, level valley clothed with grass and the river running through it (Belshaw 1932:241-242).

° Basil Longworth wrote on September 2, 1853, about the Grande Ronde Valley:

. . . passed up a long hill and then down a long and stony hill of a mile and a half in length, when we found ourselves in a beautiful place called Grande Ronde Valley (Longworth 1959:54).

° Basil Longworth wrote on September 3, 1853, about the Grande Ronde Valley:

This valley is, I suppose, about twelve miles wide and twenty miles long--has a rich soil, is surrounded by mountains which are covered with timber, and is separated by Grande Ronde River which passes through it (Longworth 1959:54).

° George N. Taylor wrote on September 9, 1853, about the Grande Ronde Valley:

On the mountain Overlooking the grand ronde is one of the finest Scenes I ever beheld In my Life The Grand rond Valley is About

Positive Responses: Grande Ronde Valley

Sixteen mls wide by About thirty Long Surounded by high Mn on All Sides the Valley is Covered with fine grass running on this grass are Large droves of the finest Looking horse Owned by the Kiuse and Nesperse Indians (Taylor 1853:24)

- ° Samuel Handsaker wrote on September 12, 1853, about the Grande Ronde Valley:

A drive of eight miles this morning over bad roads brought us into the Grande Ronde valley. It is perhaps the richest tract of land that the emigrant has seen since leaving the Missouri river and he rejoices at seeing soil once more, which if property cultivated, would yield good returned for his labor [Handsaker wrote "returned.'](Handsaker 1965:29-30).

- ° Nancy C. Glenn wrote from the Grande Ronde Valley on October 8, 1862:

This is one of the most beautiful valleys in the world surrounded by high mountains William thinks it the most beautiful valley he ever saw and a plenty of the nicest timber and the best springs in the world almost I wish you were all here and had provision enough to last until you could raise some But nearly all the emigrants that has went down into Oregon this year intend coming back as soon as they can get back in the spring and I expect the land will then all be claimed up there is a real good valley on powder river we thought some of stopping there but concluded it would be to cold there this winter there is also a good valley on the Umatilla river (Glenn 1989:24)

- ° Harriet A. Loughary wrote on August 11, 1864:

Aug 11 At noon we reach the top of the hill over Grand Ronde Valley. As we approach it we view a complete panorama of the beauty and grandeur of natures handiwork. This is a large and fertile valley nestled down at the eastern base of the Blue Mountains. Water from its icy beds in the surrounding mountains comes rippling down into the valley in every direction giving life, beauty and perpetual greenness. Beautiful grass six feet high is being cut and vegetables and small fruits in great abundance. The little town of Lagrande with 200 inhabitants is located in the valley. We leave this place after dinner, climbing a steep hill a mile in length, take the old emmigrant road to Grand Ronde river and camp for the night (Loughary 1989:156).

- ° Elizabeth Lee Porter wrote on September 23-24, 1864:

Friday--23. Hitched up this morning and come about 14 miles and camped on the Grand Ronde Valley. This is a pretty looking valley (Porter 1990:31).

Responses to Nature (Blue Mountains): Positive

Mountainous regions were the antipathy to the pastoral ideal celebrated in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Dark, forested, foreboding, and mysterious, they suggested existential threats as well as potentials of awesome grandeur. A number of travelers who passed through the Blue Mountains responded favorably to the setting. For all travelers, the Blues were the most significant chain of mountains encountered since departing from the frontier settlements of Missouri 1,636 miles to the east. Many found sylvan glades, the tallest and most handsome conifers ever encountered, and sufficient pasturage for their livestock to quell their antipathies about the challenges of travel. Some travelers became almost poetic in their efforts to describe the vistas they found in crossing the Blues.

- ° Robert Stuart, an eastward-bound fur trapper from Astoria, approached the Blue Mountains from the west on McKay Creek. He wrote about his party's transit of the mountains on August 4, 1812:

Tuesday, [August] 4th Not long after daylight we continued down the Creek till 9 A.M., when finding a deep hole with some salmon in it, we halted 4 hours, and speared seven. Proceeded on again at 1 P.M., thro' a most enchanting tract (for a few miles) where the gloomy heavy timbered mountains subside into beautiful hills, chequered with delightful pasture grounds, which, when combined with the numerous rivelets murmuring over their gravelly serpentine beds towards the glade below, afford a scene truly romantic, and such as is seldom to be met with in these regions of solitude and gloom (Stuart 1953:70).

- ° John Ball wrote about sighting Mount Hood from atop the Blue Mountains on October 14, 1832:

Here I noticed in the western horizon something stationary, although it looked like a cloud in the bright sky. It proved (I afterwards found) the grand and snowy Mount Hood. I called the attention of the men to it. This we hailed as a discovery, and the grandest sight we had yet seen (Ball 1902:96-97).

- ° John Kirk Townsend wrote on August 31, 1834, about the Blue Mountains:

[August] 31st. . . . About half an hour's brisk trotting brought us to the foot of a steep and high mountain, called the Blue. This is said to be the most extensive chain west of the dividing ridge, and, with one exception perhaps the most difficult of passage. The whole mountain is densely covered with tall pine trees, with an undergrowth of service bushes and other shrubs, and the path is strewn, to a very inconvenient degree, with volcanic rocks. In some of the ravines we find small springs of water; they are, however, rather rare, and the grass has been lately consumed, and many of the trees blasted by the ravaging fires of the Indians.

Positive Responses: Blue Mountains

These fires are yet smouldering, and the smoke from them effectually prevents our viewing the surrounding country, and completely obscures the beams of the sun. We travelled this evening until after dark, and encamped on a small stream in a gorge, where we found a plot of grass that had escaped the burning (Townsend 1978:163).

° Narcissa Whitman wrote on August 29, 1836:

Before noon we began to descend one of the most terrible mountains for steepness & length I have yet seen. It was like winding stairs in its descent & in some places almost perpendicular. We were a long time descending it. The horses appeared to dread the hill as much as we did. They would turn & wind in a zigzag manner all the way down. The men usually walked but I could not get permission to, neither did I desire it much. We had no sooner gained the foot of the mountain when another more steep & dreadful was before us. We did not mount this until we had taken some refreshment & rest. (Mount Pleasant in Prattsburg would not compare with these Mount Terribles.) Our ride this afternoon exceeded everything we have had yet & what rendered it the more aggravating the path all the way was very stony resembling a newly McAdamized road. Our horses feet were very tender, all unshod, so that we could not make that progress we wished.

The mountains in many places was covered with this black broken basalt. We were late in making camp tonight. After ascending the mountain immediately after dinner, we kept upon the main divide until sunset, looking in vain for water and a camping place. While upon this elevation, we had a view of the valley of the Columbia river. It was beautiful. Just as we gained the highest elevation & began to descend, the sun was dipping his disk behind the western horizon. Beyond the valley we could see two distant mountains, Mount Hood and Mount St Helens. These lofty peaks were of a conical form & separate from each other by a considerable distance. Behind the former the Sun was hiding part of his rays which gave us a more distinct view of this gigantic cone. The beauty of this extensive valley contrasted well with the rolling mountains behind us & at this hour of twilight was enchanting & quite diverted my mind from the fatigue under which I was labouring (Drury 1963[1]:90-93).

° Sarah White Smith wrote on August 29, 1838, about the Blue Mountains:

This afternoon we travelled the Blue Mountains covered with beautiful pines & spruce trees, 20 miles. Encamped on the summit of the mountains where we found beautiful grass for our animals. (Drury 1966[3]:108).

° Thomas Jefferson Farnham wrote on September 21, 1839, about the Blue Mountains:

In the forenoon, the trail ran over a series of mountains swelling one above another in long and gentle ascents, covered with noble forests of yellow pine, fir, and hemlock. Among these were frequent glades or rich pasture land; grass green, and numerous brooks of pure water leaping from the cliffs, or murmuring among the shrubbery. The snow-ball, the wax plant, the yellow and black currant--a species of whortleberry--the service berry--choke cherry--the elder--the shrub maple--and all the beautiful flowers that gem a mountain landscape during its short summer, clothed the ground. At twelve o'clock, we entered a deep ravine, at the bottom of which ran a brook of sweet clear water; we dined on its bank. A dish of rich cocoa, mush, and sugar, and dried buffalo tongue, on the fresh grass, by a cool rivulet on the wild mountains of Oregon! Nature stretched her bare and mighty arms around us! The mountains hid the lower sky, and walled out the lower world! We looked upon the beautiful heights of the Blue Mountains, and ate among its spring blossoms, its singing pines, and holy battlements, ten thousand feet above the sea (Farnham 1843[2]:120-121).

- Medorem Crawford described conditions in crossing the Blue Mountains on Septmeber 12, 1842:

Commenced raising a Mountain by degrees. Came to trees, at first quite thin & without underbrush having fine grass. But as we arose came to a densly timbered country, mostly pine & fir. The most beautiful tall straight trees (Crawford 1897: 19-20).

- Joel Palmer, crossing the Blue Mountains on September 14, 1845, wrote:

The scenery is grand and beautiful, and cannot be surpassed. . . .

It may be strictly termed a timber country, although many small prairies are dotted over its surface (Palmer 1847:55-56).

- Joel Palmer, atop the Blue Mountains on September 15, 1845, wrote:

It is mostly a timbered country through which we passed; the scenery is delightful, resembling in grandeur that presented on yesterday's travel. We had a fine view of the Cascade Mountains to the west. Mount Hood, the loftiest of these, was plain to the view. It was some one hundred and fifty miles distant, and being covered with snow, appeared as a white cloud rising above those surrounding it. To the north of Mount Hood, and north of the Columbia, is seen Mount Saint Helen (Palmer 1847:56).

- John E. Howell wrote on September 13, 1845, in the Blue Mountains:

Trav. over mountains some prairie and generally open along the road but the greater portion covered with the majestic pine and that densely, beautiful mountain scenery. Camp on Grand Round River in

Positive Responses: Blue Mountains

a dense forest the first camp of the kind on the whole route (Howell 1907:150-151).

- ° John E. Howell wrote a summary statement about the Blue Mountains on September 16, 1845:

The Blue Mts are a beautiful range of Mts. They are well timbered and afford good grazing. Some places in them are covered with perpetual snow (Howell 1907:151).

- ° Honore-Timothee Lempfrit wrote on September 8, 1848, about his joy in entering the Blue Mountains on horseback:

8th September As we had to be on our way early that morning I bade farewell to the good Indians after the festival. At first light I was away on my horse so as to be able to explore this attractive country. The further I went the more enchanted I was with what I discovered. Oh! How many castles in Spain did I build while riding past these lovely hills covered with magnificent fir-trees. In my imagination I was already established amongst these good Indians as their priest! Soon, however, the trail became very arduous (Lempfrit 1984:137).

- ° John Tully Kerns wrote on September 4, 1852, in the Blue Mountains:

We traveled seventeen miles through a mountainous, stony and heavy timbered country. The timber consists in pine, fir, cedar, etc., and from the tops of these high peaks adds much to the grandeur of the scenery, being in such dense forests here and there (Kerns 1917:182-183).

- ° Abigail Scott described the view from the summit of the Blue Mountains on September 6, 1852:

While on the summit of the last mountain we got the first view of the Cascade mountains west of us, while mount Hood reared its snow crowned summit in awful grandeur high above the other mountains and appearing as a stationary white cloud;; (Scott 1986:122-124).

- ° Amelia Stewart Knight wrote on August 18, 1853, upon entering the Blue Mountains:

Commenced the ascent of the Blue Mountains it is a lovely morning, and all hands seem to be delighted with the prospect, of being so near the timber again, after weary months of travel, on the dry dusty sage plains, with nothing to relieve the eye; just now the men are holloing, to hear their echo ring through the woods. -- Evening travel 10 miles to day up and down steep hills, and have just camped on the bank of Grand round river, in a dense forest of pine Timber, a most beautiful country (Knight 1986:66).

- ° John or David Dinwiddie wrote on August 30, 1853, in the Blue

Mountains:

After coming about eight or nine miles ascended a very steep ascent, we are now upon the main ridge of the blue mountains, Altitude 5400 feet, I presume these mountains take their name from their dark blue appearance being densely timbered with pine timber, which being ever green gives the forest a sombre appearance, besides the limbs of the trees are all draped with long festoons of dark coloured moss or mistletoe (Dinwiddie 1928:12).

Responses to Nature (Grande Ronde Valley/Blue Mountains): Familiar

Some travelers, particularly those reared in the Eastern Woodlands of North America, found scenes reminiscent of former living experiences when passing through the Grande Ronde Valley and the Blue Mountains. No other places during their journey were quite so reminiscent of "home." Not only did the well-watered valley seem an oasis, the forested slopes of the nearby mountains and the brooks and rivulets running across the countryside contrasted dramatically with the dust and monotony of the sagebrush-steppe traversed by the emigrants from South Pass (Mile 864) to the head of Ladd Canyon (Mile 1625). A number compared scenes they encountered in this area with places of past experience.

° Narcissa Whitman wrote on August 28, 1836:

[August] 28th . . . After dinner we left the plains & ascended the Blue Mountains. There a new & pleasing scene presented itself, mountains covered with timber through which we rode all the afternoon, a very agreeable change. The scenery reminded me of the hills in my native county Steuben.

[August] 29th Had a continuation of the same scenery as yesterday afternoon. Rode over many logs, an obstruction that we had not found in our way since we left the states. Here I frequently met old acquaintances, in the trees & flowers & was not a little delighted. Indeed I do not know as I was ever so much affected with any scenery in my life. The singing of the birds, the echo of my fellow travelers, as they were scattered through the woods, all had a strong resemblance to bygone days (Drury 1963[1]:90).

° James W. Nesmith wrote on October 1, 1843:

Sunday, October 1. Started over the mountains. Trailed twelve miles and encamped on a small dry creek in a deep ravine. To-day E. Otey and myself went hunting. Had a beautiful prospect of the Grande Ronde from the top of the mountains. Found the mountains covered with evergreen trees which remind me of the scenes of my childhood. They consist of pine, spruce, hemlock, fir, and tamarack or juniper (Nesmith 1906:353-354).

° Henry Allyn wrote on August 14, 1853, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

Most of the ox teams lay by at the west side of the valley to cross the Blue Mountains, a 10-mile drive to the Grand Ronde River in the mountains, and as we had a 20-mile drive to make without water the next day, we drove till after sundown to reach the river. Found the best of grass and encamped in a pine grove, it being the first time that we have camped in the timber for 1,500 miles. Though some ox teams started ahead of us at noon, we passed them and encamped about 3 miles beyond. Traveled 23 miles (Allyn 1924:428).

- ° Sarah Sutton wrote on August 14-15, 1854, on approaching the Grande Ronde Valley:

[August 14] 3 more of Mr Tiptons cattle died last night and this morn we came about noon 8 miles and stopt at a cold spring saw some handsomer situations for farms than I saw in Ill. the land very rich and the side of the mountains coverd with pine and fur and beautiful place to build by scatering fur trees and springs. we have stopt for the night within 3 miles of G round on a good spring, grass good fur timber very pretty near us the hills low, but we beleive it too cold to live here as there is now frost every night. . . .

Entering the Grande Ronde Valley, she wrote on August 15, 1854:

it resembles our large prairies in Illinois with low mountains all around it covered with pine timber. the land rich and dry with a great many cold springs and the land is flat clear up to the mountains we drove for 8 miles across the edge of it and stopt and [diary stopped; Sutton died in Tygh Valley to the west] (Sutton 1988:76-77).

- ° Maria Parsons Belshaw wrote on September 4, 1853, on her third day in the Blue Mountains:

Road much better today, timber not so thick, it looks like the thick woods in Michigan, Road more level, not so crooked. Struck Umatilla Hill, it is 3 miles from the top to the bottom then we reached Umatilla Valley. It looks very pleasant . . . (Belshaw 1932:242).

Responses to Nature (G. R. Valley/Blue Mountains): Negative

Some Americans carried considerable antipathy toward nature. The Bible spoke of the wilderness as the abode of the devil; it was the place where Jesus was tested. The American West and certainly the Grande Ronde Valley and Blue Mountains were the dwelling places of Indians. Two and a half centuries of unfortunate relationships between Euro-Americans and Indians had clouded perceptions and suggested that "wild men and women" lived in "wild places." While some travelers had embraced the aesthetic ideals of Romanticism and redemptive values of nature, others perceived wild lands negatively. Adjectives such as dark, gloomy, and dismal appeared in their vocabularies and gave character to scary or disquieting places.

- ° Robert Stuart, an eastward bound fur trapper from Astoria, wrote on August 7, 1812, about the hot springs and Hot Lake in the Grande Ronde Valley:

Friday 7th It was 6 A.M. before our horses were collected and loaded; our route lay along the mountains, on the south side of the big Flat, for 11 miles; then winding to the east for 9 more, came to a gap, out of which issued a small branch [Ladd Creek], where we encamped for the night. --about 7 miles from this place, to the westward and close to the hills, is a sulphur lake, 300 yards in circumference, fed by a spring in the south east corner, which appeared nearly 10 feet square and as greatly agitated as if boiling--at a short distance, the vapour was excessively noisome, and for half a mile round the olfactory nerves were sensibly affected thereby-- (Stuart 1953:71).

- ° Peter Hardeman Burnett wrote on October 1, 1843, about the alarm some emigrants had over volcanic potentials in the Grande Ronde Valley:

In this region also may be found one of the most wonderful creations of nature, existent in the world. This is a pond, or well, of boiling salt water, hot enough for cooking purposes, and bottomless in its depths. The steam arising from it may be seen at the distance of several miles, and resembles the vapor arising from a salt furnace. It occasioned no small degree of conjecture among the various savants and philosophers of our party, and not a few were the opinions expressed as to its cause. McFarley [John McHaley], however, gave the most satisfactory account of any, to the inquirers. He represented the meridian of Grand Round to be exactly opposite to Mount Vesuvius, on the other side of the globe; that the tremendous volcano "had been burning along afore Christ, and it stood to reason, as it eat deeper and deeper into the bowels of the earth, it must eventually come out on the other side." He believed this spring to be an indication of its approach to the western surface, and that "the superincumbent weight of water upon the spot was all that kept it for a time from bursting to a vent." He then added his deliberate opinion, that ere long, the area of

Grand Round would be the scene of a tremendous eruption and the circle of mountains which hemmed it in, would be the rim of its crater.

This notion created no small alarm among some of our folks, and a very extensive opinion prevailed that it was better to move on as soon as possible, and give Vesuvius a chance (Wilkes 1845).

- ° James Clyman wrote on September 27, 1844, as he approached the Grande Ronde Valley and encountered a fire sweeping across the region:

[September] 27th As we caught our horses for our afternoons travel Some Indian as is their habit when they discover Strangers in their country set fire to the grass about a half mile ahiad of us our rout being N. & a strong south wind blowing the fire kept ahead of us through the hills about 6 or 8 miles and when we overtook the fire we had some difficulty in passing it but all got through nearly suffocated with smoke & dust & entered the grand Round vally the whole mountains which surround this vally completely enveloped in fire and Smoke (Clyman 1984:119-121).

- ° James Clyman wrote on September 29, 1844, while in the Blue Mountains:

the rocks all shew the effects of internal fires Left our nooning & proceeded on N. Westward Pased some remarkable wild & lonesome groves of pine and firr that had a dark appeearanc & the more so on account of the thick smoke that enveloped the mountain in such clouds as to nearly hide the sun at midday (Clyman 1984:123).

- ° Henry Allyn wrote on August 15, 1853, the second day in the Blue Mountains:

Elizabeth and father still quite unwell. We climb a mountain about 3 miles to the summit and the balance of the day we have it rough and tumble. We noon on the mountain and take our mules down into a doleful cavern and found a little grass and water, the pines growing as though they intend to tower above those on the mountains. So by locking and unlocking each wagon about fifty times and tumbling and sideling on till dark we found water, but no grass, except very scattering among the thick pine (Allyn 1024:428).

Travel: Descent of Ladd Canyon

Although emigrants had experienced weeks of challenges and conditions imposed by terrain, the descent of Ladd Canyon to the floor of the Grande Ronde Valley proved a momentous challenge. Dozens of diarists wrote about the event and a number proclaimed that the route from mile 1625 to 1629 was the "longest" hill thus far encountered. Braking the wagons, coping with stones in the trace, and zigzagging their way down the canyon proved a test. The great reward came in the delightful camping places in the valley which spread out before them.

° Narcissa Whitman wrote on August 28, 1836:

[August] 28th . . . We decend a very steep hill in coming into Grand Round at the foot of which is a beautiful cluster of pine trees, pitch and spruce, but no white pines like that I have been accustomed to see at home (Drury 1963[1]:90).

° Mary Richardson Walker wrote on August 25-27, 1838:

August 25th Just as we approached Grand Round, we descended a longer hill than I ever walked down before (Drury 1963[2]:115).

° Thomas Jefferson Farnham noted on September 20, 1839:

About twelve o'clock, came to a very steep descent, a mile in length. The upper part of it was so precipitous that the animals with packs were obliged to make a zigzag track of a mile, to descend the half that distance; the lower part was less precipitous, but covered with loose volcanic rocks. Among these the horses plunged and bruised themselves badly; but fortunately none were seriously injured (Farnham 1843[2]:119-120).

° Medorem Crawford wrote on September 10, 1842:

Sept. 10. Commenced rising gradually at 10 oclock continued to rise until 12 when we came to a tremendous hill to descend. The mountains on our left were close by they rose gradually and were covered with Pine Trees. Our descent lasted for near an hour, about midway of the hill was a little water course crossing our path & afforded us a resting place around this place were several Pine Trees. I noticed the White Pine and the Spruce Pine. Some were verry tall & slim. From this little grove down the hill was more difficult all were obliged to dismount for safety. It was verry sidling and uncomfortable rocky . . . (Crawford 1897:19).

° Peter Hardeman Burnett wrote on October 1, 1843:

I should have mentioned before, that on entering the "Grand Round," we had to descend an abrupt declivity of three or four hundred feet, covered with loose rocks, as large, and, in some cases larger, than a man's head. This was by far the worst hill we had

Travel: Descent of Ladd Canyon

yet descended, but by locking both hind wheels, and with teams to well trained as ours, we all descended in about three hours without hurt or injury to a single soul, and no damage was done to our truck beyond a slight crush of one side of a wagon body (Wilkes 1845).

- ° William T. Newby wrote on October 2, 1843:

(October 2) We struck the devide in a fue miles. The hill in going down to the ground is very bad, the worst hill I ever saw wageons go down (Newby 1939:236).

- ° James W. Nesmith wrote on September 29, 1843:

Friday, September 29. Had some difficulty in entering the Ronde in consequence of the big hill [Ladd Canyon] which it was necessary for us to descend (Nesmith 1906:353).

- ° John C. Fremont wrote on October 17, 1843:

October 17. Probably with the view of avoiding a circuit, the wagons had directly descended into the Rond by the face of a hill so very rocky and continuously steep as to be apparently impracticable; and, following down on their trail, we encamped on one of the branches of the Grand Rond river, immediately at the foot of the hill (Fremont 1970:545).

- ° Joel Palmer wrote on September 11-12, 1845:

September 11. This day we traveled about twelve miles; for the first five or six miles, the road was quite level and good; it then follows a ridge dividing Powder river and Grand Round; this portion of the road is very uneven and stony. The road leading down into the valley of Grand Round, is circuitous, and its difficulty of travel enhanced by its roughness; it is about one and a half miles in length, to where it reaches the bottom (Palmer 1847:53).

- ° Absalom B. Harden wrote on August 29, 1847:

at the End of the 6 miles we came to a very Steep lonng hill it is 2 mills lonng from where you first begin to desend it and powerful rocky then we came to the grand round valley at the foot of this hill (Harden 1847)

- ° Benjamin Cleaver wrote on August 18, 1848:

we continued west until we came in sight of the Grand Ronde Bottom we here had a long hill to go down Say about one mile it is not very Steep. But there is a good number of loos stones on the Road (Cleaver 1848).

- ° Honore-Timothee Lempfrit wrote on September 5, 1848:

Travel: Descent of Ladd Canyon

5th September . . . The trail that led down to the plateau was very steep with numerous spiral turns. Those people who were on foot sometimes took a shortcut, a little path that was extremely steep and therefore very dangerous. I had already reached the prairie that lay at the foot of the plateau when I could not help but admire the courage of an American lady. In order to get down the hill this lady got hold of a plank from an abandoned waggon and after placing her child at one end of it she positioned herself at the other end. Then by making a little movement she set the plank in motion and slid straight down to the floor of the prairie without the slightest mishap. However I shuddered to think of the danger she was courting (Lemfrit 1984:128).

° William J. Watson wrote on August 17, 1849:

Leaving here, and crossing the division ridge, and ascending a long and somewhat steep hill, then descending a long, steep hill, we came to the Grand Rond . . . (Watson 1851:39).

° Samuel James wrote on August 6, 1850:

Got onto Grand Round over a ten mile hill. Most of the drivers quaked in getting their wagons down (James 1850)

° John Johnson wrote on July 30, 1851:

About 2 o'clock we came to a very long steep hill overlooking the beautiful valley (Johnson 1851:18).

° Susan Amelia Cranston noted on August 10, 1851:

in the afternoon we had a very rough rocky road along a long stony hill to go up and down Encamped at night in the edge of Grand round on a little stream good camp (Cranston 1984:123).

° P. V. Crawford wrote on August 20, 1851:

We traveled down the valley three or four miles, and over a sidling, stony ridge, to the top of the Grande Ronde hill, then down a long, steep-sidling to Grande Ronde valley. Here we found and passed some of our advanced company repairing a broken wagon. (Crawford 1924:161-162).

° Charles A. Brandt wrote on August 31, 1851:

We went up a steep hill and 8 miles brings us to Grand Rond River and down the worst hill we have had on the trip. Mountains are covered with timber some of which is 200 feet high (Brandt 1851:23).

° Harriet Talcott Buckingham noted on September 8, 1851:

Travel: Descent of Ladd Canyon

The descent was made with difficulty - the wagons being chained & let down with ropes much of the way (Buckingham 1984:49).

- ° Eliaabeth Wood noted on September 8, 1851:

Monday the 8th we descended a very steep hill, which took an hour to get down, into a valley called the Grand Rounds (Wood 1984:176).

- ° Jared Fox wrote on July 28, 1852:

Wednesday 28. Passed 8 miles good road & rather tolerable and hardly that and 8 miles of the worst possible road, too much for man or beast. At noon found one of my waggon tire broke but patched it up. The 8 miles good road was through Grand Droude Valley. Going down a terrible hill just before we got on to it I gathered some good rye (Fox 1852:43).

- ° E. W. Conyers wrote on August 28, 1852, about Ladd Canyon:

We came up the valley about one-half mile, and then we traveled three miles more over hills and hollows, and a very rough and rocky road. And dust! Well, we have become so used to the dust, which generally is from two to six inches deep, that we do not think of making any mention of it. This brought us to the summit of the mountain, overlooking the Grand Ronde Valley, one of the prettiest and most welcome sights seen on the whole route. Two miles more down a long, steep and rocky hill brought us into the valley (Conyers 1906:492).

- ° John Tully Kerns wrote on September 1, 1852:

Wednesday, September 1--Traveled only about ten miles, which brought us to the Grand Ronde valley. The road for the first six miles was good; we then ascended a stony ridge and traveled over a stony road for one and on-half miles, then ascended into a small valley about one mile in width, then ascended another stony ridge, which we followed some distance and then descended the most difficult and highest hill we have yet seen, into the Grand Rond (Kerns 1852:181).

- ° Abigail Jane Scott wrote on September 1, 1852:

. . . we here halted for two hours and then directed our course over plains and bluffs till we reached the brow of a mountains overlooking the Grand Round; We then descended this mountain and ascended a (rocky) ridge which has the longest and most of difficult descent of any hill which we had yet encountered;: The dust (would) blow (for a time) in clouds, hiding the wagons teams and roads entirely from our view,. when a sudden contrary breath of air would clear away the dust for a few moments enabling us for a time to proceed; The rocks so filled the road, that any one who had not begun to "see the elephant" would have been afraid to have

attempted the descent; When we came to the base of the mountain we were delighted to find ourselves (safely) in "Grand Round"; We were all hungry and tired, and hastily preparing our supper, we gladly retired to rest (Scott 1984:120-121).

- ° Samuel Dexter Francis wrote on September 7, 1852:

We descended a long, steep and ruff hill. Grand Rond is a butiful place, thare is the handsomest land I ever saw (Francis 1852:105).

- ° Lydia Rudd wrote on September 10, 1852, about entering Grande Ronde Valley:

We came over the worst road and rocky road that we have yet passed over (Rudd 1852)

- ° Henry Allyn wrote on August 14, 1853, about entering the Grande Ronde Valley:

The first 5 miles was composed of a long ascent and a long descent which was steep, crooked, sideling and the road literally covered with rock from the size of your fist to any size not quite big enough to turn a wagon over, if you drive very careful. By locking both hind wheels and getting back in the wagons and placing your feet against the bows the drivers all escaped being thrown out (Allyn 1928-428).

- ° Amelia Stewart Knight wrote on August 16, 1853, about the descent into the Grande Ronde Valley:

Slow traveling on account of our oxen having sore feet, and the roads being very rocky, passed the Silvery springs. traveled 12 miles, and now we have a long steep rocky hill to descend into the Valley it is a mile long, very steep and rocky from the top of this hill, we could see a band of Indian horses in the Valley below, and being mostly white, they looked like a flock of chickens (Knight 1986:65-66).

- ° Charlotte Stearns Pengra wrote on August 23, 1853, about descending through Ladd Canyon:

Struck the Blue Mountains this morning and have traveled on them most of the day, reached Grand Round Valley after descending a very precipitous and long mountain at about 4 o'clock, traveled in the valley 5 miles and encamped to the left of the road near a small Spring, have excellent feed for the cattle (Pengra 1966:54).

- ° John or David Dinwiddie wrote on August 26, 1853:

Friday [August] 26th Passed over a very stony mountain. Five miles brought us to the brow of the mountain here we had a long steep and very rocky descent, the worst we have had, to Grand Ronde

Travel: Descent of Ladd Canyon

Valley one mile. Turned down the stream about one mile and camped at a little grove . . . (Dinwiddie 1928:11-12).

- ° George Belshaw wrote on September 1, 1853, about entering the Grande Ronde Valley:

. . . one mile more brought us to the hill that bounds the Grand round and it is four miles over a rocky road to Grand round and a long crooked hill to go down. From here it is 8 miles across this butiful valey (Belshaw 1960:44).

- ° Maria A. Parsons Belshaw wrote on September 1, 1853, about entering the Grande Ronde Valley:

We traveled a short distance in the valley then commenced ascending the hill, took us till noon to reach the bottom of hill, and the worst has not come yet. While on the hill we had a view of Grand Round Valley (Belshaw 1932:241-242).

- ° Basil Longworth wrote on September 2, 1853:

We then passed up a long hill and struck down a canyon or ravine to a small stream of water and then passed up a long hill and then down a long and stony hill of a mile and a half in length, when we found ourselves in a beautiful place called Grande Ronde Valley. (Longworth 1959:54).

- ° John Crawford wrote on September 17, 1861, on descent to Grande Ronde Valley:

Started $\frac{1}{2}$ past 7 the road crossing the stream & across a large plain which has been burnt over, nooned after 6 miles on a small stream near the hills, up a rise very stony road over the divide, fine grass the whole distance, long steep & stony decent into Grand Rond valley & camp on fine stream at foot of Hill distance 9 m. total 15 m. (Crawford 1861).

Travel: Transit of the Blue Mountains

While fur trappers and overland emigrants had crossed the Rockies, the journey through South Pass was gradual, often uneventful. Except for distant views of the Wind River Mountains there was little physical sense of traversing the continental divide. The Blue Mountains, however, rose as the most significant physiographic challenge encountered in more than 1,600 miles of travel. Indian trails crossed the mountains and afforded several options to fur trappers. Some moved from the lower end of the Grande Ronde Valley over the Blues into the watershed of the Walla Walla River. Others traveled on the high ridges and others, by the mid-1830s, took a route from the valley to the Umatilla which, a decade later, became the Oregon Trail. Lee's Encampment, named for missionary Jason Lee who traveled west with the fur trader Nathaniel Wyeth in 1834, confirmed the existence of the pre-emigrant use of the trace opened for wagons in 1843 by axemen.

As emigrants left the Grande Ronde at mile 1636, they faced 40 torturous miles. The route was rough, "sideling," sometimes dusty, and beset with downed trees, rocks, and changes in elevation. The experiences of the emigrants included the following:

- ° Loss of livestock through straying into the forest from the evening camps
 - ° Shortages of water and sometimes dry camps on the ridges
 - ° Forest fires and smoke which clouded the skies
 - ° Double-teaming in order to pull heavy wagons up the steep slopes
 - ° Occasional meetings with Indians
 - ° Sightings of wild game and cries in the dark of cougars
 - ° Sylvan glades and attractive camping places, especially Lee's Encampment mentioned by dozens of travelers
- ° John Kirk Townsend wrote on August 31, 1834, about the Blue Mountains:

[August] 31st. . . . About half an hour's brisk trotting brought us to the foot of a steep and high mountain, called the Blue. This is said to be the most extensive chain west of the dividing ridge, and, with one exception perhaps the most difficult of passage. The whole mountain is densely covered with tall pine trees, with an undergrowth of service bushes and other shrubs, and the path is strewn, to a very inconvenient degree, with volcanic rocks. In some of the ravines we find small springs of water; they are, however, rather rare, and the grass has been lately consumed, and many of the trees blasted by the ravaging fires of the Indians. These fires are yet smouldering, and the smoke from them

effectually prevents our viewing the surrounding country, and completely obscures the beams of the sun. We travelled this evening until after dark, and encamped on a small stream in a gorge, where we found a plot of grass that had escaped the burning (Townsend 1978:163).

° Narcissa Whitman wrote on August 29, 1836:

Before noon we began to descend one of the most terrible mountains for steepness & length I have yet seen. It was like winding stairs in its descent & in some places almost perpendicular. We were a long time descending it. The horses appeared to dread the hill as much as we did. They would turn & wind in a zigzag manner all the way down. The men usually walked but I could not get permission to, neither did I desire it much. We had no sooner gained the foot of the mountain when another more steep & dreadful was before us. We did not mount this until we had taken some refreshment & rest. (Mount Pleasant in Prattsburg would not compare with these Mount Terribles.) Our ride this afternoon exceeded everything we have had yet & what rendered it the more aggravating the path all the way was very stony resembling a newly McAdamized road. Our horses feet were very tender, all unshod, so that we could not make that progress we wished.

The mountains in many places was covered with this black broken basalt. We were late in making camp tonight. After ascending the mountain immediately after dinner, we kept upon the main divide until sunset, looking in vain for water and a camping place. While upon this elevation, we had a view of the valley of the Columbia river. It was beautiful. Just as we gained the highest elevation & began to descend, the sun was dipping his disk behind the western horizon. Beyond the valley we could see two distant Mountains, Mount Hood and Mount St Helens. These lofty peaks were of a conical form & separate from each other by a considerable distance. Behind the former the Sun was hiding part of his rays which gave us a more distinct view of this gigantic cone. The beauty of this extensive valley contrasted well with the rolling mountains behind us & at this hour of twilight was enchanting & quite diverted my mind from the fatigue under which I was labouring. We had yet to descend a hill as long but not as steep or stony as the others. By this time (time) our horses were in haste to see camp as well as ourselves & mine made such lengthy strides in descending that it shook my sides surprisingly. It was dark when we got into camp but the tent was ready for me & tea also, for Mr McLeod invited us to sup with him. We are now on the west side of the Blue Mountains, crossed them in a day and half (Drury 1963[1]:90-93).

° Sarah White Smith wrote on August 29, 1838, about the Blue Mountains:

This afternoon we travelled the Blue Mountains covered with beautiful pines & spruce trees, 20 miles. Encamped on the summit

of the mountains where we found beautiful grass for our animals.
(Drury 1966[3]:108).

- ° Thomas Jefferson Farnham wrote on September 21, 1839, about the Blue Mountains:

A day of severe travelling. In the forenoon, the trail ran over a series of mountains swelling one above another in long and gentle ascents, covered with noble forests of yellow pine, fir, and hemlock. Among these were frequent glades or rich pasture land; grass green, and numerous brooks of pure water leaping from the cliffs, or murmuring among the shrubbery. The snow-ball, the wax plant, the yellow and black currant--a species of whortleberry--the service berry--choke cherry--the elder--the shrub maple--and all the beautiful flowers that gem a mountain landscape during its short summer, clothed the ground. At twelve o'clock, we entered a deep ravine, at the bottom of which ran a brook of sweet clear water; we dined on its bank. A dish of rich cocoa, mush, and sugar, and dried buffalo tongue, on the fresh grass, by a cool rivulet on the wild mountains of Oregon! Nature stretched her bare and mighty arms around us! The mountains hid the lower sky, and walled out the lower world! We looked upon the beautiful heights of the Blue Mountains, and ate among its spring blossoms, its singing pines, and holy battlements, ten thousand feet above the sea (Farnham 1843[2]:120-121).

- ° Medorem Crawford described conditions in crossing the Blue Mountains on Septmeber 12, 1842:

Commenced raising a Mountain by degrees. Came to trees, at first quite thin & without underbrush having fine grass. But as we arose came to a densely timbered country, mostly pine & fir. The most beautiful tall straight trees. Our traveling through the timber was quite difficult as the path wound back and forth and many logs lay across it. We descended & arose a tremendous hill and about 3 o'clock our Indian Guide beckoned us to take a by path to find water, we did so and after traveling a few hundred yards found a little opening of timber & plenty of good water & some grass. Camped here for the night trav. 10 miles. Cool & cloudy considerable of rain after dark. Horses got frightened tied some up & the rest remained near.

Sept. 13 Tuesday. Started at 8½ and followed back our path until we came to the main trail when we pusued our dismal rout, Our path today led through more dense places & driving our pack animals & cattle was almost impossible. Occasionally we found a clear spot frequently several acres together and in the forenoon several little springs of water, towards evening we left the timber and found ourselves on a rolling Prairie of good soil. Continued to decend until near sunset when to our great joy we found water and wood but poor grass. Camped traviled 20 miles (Crawford 1897: 19-20).

Travel: Transit of the Blue Mountains

- ° Overton Johnson and William Winter wrote in September, 1843:

From the Grand Round we bore to the left, and began the ascent of the Blue Mountains. It was long, but gradual. After reaching the summit, the road was generally passable, excepting some deep ravines, which were frequently very steep and rocky. A great portion of these Mountains, are covered with dense forests of lofty pine. Those portions which are destitute of timber, are generally covered with good grass, and a considerable portion of the soil appears to be fit for cultivation (Johnson and Winter 1846:32-33).

- ° William T. Newby wrote on October 3-7, 1843:

(October 3) We crawled over a bad mountain & down it to a creek, the hill very bad to go down. These is hills of the Bliew Mountain. Tha[y] are covered with the pirtiest timber I ever saw. We hav past betwene two snowey mountains for the last 3 days. We hav frequentley past snow that I hav not mentioned. The grazing on the Bliew Mountain is good. Dist[ance] 7 [miles].

(October 4) We continued over the mountain, passing through hevey timber. The timber is so thick in meney places that you coldant see a man 10 steps. I believe that there is pine trees 200 feet high & not more than 2 foot through. We had a very bad road. We in camped on the mountain with out water. There was snow to day & at nite the ground froze & thare was a frost cool enough. Dis[tance] 7 [miles].

(October 5) We continued over the moun[tain], bad road, timber thick, & in camped at a smawl branch. Grazing good. The difficulty is in finding cattle, the timber is so thick. Distance 9 [miles].

(October 6) We continued over, having 1 bad hill, then a good road, & in camped with out watter. Grazing good. Dist[ance] 12 [miles].

(October 7) We got down the mountain in 4 miles (Newby 1939:237-238).

- ° James W. Nesmith wrote on October 1-4, 1843, about the labors of crossing the Blues. He and others went ahead to cut a wagon raod:

Started over the Mountains. Trailed twelve miles and encamped on a small dry creek in a deep ravine. To-day E. Otey and myself went hunting. Had a beautiful prospect of the Grande Ronde from the top of the mountains. Found the mountains covered with evergreen trees which remind me of the scenes of my childhood. They consist of pine, spruce, hemlock, fir, and tamarack or juniper. Mrs. Rubey died at Grand Ronde, and was buried October 1.

Travel: Transit of the Blue Mountains

Monday, October 2. Trailed twelve miles to-day over bad roads, in many places timber to be cut. I went in advance and cut timber all day. Encamped at night on a small stream of good water.

Tuesday, October 3. Had some difficulty this morning in finding our oxen, some of them having lain down in the pine thickets. Started about ten o'clock. Trailed about three miles. Crossed a very bad ravine and encamped on the west side of it. Weather since we left Grande Ronde fine, warm and mild. Nights rather cool.

Wednesday, October 4. Weather stormy; rain and hail. We got under way and traveled twelve miles down the west side of the Blue Mountains, when we struck the Umatilla River. Went three miles down it, and encamped near some Cayuse lodges (Nesmith 1906:353-354).

° Peter Hardeman Burnett wrote on October 2-5, 1843:

October 2d. We ascended a hill, or rather a mountain, at the edge of the "Grand Round," and then descended it in an extensive declivity on the other side, ending at a fine running creek, for which I could find no name, but on the banks of which we encamped. Both of these hills, the one at the entrance and the other at the outlet of the Grand Round, might be better avoided by turning to the left upon the mountain side and passing them altogether. We passed during the later part of this day, through large bodies of heavy pine timber, and I will take this occasion to remark, that the timber of the Blue Mountains were the first considerable bodies we had seen since we left the banks of the Kansas.

October 3d. We were obliged to ascend and descend three very bad hills, and to pass over eight miles of a very rough and difficult road, a portion of it running through a track heavily timbered with pine. We cut through this a road for the wagons, and it now offers much superior facilities for those who follow.

October 4th. This day our route stretched through the still continuous pine, but they were more sparcely scattered than before, and our progress consequently was more easy. The weather was cold and bleak.

October 5th. A slight fall of snow this morning brought us to our heaviest clothing, and increased the size of our early campfires. The roads were excellent before us, but in consequence of two bad hills, and the disposition to linger round our fires, we did not make more than eight miles, after completing which we went early to camp.

October 6th. On the 6th we descended the Blue Mountains, by an easy and gradual declination over an excellent road, and encamped on the banks of the Umatilla River near a Kiuse village. This

Travel: Transit of the Blue Mountains

stream, like most of the rivers we had crossed in Oregon, was nothing more than a good sized creek . . . (Wilkes 1845).

° Ninevah Ford, an emigrant of 1843, recalled:

Peter H. Burnett was in favor of stopping [in the Grand Ronde] and locating there but having no supplies we travelled on for the Blue Mountains cutting our way through the fallen timber. We camped many times in sight of our former nights camp. We found it very laborious and very hard cutting that Tamarack timber with our dull axes that we had not ground since we left Missouri having no grind stone to grind them & our hands being very tender--cutting those dry sticks which sprung the skin loose on our hands. But it was getting late in the season; and it devolved on some 40 persons to make that road. The lazy ones dropped back, not for the purpose of screening themselves, but to rest their cattle, so they stated, but we imputed it to their diffidence in regard to the work. It developed on the 40 persevering men to drive the wagons and cut the roads.

The women frequently would drive the teams and the men would do the work. The most of them had axes. We had shovels but it was rarely that we used them. I recollect we had to dig down the banks to get across the Grand Rounde River. When we crossed the Grande Rounde River the snow had fallen to a depth of two inches but did not lay long. I think it was in September. It was an early snow. We travelled under the guidance of an Indian pilot that Dr. Whitman had sent back. Wherever he directed us to go there we went, without searching for any other route. . . .

In some places the timber was very thick, so that you could not ride a horse through without cutting. After we got on top of the mountain the timber got lighter and more scattered and we got down the mountain comparatively easy. We got out of the timber when we got pretty nearly down. Went to Umatilla. . . (Ford 1878:11-12).

° Edward Evans Parrish wrote on October 15-18, 1844, about challenges of crossing the Blue Mountains:

Wednesday, Oct. 15.--Started early for the head of the Grand Round River and drove hard over the worst road yet, hills and rocks awful. We camped along with Mr. Cave on the hill without water for the cattle. A little snow fell to-day on the high divide.

Thursday, Oct. 17.--All together again at the head of the Grand Round river and are starting at twelve o'clock for the Utilia [Umatilla] River. Drove about five miles and camped at the head of a spring on the hill. Here we had to double teams again. The road was better to-day, though bad yet. The evening not so cold as last evening.

Friday, Oct. 18--A clear morning. Hope we will get out of this mountain to-day. We got out of the mountain and camped on the Uvilla [Umatilla] River. The last twenty miles of the Blue Mountains was pretty good for mountain roads. A very long hill to come down off the mountain (Parrish 1888:114).

- ° Joel Palmer wrote on September 14, 1845, described travel conditions in the Blue Mountains:

This day we traveled about ten miles. The road ascended the mountain for one and a half or two miles, then wound along the ridge crossing many deep ravines, and pursuing its route over high craggy rocks; sometimes directing its course over an open plain, at others through thick groves of timber, winding among fallen trees and logs, by which the road was encumbered (Palmer 1847:55-56).

- ° Absalom B. Harden wrote on August 31, 1847, about the first day ascending the eastern flank of the Blue Mountains:

August 31 we Started and assended the first hill of the blew mountains 2 mills lonng a very bad hill and rockey then up and down bad hill and rockey then up and down bad hill to the grand round river which is 8 miles here we campt these mountains is clothed with beautiful short leaf pine timber some calls it yellow fir but it is pine . . . poor camp for grass but down l miles good grass (Harden 1847)

- ° Loren B. Hastings described the dangers of becoming disoriented or lost in the Blue Mountains on October 7, 1847:

While we were hunting cattle today, one lady (Mrs. Thatcher) was discovered walking very briskly in the thick timber and asked which way she was traveling, she said she was going to the wagons and wondered what was the reason she could not see them; but when told that she was one-half mile from the wagons and going in a contrary direction, she was not a little surprised and concluded in such thick timber as this she would not undertake to hunt cattle. This night guarded our cattle all night (Hastings 1926:22-23).

- ° Elizabeth Dixon Smith described travel conditions in the Blue Mountains on October 7 and 8, 1847:

havin to stiddy the waggons down while we women carried and led our children camped on a branch of grand round river here the men made tar out of pine here we are surrounded with mountains covered with tall pines

Oct 8 ascended a steep mountain trav[e]led through thick pine came to another mountain had to double teams to some wagons they put 9 yoke of oxen (Smith 1983:136-137).

- ° William Wright Anderson wrote on this second day in the Blue

Mountains:

August the 20th we traveled 10 miles over the roughest road we have yet traveled our road was verry mountainous and rocky and verry heavy timbered with pine and fur the road wound around amongst the standing and falen timber which made it difficult driveing we camped on the side of a mountain and had to carry watter near half a mile from a small branch down on the side of the mountain (Anderson 1848)

- ° Honore-Timothee Lempfrit wrote on September 10, 1848, while in the Blue Mountains:

10th September We had a very bad camp site and as a result of this we almost lost half our animals. Nearly all of them strayed during the night, in search of a little water. We had let them graze at random, consequently when morning came we found ourselves without any oxen. We had a great deal of difficulty getting them back. The poor old man who had died the previous evening was buried.

Thirteen of our oxen were still missing at 11 o'clock. Finally we left around noon so that we could make a little headway (Lempfrit 1984:139).

- ° William J. Watson wrote on August 18-19, 1849, about the need to double-team to climb the Blue Mountains:

18th. Starting early this morning, we had in the very outset to double teams at a very long, steep hill. Traveling eight miles over the mountain, the road being very rocky and there being a very hard frost, killing the grass and leaves; six miles farther over a very bad road, having to double teams twice in four miles, in the afternoon we reached Rond river, where we encamped for the night

19th. For a start this morning, we had to double our teams at a very bad hill; five miles. We had to double teams twice more at very bad hills; eleven miles farther brought us to the river, where we encamped for the night, our Indians being still with us: wood, water, and grass plenty (Watson 1851:39-40).

- ° David Maynard wrote on September 2, 1850, about the Blue Mountains:

Here we began climbing the Blue mountains, and if they don't beat the devil (Maynard 1906:60).

- ° Susan Amelia Cranston wrote on August 12, 1851, about the ascent of the Blue Mountains:

This day we had to climb the hardest hills that we had climbed since we started some had to double teams (Cranston 1984:123-124).

Travel: Transit of the Blue Mountains

- ° P. V. Crawford described road conditions in the Blue Mountains on this second day of ascending from the Grande Ronde Valley on August 22, 1851:

This day our road has been very rough, first a up a long hill, where we had to double teams, then down a long ridge to a dry branch, then up another long ridge and down a steep hill to another dry branch. Here we had to double teams again, to get onto the next ridge along the side of which we traveled five miles. Here we camped on the ridge and drove down into a deep hollow to water and grass. We had to carry water half a mile up a very steep hill to camp. We are now in the Blue mountains and find it very rough country. Much more so than the Rocky mountains, and our worn-out teams seem to appreciate the difference equal to ourselves (Crawford 1924:162-163).

- ° Elizabeth Wood wrote about September 9, 1851, regarding the ascent of the Blue Mountains:

The hills here are all covered with fine timber. Some of them are awful steep, however. We went up one today and it took twenty-two head of cattle to haul up one wagon, and there was not much in the wagon either. Emigrants will therefore see the necessity of kind and careful treatment of their teams at the outset and indeed through the whole of this long journey, to reserve their strength for these difficult places (Wood 1984:177).

- ° John S. Zieber wrote on September 19, 1851, about ascending the Blue Mountains:

Friday, September 19--Started late for the Blue Mountains, came in four miles to a creek at the foot of the mountains and then began to ascend. Went ahead pretty fairly and traveled 11-3/4 miles, where we camped near the top of the longest hill we have yet seen. Parts of it are very steep and a smashed wagon lies near the foot of it (Zieber 1921:329-330).

- ° Rev. Jesse Moreland wrote on September 5, 1852:

Sept 5 to[day] worse Road than yesterday O the condition this road places men in this the Sabath & I have never though[t] of it till the children told me after the Sun was down (Moreland 1852:45-46)

- ° John Newton Lewis wrote on September 26, 1852:

the grass is like hen teeth the timber is very thick and tall pine and fur som little hemlock and cedar there was an ox killed last night by a bere (Lewis 1852:29).

- ° George Belshaw wrote on September 3, 1853, in the Blue Mountains:

Travel: Transit of the Blue Mountains

Drove 19 miles from grand round river to a branch of the same is 18 miles the hardest drive that my team has had on the whole Journey I will describe it In 3 miles we passed down some very steep hills and crooked road and 3 miles more brought us up the steepest hill yet on the whole route and 12 more hilly rough road we came to a small branch of grand round river some grass but it is amongst the pines that make it bad with a large drove of stock, I watered my stock and drove 1 mile and Camped on the right hand side road 7 rods tollerable grass as in the timber This is the roughest road in the blue mountains (Belshaw 1960:45-46).

° Maria Parsons Belshaw wrote on September 2-3, 1853:

September 2nd. Commenced climbing the Blue Mountains this morning. It has been go up and go down. Such hills as never were viewed by us poor mortals before, or such beautiful tall straight pine trees from one hundred to one hundred and fifty feet high, from 1 to 3 feet thick. Saw 8 graves, on one it was said "found dead his horse near him the man was shot through the head" saw 19 dead cattle. . .

September 3rd. Still we are climbing the mountain, but met yesterday one very long and steep [road] coming out of Grande River bottom. I never saw as crooked a road in my life. It was Gee and Haw both at once to keep off of trees. Some of the trees are rubbed one third of the thickness through by the wagon hubs, heavy tall pine and fir. No water through our travels to-day until night. Saw 5 graves, 8 dead cattle (Belshaw 1932:242).

Travel: Descent from Deadman's Pass

The transit of the Blue Mountains took most wagon train emigrants a minimum of three days, sometimes longer if teams were weak or parties tarried at meadows in the hills. When the travelers reached the western face of the Blue Mountains the great Columbia Plateau stretched before them. Some emigrants wrote about sightings of the distant, snow-capped peaks of the Cascades. Many more noted the descent to the banks of the Umatilla River. The route from Deadman's Pass [mile 1663] to the Umatilla [mile 1669], while steep, proved less eventful and difficult than Ladd Canyon. The gradual switchbacks may have been one factor. Experience in descending grades by this point was undoubtedly another.

- ° John Kirk Townsend described the descent from the Blues into the Umatilla watershed on September 1-2, 1834:

The path through the valley, in which we encamped last night, was level and smooth for about a mile; we then mounted a short, steep hill, and began immediately to descend. The road down the mountain wound constantly, and we travelled in short, zig-zag lines, in order to avoid the extremely abrupt declivities; but occasionally, we were compelled to descend in places that made us pause before making the attempt: they were, some of them, almost perpendicular, and our horses would frequently slide several yards, before they could recover. To this must be added enormous jagged masses of rock, obstructing the road in many places, and pine trees projecting their horizontal branches across the path.

The road continued, as I have described it, to the valley in the plain, and a full hour was consumed before we reached it. The country then became comparatively level again to the next range, where a mountain was to be ascended of the same height as the last. Here we dismounted and led our horses, it being impracticable, in their present state, to ride them. It was the most toilsome march I ever made, and we were all so much fatigued, when we arrived at the summit, that rest was as indispensable to us as to our poor jaded horses. Here we made a noon camp, with a handful of grass and no water. This last article appears very scarce, the ravines affording none, and our dried salmon and kamas bread were eaten unmoistened. The route, in the afternoon, was over the top of the mountain, the road tolerably level, but crowded with stones. Towards evening, we commenced descending again, and in every ravine and gully we cast our anxious eyes in search of water; we even explored several of them, where there appeared to exist any probability of success, but not one drop did we find. Night at length came on, dark and pitchy, without a moon or a single star to give us a ray of light; but still we proceeded, depending solely upon the vision and sagacity of our horses to keep the track. We travelled steadily until 9 o'clock, when we saw ahead the dark outline of a high mountain, and soon after heard the men who rode in front, cry out, joyously, at the top of their voices, "water!"

water!" It was truly a cheering sound, and the words were echoed loudly by every man in the company. We had not tasted water since morning, and both horses and men have been suffering considerably for the want of it.

[September] 2d. Capt. W[yeth] and two men, left us early this morning for Walla-walla, where they expect to arrive this evening, and send us some provision, of which we shall be in need, to-morrow.

Our camp moved soon after, under the direction of Captain Thing, and in about four miles reached Utalla river, where it stopped, and remained until 12 o'clock (Townsend 1978:163-166).

- ° Overton Johnson and William Winter wrote in September, 1843:

On the third day, we left the Mountains and descended to the Umatilla or Utilla River, (generally called in that country, the Utilla,) in the valley of Walawala. From the brow of the Mountain, we had a fine view of the Cascade range, fifty miles distant, forming the Western boundary of the valley, stretching far to the North and South, with its lofty peaks of eternal snow rising among the clouds (Johnson and Winter 1846:32-33).

- ° James Nesmith wrote on October 4, 1843:

Wednesday, October 4. Weather stormy; rain and hail. We got under way and traveled twelve miles down the west side of the Blue Mountains, when we struck the Umatilla River. Went three miles down it, and encamped near some Cayuse lodges (Nesmith 1906:353-354).

- ° Peter Hardeman Burnett wrote on October 6, 1843:

October 6th. On the 6th we descended the Blue Mountains, by an easy and gradual declination over an excellent road, and encamped on the banks of the Umatilla River near a Kiuse village. This stream, like most of the rivers we had crossed in Oregon, was nothing more than a good sized creek . . . (Wilkes 1845).

- ° Loren B. Hastings wrote on October 8, 1847:

This day got an early start; in a few miles we came through the thick timber and came to large pines. The road smoother and not so hilly directly we came out of the pines and went down a long hill into the Umatilla valley; the bottom and bluffs covered with Indian ponies and good horses, too. Came to the Aitilla river and camped (Hastings 1926:22-23).

- ° Honore-Timothee Lempfrit wrote on September 11, 1848:

11 September Today we have had some nice light rain that was most beneficial. The trail was extremely rough. We emerged from the lovely fir forests at about 2 o'clock and at last left behind us the long range of mountains. Ahead of us the country was quite flat. Now we had a new horizon. It seemed as though we saw a vast expanse of sea in the distance, for the scorched prairies give the landscape a bluish hue. We camped on the banks of the Umatilla River and there we found the remains of gardens that the poor Indians had cultivated before the Walla Walla revolt [of 1847]. The country here is extremely fertile (Lempfrit 1984:137-140).

- ° Osborne Cross wrote on September 10, 1849, about descending to the Umatilla River:

Our horses were soon put into a canter, in the true California style of riding, and kept so until the close of the evening, when we again came to clear ground, on the opposite side of the mountain, and after traveling along on the ridge, and winding for some time down its side, which is entirely destitute of timber, we reached the Eumatilla river, which has its rise in the Blue mountains, and flows into the Columbia river, ninety miles above the Dalles (Cross 1850:96).

- ° P. V. Crawford wrote on August 24, 1851, about descending the Blues to the Umatilla River:

This day we traveled fifteen miles, nine along a dry ridge brought us to where we turn down the mountain toward the Umatilla river. For the last few miles the land is very rich and is covered with groves of scattering pines, to the brow of the hill. The hill is four miles long and tolerably easy to descend. At the foot of the mountain we found a spring, where we halted and nooned. . . (Crawford 1924:162-163).

- ° Charles A. Brandt wrote on September 4, 1851:

Rained till noon. Passed Indiana train. Roads very muddy and slippery. We came down a hill 4 miles long into Umatilla Valley. From the top of the hill we had a splendid view. Such as Pilgrims to Oregon only are permitted to behold. We could see the snow capped peak of the Blue Mountains far behind us. 29 miles brought us to the foot of the mountains where we camped (Brandt 1851:23-24).

- ° John S. Zieber wrote on September 22, 1851:

Monday, September 22--This day we left the Blue Mountains and really they proved the pleasantest part of our journey. The last descent was a very long one and at the foot we came to a dry creek from which there was a gradual descent to the Umatillah River, about 2 miles distance and on the banks of which we camped (Zieber 1921:330).

Travel: Descent from Deadman's Pass

- ° Jared Fox wrote on August 30, 1852:

Got a late start, made 13 miles in forenoon, mostly fair road, timber most of the way, mostly Fir, one long hill to get down on to the Umatilla bottom, feed no good. Made 24 miles today Prairie but sandy in afternoon (Fox 1852:44).

- ° E. W. Conyers described the descent to the Umatilla River on September 1, 1852:

We started at 7 a. m. and traveled fifteen miles to the foot of the Blue Mountains. There is a fine spring at this camp, but no grass. The Indians have so many ponies herded in this vicinity that they eat the grass clean as they go. At this camp is the principal village of the Cayuse Indians. We traveled on three miles further to the Umatilla River and camped (Conyers 1906:495).

- ° Samuel Dexter Francis wrote on September 13, 1852:

Again we move on, better roads, sm[o]ther, leveler, &c., untill we decend a long hill and come to a spring, fifteen miles. We then drove on to the Umatilla River, five miles further. Stopt and prepared some supper (Francis 1852:107).

- ° Lydia Rudd wrote on September 13, 1852:

Traveled twenty miles to day got through the blue mountains encamped on the Umatilla river near a Indian village bought some peas and corn not much grass (Rudd 1852)

- ° James Aikin, Jr., wrote on September 20, 1852:

Travel 10 miles; good roads to Umatilla River; pass a Kioose (Cayuse) village; camp on the river; grass scarce (Aikin 1909:272).

- ° John McAllister wrote on September 24, 1852:

(Sept.) 24 Tolerable road to Umatilla river Mostly down hill a little rocky in places A spring to right in a hollow hard by tolerable grass may be found before reaching foot of mons the timber will get less & less untill it will gradually disappear Foot of Blue Mountains & springs after a very long but gradual decent plenty water but we found no grass mostly decending to the Umatillo river here are many indian wigwarms Road turns to left down river A dry Ravine some bushes on it this is after a little decent. about 3/4 mile further is a spring to right down under the bluff near the branch of which we camped carried wood & water up bluff a large country for grass but we found none either on account of the many indian ponies grazing on it or a failure (McAllister 1925:502-503).

- ° Cecelia Adams and Parthenia Blank wrote on October 8, 1852:

Started for the Umatilla river. Road slightly descending nearly all the way and in some places steep. At last came in sight of the valley covered entirely with dry grass except a small skirt of timber along the river -- and literally dotted with indian ponies -- and cattle. Commenced the descent into the valley very gradual. said to be five miles down hill. Dont think is was much overrated (Adams and Blank 1986:304).

- ° Amelia Stewart Knight wrote on August 22, 1853:

22nd Monday morning, I began to think last night we would never get to the foot of the mountain it was 4 miles long, however we came into camp after nine oclock at night and find outselves in the Umahtilah Valley, a warmer climate, more like summer, no feed for the poor stock, we are now traveling on the Nez perces plains, warm weather and very dusty, came 12 miles and camp at a spring $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from the Umahtilah river, grass all dead but the stock eat it greedy for fuel willows and some little sage brush (Knight 1986:66-67)

- ° Charlotte Pengra wrote on August 26, 1853:

Have had pretty good roads for the last fifteen miles on the mountains though we descended a long one to the valley, it was not very bad, are encamped at the foot of the Mountain at a Spring have but little grass. Stella is quite sick and so is Bynon. I have packed her and he has been bathed and bandaged for the night. things look rather discouraging (Pengra 1966:54-55).

- ° Catherine Amanda Stansbury Washburn wrote on August 30, 1853:

traveled 7 miles without water discended a steep hill came in sight of the Umatila River camped on a spring branch by a Indian garden they had some good corn and potatoes we bought some for supper it rained last night left the Blue Mountains (Washburn 1967:28).

- ° George Belshaw wrote on September 4, 1853:

9 miles more over good roads we came to the top of the last blue mountain and in site of Umatilla Valey and river and 3 miles decending down brought us to the foot of it the longest hill I ever saw but not bad to go down (Belshaw 1960:46).

- ° Basil Longswroth wrote on September 7, 1853:

After considerable difficulty in herding and finding cattle which had wandered among the timber all were secured and we started for the Umatilla Valley. The road for some miles was rough and then good until we came to a hill which leads down to the valley and

Travel: Descent from Deadman's Pass

which is three miles long and perhaps descends two thousand feet in perpendicular height. We made fifteen miles and camped in good time in the Valley with good grass on the left of the road (Longworth 1959:55).

° Samuel Handsaker wrote on September 16, 1853:

The descent from these mountains is four miles long, and steep that it is necessary to lock both the hind wheels of our wagons, most of the way down. At the foot lies Umatillah valley, and a fine stream bearing the same name. The soil in this valley is rich, but it is used for no other purpose than pasturage (Handsaker 1965:30).

Travel Conditions: Weather

Most emigrants passed through the Grande Ronde Valley and traversed the Blue Mountains in late August or September. A few came as early as July and some late travelers found themselves in the Blues in October. Most found favorable weather conditions. A few noted frost at night; some complained of rain or drizzle; and some were caught in thunder, lightning, and brief hailstorms. Any who attempted a winter transit of the mountains, however, confronted snow, freezing weather, and exceedingly difficult conditions.

- ° In 1827 Peter Skene Ogden's brigade left Fort Nez Perce on September 11 and began crossing the Blue Mountains to travel to the upper Snake region. Rainy weather hampered the travelers.

Tuesday, [September] 10th [11th]. Although the weather was far from being settled we started at an early hour and commenced crossing over the Blue Mountains, but at eleven obliged to encamp all being drenched in rain and our property in the same state, after having travelled over steep hills and thick fallen woods which made it almost impossible for the loaded horses to pass.

Wednesday, [September] 11th [12th]. It still continuing to rain we did not raise camp. We are certainly most unfortunate in regard to weather since our starting, but in mountains we cannot expect often to meet with fair weather particularly at this season. Our guide informs us, one day more and we shall be across.

Thursday, [September] 12th [13th]. Cloudy weather and although every appearance of more rain and contrary to the wishes of many, I gave a call at day light for the horses and at 7 a.m. we started (Ogden 1971:4).

- ° Robert Shortess crossed the Blue Mountains in November, 1839:

The hills were covered with snow, the ground bare and frozen, and thick ice was on the waters; and, though only the latter part of November, winter reigned supreme on the Blue Mountains. We traveled two days in snow from one to three feet deep; our animals were so weak from hunger and fatigue as to be hardly able to make their way through the snowdrifts, and sometimes fell under their loads or became restive and could hardly be moved by the severest blows. At length we descended to the valley of Umatilla, where we found a mild spring temperature and the earth covered with an abundance of grass, green as in May (Hafen and Hafen 1955:109).

- ° John Newton Lewis ascending the Blue Mountains on September 29, 1852, wrote:

Travel: Weather

this was not a pleasant day by no means it rained hailed snowed and
blowed and upon the whole it was rather disagreeable but all for
Oregon (Lewis 1852:29-30).

- ° On September 30, 1852, John Newton Lewis wrote atop the Blue
Mountains:

this is a cold wet disagreeable day the hail fell until the ground
was white (Lewis 1852:30).

- ° Basil Longworth wrote on September 3, 1853, in the Grande Ronde
Valley:

Morning cool. We drove eight miles of level road across this
valley and camped on the west side. This day about noon we had a
heavy shower of rain and hail, the latter covering the ground quite
thick (Longworth 1959:54).

- ° Elizabeth Julia Goltra wrote on September 3, 1853, on entering the
Grande Ronde Valley:

Have had a very hard drive today, we crossed the main ridge of the
Blue Mountains, over a very rough road and a very cold one, when
once on the top we can look down in the valley beneath and see
again a level road for a few miles, at night we camped in "Grand
Round" valley, after a hard drive of 16 miles (Goltra 1970:25).

- ° Samuel Handsaker wrote on September 15-16, 1853, atop the Blue
Mountains:

[September] 15th It commenced to rain this morning at two o'clock,
and has continued with short intervals all day, occasionally giving
us a small shower of hail. We completed our day's drive by one p.
m.

[September] 16th The weather still continues wet and cold. Roads
good, with the exception of being slippery (Handsaker 1965:30).

- ° Sarah Sutton wrote on August 14, 1854, on approaching the Grande Ronde
Valley:

we have stopt for the night within 3 miles of G round on a good
spring, grass good fur timber very pretty near us the hills low,
but we believe it too cold to live here as there is now frost every
night (Sutton 1988:76-77).

- ° Philip Condit wrote on August 22, 1854, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

Rained a little for the first time in many weeks. Thundered today
for the first time since we crossed the Rocky Mts. Rained tonight.
All well and cattle much refreshed (Condit, P. 1854).

- ° Mary Louisa Black wrote on September 10-11, 1864, in the Blue Mountains:

[September] 10th We passed by Ringo yesterday evening came 8 mile to this camp. got supper after night. it is raining this morning. we are in the valey skirted by snow crested pine covered mountains. we are noonin on the summit of the Blue moun[tains] we have been coming up all the forenoon. the horses are very tired. drizzling all the time too we travailed till late through a cold rain. stoped close to a deserted store house I cooked supper in it. Tilla is very sick (Black 1990:78).

[September] 11th Late in the evening. Encamped again in the Blue Mt. rained all day (Black 1990:78).

- ° Elizabeth Lee Porter wrote on September 25-27, 1864:

Sunday, September 25. Rained last night. Camped by the Blue Mountians last night at a little place called Oradell [Orodell].

Crossed one range of mountains. Road wet and slippery. Only came seven miles today.

Monday, 26. Raining and some snow today. Considerable snow on top of mountains. Come about 16 miles across the summit. 15 miles yet to valley.

Tuesday--27. Big frost and lots of ice. Rose sick all night but better this morning. Came in sight of valley and camped for night. Beautiful road today (Porter 1990:31).

Travel: Time Elapsed, Miles Traveled

The Grande Ronde Valley lay 1,630 miles west of Independence, Missouri. Thousands of emigrants, however, had begun their travels farther east. They sold farms and homes in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois and hit the road in March or April to journey to the head of the trail. Thus, while they might be 110 evening encampments west of Independence by the time they reached the foot of the Blue Mountains, the miles traveled and days elapsed since setting out were often much greater. The tally varied with each individual or family.

Several factors impinged on emigrants by the time they sighted the Blue Mountains. Some had run out of livestock to pull their wagons. Diarists commented on seeing abandoned or broken wagons, especially in the Blue Mountains. Others had consumed their food and eagerly hunted for game, picked berries, bartered for camas and salmon from the Indians, or, after 1852, purchased flour and other necessities from itinerant traders who had come east from the Willamette Valley to serve their needs (for a price). Some were beset with illness and, a few, died along this portion of the trail. Diarists describe several graves and at least one murder and the poignant, pencilled note affixed for a few days to the victim's grave.

- ° Cyrus Shepard wrote on August 30, 1834, about condition of the livestock when in the Blue Mountains:

Travelled over a rough steep mountain which took us most of the day to cross - Our animals are also in a poor condition to drive having had but little to eat at the last encampment (Shepard 1834:60-61).

- ° Jason Lee described the impact of the Blue Mountains on the cattle his party took to Oregon. He wrote on August 30, 1834:

Started at 6 o'clock and ascended a worse mountain than yesterday. It was with great difficulty that the cows could get up at all, but we at last reached the summit and traveled most of the day on the ridge, but we lost the view of the scenery, the smoke being so dense that we could see but a few yards. Many green pitch trees were burned down, and the fire was yet consuming them. The grass is mostly burnt up. Very little grass remains and that so dry that it is turned white (Lee 1916:256-257).

- ° Absalom B. Harden wrote on August 29, 1847, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

we saw several head of oxen today that had given out (Harden 1847)

- ° P. V. Crawford wrote on August 20, 1851, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

Here we found and passed some of our advanced company repairing a broken wagon (Crawford 1924:161).

Travel: Time Elapsed, Miles Traveled

- ° P. V. Crawford wrote on August 22, 1851, about the impact of the Blue Mountains on his teams:

We are now in the Blue mountains and find it very rough country. Much more so than the Rocky mountains, and our worn-out teams seem to appreciate the difference equal to ourselves.

- ° Jared Fox wrote on July 28, 1852, on the way to the descent into the Grande Ronde Valley:

Wednesday 28. Passed 8 miles good road & rather tolerable and hardly that and 8 miles of the worst possible road, too much for man or beast. At noon found one of my waggon tire broke but patched it up (Fox 1852:43).

- ° E. W. Conyers wrote on August 31, 1852, about condition of livestock on the second day into the Blue Mountains:

We found water standing in pools, also very good mountain grass in a deep ravine to our left. It was very steep, and hard getting our cattle in and out of this ravine. Here we found an ox that had been driven into this ravine for grass, but, being too weak to climb the steep hill, the owner had left him behind. We took the ox along with us, calling his name "Lazarus." He took the place of "Old Bill," the ox that we left by the road several days back. We are now near the summit of the Blue Mountains (Conyers 1906:494-495).

- ° Martha S. Read wrote on September 20, 1852, about entering the Grande Ronde Valley:

Saw 3 graves today and 13 dead cattle. Weather a little warmer to day but rather windy (Read 1986:244-245).

- ° John McAllister wrote on September 21, 1852:

steps after crossing the ridge follow this branch to a pine grove to the left here it commenced raining on us the wind blew a brisk breeze making it a little disagreeable (McAllister 1925:502)

- ° Martha S. Read wrote on September 22, 1852, about conditions in the Blue Mountains:

Found hard hills to day and very stony. Saw 5 graves and 5 dead cattle. The weather cold and rainy (Read 1986:245).

- ° John Newton Lewis wrote in the Blue Mountains on September 29, 1852:

the rode is some better today we daly passed one or less fragments of wagons this day we past 2 good wagons this was not a pleasant day by no means (Lewis 1852:29-30).

- ° John Newton Lewis wrote atop the Blue Mountains on September 30, 1852:

we past severl good wagons (Lewis 1852:30).

- ° Cecelia Adams and Parthenia Blank wrote on their second day in the Blue Mountains on October 5, 1852:

Mr Millers co. from Iowa are here entirely out of flour. Have some loose cattle which they kill now and then for good. Traded them some flour for beef, sold them some and lent them some to be repaid at The Dalles. Hard times. many cattle are failing and are very poor and a good many get lost among the thick timber. A good many wagons are left, some broken and some good and sound because the cattle are not able to take them along (Adams and Blank 1986:303).

- ° Henry Allyn wrote on August 14, 1853, on approaching the Grande Ronde Valley:

Father Allyn is a little on the mend, so as our provisions are getting short and we still are 300 miles from the settlements we thought it our duty to press towards the land of destination (Allyn 1924:428).

- ° Henry Allyn wrote on August 14, 1853, about traders taking advantage of hungry emigrants in the Grande Ronde Valley:

Here we come to another skinning post in the edge of the Grand Ronde Valley. Sunday as it was he deliberately walked out to skin. So he made for mules and offer to sell Indian ponies, and as he could not skin there he walked in and got a beef leg cut off at the knee and offered it to us at the low price of two dollars. As we did not see fit to be skinned with a cow's leg we pushed on to noon at the other edge of the valley (Allyn 1924:428).

- ° Amelia Stewart Knight wrote on August 16, 1853:

. . . there are also two or three trading posts here, and a great many fine looking Kayuse Indians riding round on their handsome ponies (Knight 1986:65-66).

- ° Catherine Amanda Stansbury Washburn wrote on August 23, 1853:

came to Grand round tonight it is beautiful valey on grand River there is a trading post here owned by a friend from Iowa (Washburn 1967:27)

- ° Maria A. Parsons Belshaw wrote on September 1, 1853, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

Here we camped. Found back of us a spring to water stock, good grass, had to go to mountains for wood. Saw 1 grave[,] 21 dead cattle[,] 2 horses, raining this afternoon good traveling 6 or 8

Travel: Time Elapsed, Miles Traveled

miles, after leaving Cold Springs on Powder River there no water[,]
but grass and volcanic rock. Traveled 10 miles (Belshaw
1932:241-242).

- ° George N. Taylor wrote on September 10, 1853, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

our Cattle are dying Occasionally (Taylor 1853:24)

- ° Sarah Sutton wrote on August 14-15, 1854, nearing the Grande Ronde Valley:

[August 14] 3 more of Mr Tiptons cattle died last night and this
morn . . .

Tuesday Aug 15 the axeltree of the wagon broke to day and we had
to leave it came up a very long hill and down the longest and
rockyest one we have all the way all the foot of it is the round
[Grande Ronde] (Sutton 1988:76-77).

- ° Philip Condit wrote on August 21-22, 1854, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

Monday Aug. 21 Traveled over the valley 8 miles and over the
mountains 10 miles to Grand Round [Grand Ronde] river, a fine
mountain stream Cy's wagon broke about two miles from the river
but all seemed to bear it patiently.

Tuesday Aug. 22 Staid in camp and mended the broken wagon. Got
an axel out of an old wagon and put in Cy's (Condit, P. 1854).

- ° Maria Parsons Belshaw wrote on September 2, 1853, on entering the Blue Mountains:

Saw 8 graves, on one it was said "found dead his horse near him the
man was shot through the head" saw 19 dead cattle (Belshaw
1932:242).

- ° Basil Longworth wrote on September 5, 1853, in the Blue Mountains:

This evening seven young men from the Mason Company came to our
camp. They had purchased three ponies and were packing through.
They left their employers in friendship, as many of their cattle
had died and they left a number of their wagons (Longworth
1959:54-55).

- ° Basil Longworth wrote on September 6, 1853, in the vicinity of Lee's Encampment:

While on Powder River Mr. Conoyer left a wagon. Mr. Edwards left
one at Grande Ronde and Mr. Crow left one thirty miles in the Blue
Mountains on account of the loss of many of their cattle
(Longworth 1959:54-55).

Indian Relations: Positive

Thousands of emigrants traveled across the American West in the nineteenth century with negative images of Indians fully in mind. Schooled with tales of frontier violence and nurtured by more than 300 "captivity narratives" chronicling Indian barbarity, they cloaked their fears in a determination to see Indians in unfavorable light. The emigrants, however, almost uniformly revised their attitudes when they met the Cayuse, Nez Perce, and Walla Walla in the Grande Ronde Valley and Blue Mountains. They liked these people. They praised their handsome features, envied their herds of horses, and traded eagerly for things necessary to sustain their travels.

The interactions between travelers and Indians in northeastern Oregon included the following positive relationships:

- Indians traded camas, salmon, peas, potatoes, and other foodstuffs to hungry emigrants
 - Indians traded horses to emigrants needed new animals
 - Indians served as guides, especially in crossing the Blue Mountains
 - Indians displayed good manners
 - Indians sometimes showed their commitment to Christianity or interest in that religion
 - Indians pointed out the route or warned of dangers ahead
- Peter Skene Ogden, a Hudson's Bay Company brigade leader, wrote on September 15, 1827, in the Grande Ronde Valley. Friendly Cayuse Indians provided information about American trappers who had penetrated the Snake River watershed to the southeast:

Saturday, [September] 14th [15th]. At 7 a.m. we started, advanced one mile and reached Clay River or commonly called Rivere de Grande Ronde. This river discharges in the south branch of the Columbia [Snake River], about two days march across land from Fort Nez Percy. At 1 p.m. we reached the Grande Ronde and encamped. . . . Shortly after we were encamped four Cayouses paid us a visit and report a party of American trappers were on their way to Fort Nez Percy, they still separated from them three days since. It may be so, but until I see them I shall not be convinced (Ogden 1971:6-7).

- Peter Skene Ogden purchased horses from the Cayuse Indians in the Grande Ronde Valley on September 16, 1827:

Sunday, [September] 15th [16th]. At sunrise we started, at the same time I sent Mr [Thomas] McKay with a trading assortment to the

Indian camp to procure horses In the evening Mr McKay rejoined us having traded two 2 year old horses at a reasonable price, averaging each fifteen skins Indians Tariff; more they would not part with (Ogden 1971:7).

- ° Cyrus Shepard wrote on August 28, 1834:

Thursday 28th August 1834 Awoke in a peaceful frame and committed myself to Him who alone is able to save -- Tarried all day in camp for the refreshing of animals -- A.M. visited the indians in company with Br. Lee, were treated in a most friendly manner asked into a lodge and had broiled salmon, cherries, etc., set before us -- Many of the indians came to our tent and passed several hours -- They have given four valuable horses to the mission for which Br. L gave them presents in return -- The indians tarried till nearly night when we had prayers, etc. The friendly manner in which we have been received by the indians is oweing in a great measure under God to Mr. McCay who has used his influence to recommend us in their favour -- The gift of horses is quite providential -- Afflicted with severe headache (Shepard 1834:59).

- ° Jason Lee wrote on August 28, 1834, about the Cayuse Indians in the Grande Ronde Valley:

Thursday [August 28] did not move camp. Walked a mile to the village to look for salmon and cammas, as our provisions were nearly spent, but they no salmon and were lean with their cammas. I suppose some of the Kioos who had been with us informed the chief that we were there and our objecting in coming to this country. We were invited into the chief's lodge. Dried salmon, choak cherries and water were set before us, of which we partook and conversed as well as we could by signs and the few words of Nez Perce that we had learned, but we were sadly puzzled to understand each other. The chief of the Walla Walla tribe was there and he showed me some old papers with scraps of writing on them and a calendar showing the day of the month with Sunday distinctly marked--written--I presume by some gentleman of the H[udson's] B[ay] Company. I then, in red ink, wrote my name and Daniel [Lee]'s, stating what we were, dated it and gave it to him and he seemed pleased with it. He soon made a sign for me to follow him, and he took me out and presented me an elegant horse and one of the Kioos presented Daniel a fine horse and one of the fattest I ever saw. We invited them to come to our lodge and in the afternoon two chiefs and others, more than could get into our tent came, and the Kioos chief and a brave, I think, gave me each a horse. I gave them knives, fish hooks, awls, etc., not of great value, but of considerable importance to them, in return. We smoked with them, sang a hymn, and commended them to God in prayer, and then dispersed, and prepared to go . . . (Lee 1916:255-256).

- ° Jason Lee on August 29, 1834, spoke of friendship with the Cayuse Indians in the Grande Ronde Valley:

Started early this morning [August 29] in pursuit of the horse gave me by the Wallah Wallah chief, he having broke his halter and gone. Met the chief coming to see us start, and told what I was after. He immediately returned to his lodge and sent a man for the horse and took me into the lodge and asked me if I would have something to eat. He wished to try my skill in medicine and presented a sick girl, probably afflicted with headache. I gave him some camphor, with directions how to use it. He accompanied me to our camp and the Kioos chief and others came to see us off, Mr. Shepard and I before the rest, and gave us a hearty shake of the hand and called us friends (Lee 1916:255-256).

- ° John Kirk Townsend wrote on August 31, 1834, about meeting Indians in the Grande Ronde Valley:

With the captain [Bonneville], came a whole troop of Indians, Kayouse, Nez Perces, &c. They were very friendly towards us, each of the chiefs taking us by the hand with great cordiality, appearing pleased to see us, and anxious to point out to us the easiest and most expeditious route to the lower country. These Indians are, almost universally, fine looking, robust men, with strong aqualine features, and a much more cheerful cast of countenance than is usual amongst the race. Some of the women might almost be called beautiful, and none that I have seen are homely. Their dresses are generally of thin deer or antelope skin, with occasionally a bodice of some linen stuffs, purchased from the whites, and their whole appearance is neat and cleanly, forming a very striking contrast to the greasy, filthy, and disgusting Snake females. I observed one young and very pretty looking woman, dressed in a great superabundance of finery, glittering with rings and beads, and flaunting in broad bands of scarlet cloth. She was mounted astride, --Indian fashion, --upon a fine bay horse, whose head and tail were decorated with scarlet and blue ribbons, and the saddle, upon which the fair one sat, was ornamented all over with beads and little hawk's bells. The damsel did not do us the honor to dismount, but seemed to keep warily aloof, as though she feared that some of us might be inordinately fascinated by her fine person and splendid equipments, and her whole deportment proved to us, pretty satisfactorily, that she was no common beauty, but the favored companion of one high in office, who was jealous of her slightest movement (Townsend 1978:161-163).

- ° Mary Richardson Walker wrote on August 25-26, 1838, about the Indian wife of the fur trapper Connor who was with her party entering the Grande Ronde Valley. Walker admired the woman's tenacity, labor, and childbearing skills:

August 25th Connor's wife was confined. She followed camp about 30 miles. At noon she collected fuel & prepared dinner. Gave birth to a daughter before sunset.

Indian Relations: Positive

August 26th Another quiet Sabbath. The squaw came into camp about 10 with her child in her arms. Smart as could be (Drury 1963[2]:115).

- ° Alvin Thompson Smith wrote on August 12, 1840, about securing an Indian guide for passage through the Grande Ronde Valley and Blue Mountains:

August 12th saw some Indians early this morning some of them came to camp before breckfast & we engaged one for a pilot camped in the grand round (Smith 1840).

- ° Medorem Crawford wrote on September 10, 1842, about securing useful information from Indians in the Grande Ronde Valley:

After dark two Indians came to camp on horseback. They were of a different tribe from any which we had seen. They had traps and appeared to have been out but a short time. They told us that we could get to Wala Wala in 3 days (Crawford 1897:19).

- ° Medorem Crawford wrote on September 12, 1842, about assistance from the Indians while crossing the Blue Mountains:

Horses strayed far from camp and scattered among the Indians' Horses. The Indians showed moral honesty by bringing horses to us which had strayed by themselves to some distance. Started at 9½ o'clock several Indians started with us one continued & said he would go to Dr. Whitmans (Crawford 1897: 19-20).

- ° Peter Hardeman Burnett wrote on October 1, 1843, about purchase of camas from the Indians in the Grande Ronde Valley:

October 1st. In this region abounds a peculiar vegetable called Kamas root, which has a sweet and pleasant taste, and which is also very nutritious food. It is about the size of a partridge egg, and is cured by being dried upon hot stones. We purchased large quantities of it from the numerous Indians we found in the vicinity (Wilkes 1845).

- ° James Clyman, camped in the Grande Ronde Valley, wrote on September 28, 1844:

[September] 28 Encamped in this vally are several hundred Indians of the Skuse nation now amalgamated with Shepaptin or Pierce nose nation 30 or 40 of these people visited us this afternoon & from whom we traded a little cammerce [camas] they bringing with them some peas & Squashes of their own raising they seemed to be anxious to see our wagons & cattle they being anxious to trade horses of which they have great Quantities for cattle & appear to be rapidly advancing in civilization (Clyman 1984:119-124).

- ° Joel Palmer wrote on September 11, 1845, while camped in the Grande

Ronde Valley:

An incident quite worth of note, occurred at this place. The chief (Aliquot by name) who had joined us at our other encampment, and had pursued this day's journey in company, had pitched his tent some three hundred yards to the rear of our camp. In the evening, in strolling about the camp, I came near his tent, and entered with the intention of employing his squaw in the soling of my moccasins; while she was engaged in this employment, a conversation had sprung up between the old chief and myself, in which he took occasion to ask me if I were a christian, as also whether there were many upon the road; to which questions I of course answered in the affirmative, supposing that he merely wished to know, whether I classed myself with the heathen or christians. On my return to our camp, some one of our party proposed that we should while away an hour or so, in a game at cards, which was readily assented to. We had but engaged in our amusement, when the old chief Aliquot made his appearance, holding a small stick in his hand; he stood transfixed for a moment, and then advanced to me, raising his hand, which held the stick in the act of chastising me, and gently taking me by the arm, said "Captain--Captain--no good; no good." You may guess my astonishment, at being thus lectured by a "Wild and untutored savage," twenty five hundred miles from a civilized land. I inwardly resolved to abandon card playing forever (Palmer 1847:53-54).

- ° Joel Palmer wrote on September 12, 1845, about the Indians of the Grande Ronde Valley:

At this spring branch we pitched our camp, and while here, were visited by great numbers of Indians, including men, squaws and paposes. These Indians have decidedly a better appearance than any I have met; tall and athletic in form, and of great symmetry of person; they are generally well clad, and observe pride in personal cleanliness. They brought wheat, corn, potatoes, peas, pumpkins, fish, &c. which they were anxious to dispose of for cloths, calico, nankins and other articles of wearing apparel; they also had dressed deer skins and moccasins; they had good horses, which they offered in exchange for cows and heifers; they would gladly exchange a horse for a cow, esteeming the cow as of equal value. They remained with us throughout the day, and when evening approached returned to their lodges along the river two miles distant. I noticed a few of the Nez Perces (Pierced Noses) tribe of Indians among them. Both of these tribes are under the influence and control of two Presbyterian missionaries, Dr. Whitman and Mr. Spalding, who have resided among them for the last ten years; the former among the Caaguas, which inhabit the country bordering on Wallawalla river and its tributaries, the Blue mountains and Grand round: the latter among the Nez Perces who inhabit the country lying along the Lewis river, and its tributaries, from the eastern base of the Blue mountains to the

Columbia river. These missionary establishments are of a like character to those farther north (Palmer 1847:54-55)

- ° Joel Palmer noted on September 12, 1845, that the Indians provided guide service for hungry emigrants who hurried toward the Whitman Mission for assistance:

Some of our party becoming scant of provision, started for Dr. Whitman's the missionary establishment referred to above, intending to rejoin us at Umatillo river, my old friend Aliquot generously proffered his services as pilot for them, which were readily accepted (Palmer 1847:55).

- ° Absalom B. Harden wrote on August 30, 1847, about trading with Indians in the Grande Ronde Valley:

here we incamp and the indians came to us in abundance some 30 or 40 tho they were very friendly and traded to us som of there horses for cattle and shirts & Brought us plenty of Salmon fish and Sold for shirts and powder and lead some of the boys swapped good rifels for A horse that is give a gun for a good horse (Harden 1847)

- ° Absalom B. Harden wrote on September 1, 1847, in the Blue Mountains about relations with the Indians:

plenty of bear and elk in theas mountans and indians in abundance through this counetry tho they have not done us aney injury yet they appear to be very friendely and wants to trade with us for clothing and give us fish that is Salmon and trade horses for Cows and flint Lock rifel guns Large bore at that they want sound stocks and single trigger they want powder and Lead & butcher knives of a Large size theas is the Kioose indians and they have the best Stock of Horses that I Ever Saw the most beautiful made (Harden 1847)

- ° William Wright Anderson wrote on August 19, 1848, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

here we saw several Cyse Indians they showed no sines of hostility (Anderson 1848:39)

- ° Honore-Timothee Lempfrit wrote on September 6, 1848, in the Grande Ronde Valley. He described meeting the Indians and how they hosted a "festival" to induce him to establish a mission among them:

Two Indian nations have established their lodges at the foot of these lovely hills, the Nez Perces and the Cayuse

We camped on the heights of the Grand Rond by the banks of the smaller of the two rivers that cross this immense prairie from south to north. The time is after dinner, about 4 to 5 in the

evening. I go for a short walk so that I can explore the country around us. Very soon the Indians come to seek me out to tell me that the two Great Chiefs of this Nation have come with their whole retinue to pay me a visit.

"Wait a moment" I said to myself, "This now is the real thing, I am going to find myself in the presence of their Eminences! Well the, let us go and see these Great Chiefs." I set of at a gallop.

When I arrived I was told that the chiefs were awaiting me in the tent of the Canadian who would serve us as interpreter. Then came the solemn moment! Gathered round a great fire were thirteen Indians. Two of whom were Thuote (Tawatoe) and Five Crows. Both were dressed the European fashion. They were wearing caps made from high quality blue cloth. Thuote sported a green suit, a red waistcoat and pale blue trousers made from a very fine material. Five Crows was also carefully dressed. They took off their caps as they greeted me. I walked around the assembled group, shaking hands with everyone.

Then the Great Chief spoke for a short while and the good Canadian immediately repeated in translation the reason for this official visit. [Lempfrit listened to speeches from the two chiefs and then explained that he had come to mount a mission to the Indians of the Oregon country. The chiefs then said they wanted to host a "festival" the following day.]

7th September [Lempfrit described the gathering of Americans and Indians for the great "festival.]

We arranged ourselves in a semicircle and then we advanced slowly to meet the procession. Now we are face to face! A dozen Indians mounted on superb horses had small drums that they tapped lightly with little drumsticks. The drums were bound around with horsehair and the sound they produced could either be muffled or very loud according to the wishes of the player. Behind them came the singers beating out the measure by striking the saddles of their horses. We were the first to halt. Then the long line of horses peeled off to the right and to the left and the two flags were brought up and set up beside our own. The white flag had a red cross at its centre and the other flag, the one that had inspired so much fear in the hearts of our Americans, was a red flag emblazoned with the arms of the United States! The Great Chiefs Five Crows and Thuote (Tawatoe) came forward while their Indian musicians played a fanfare. They shook hands with us, then several horsemen rode up and circled round our flags and immediately the peace-pipe ceremony got under way. I noticed that in circumstances such as these it is the newcomers who are expected to provide the tobacco. As we were unaware of the etiquette required by the ceremony the Indians let us see the great peace-pipe empty, then a huge amount of tobacco was hastily brought up.

Later on the two Great Chiefs requested me to follow them into the Canadian's tent. It was there that they repeated to me in essence what they had said the previous evening but this time I learned that this festival had been prepared especially for me, the objective being to commit me to come and establish my mission amongst their people! Then they brought me a large roll of papers. I thought I would find there the letters they had told me about, but instead, I found fourteen beautifully coloured engravings. These were the fourteen stations of the Road to the Cross. They told me that they had been given them by a Catholic Father. I also found other religious engravings amongst which was a Catholic Ladder. These were the letters they had to deliver to me! I told them to take great care of these things and that we would hang them up in the church I would come and build for them. After this short conversation I went back to have a look at the festival.

As the Great Chief had earlier announced that trading could take place most of the Indians had gone off to fetch horses and other items of barter. They came back shortly bringing some magnificent horses that we could acquire for very little; for example a very poor gun or blanket could be exchanged for a horse that in France would cost at least one hundred Louis. I spent a little time walking about among the rows of Indians as I wanted to study the variety of their costumes and more especially the colours of them. I had previously noticed that there were eighty-three horsemen on the right and only about thirty on the left. I was told that the reason why the group on the right consisted entirely of women while the group on the left were all men.

Shortly afterwards a large number of men and women carrying baskets filled with potatoes and Indian corn arrived. Sometimes there were two riders on the same horse, a man sitting up front and a woman sitting behind on the rump of the animal. This sight called to my mind the observation of an American lady, who came up to me, and having separated me from the other people in our party, showed me an Indian woman eating the lice on her man's head! The Indian woman searched them skilfully and nibbled them as we might relish a grain of salt! I have no idea what exquisite taste this good Indian woman could possibly find in this condiment! Perhaps it might have tasted like crab sauce!

Among the group of Indians I noticed a man of excellent physique. He was of good height and he an aquiline nose. Around his neck was a long string of bear claws. I was told that this decoration was a trophy representing his victories. Apparently he had killed several bears and had therefore been given permission to make a necklet with the claws of this formidable animal.

The festival went on until evening. It was not until about 7 o'clock that the chief's messenger called out to the crowd that the party was over and that everyone should return to their villages.

In a few minutes the huge swarms of Indians had vanished (Lempfrit 1984:128-135).

- ° While crossing the Blue Mountains on August 19, 1848, William Wright Anderson wrote:

here saw several Cyse Indians they showed no sines of hostility (Anderson 1848)

- ° William J. Watson wrote on August 17, 1849:

During the evening we were visited by several Ceyuse Indians, and their chief, who had papers to show that he was innocent of the death of Whiteman [sic], stating that he was very sorry and cried very much concerning it (Watson 1851:39).

- ° William J. Watson wrote on August 18, 1849, at the evening of the first day of ascending the Blue Mountains:

. . . in the afternoon we reached Rond river, where we encamped for the night, our Indian chief, his wife, and servants, with a large drove of horses, and twenty head of cattle traveling with us; he gave us some milk, and was very friendly (Watson 1851:39-40).

- ° Osborne Cross wrote on September 9, 1849, about trading with Indians in the Grande Ronde Valley:

A number of Indians came to our camp last evening and this morning, bringing some of their most inferior horses with them, to exchange for blankets, tobacco, and trinkets. These animals were very wild and equally vicious, as they could scarcely be approached without our running the risk of being bitten or kicked by them. They are generally rode with a lariat, fastened simply around the lower jaw, while a small pad, with wooden stirrups, constitutes the saddle. The Indians never mount their horses on the left side, and the bridle is of but little use to them in guiding, as it is principally done by pressing the legs close to the side of the animal, and the least touch of the bridle is sufficient to guide in any direction (Cross 1850:95-96).

- ° Lucia Loraine Williams wrote about meeting Indians in the Blue Mountains on August 12-13, 1851:

Bought potatoes and peas of Cayuse Indians (squaws). This tribe dresses like white people

13. Parted into three companies on account of grass being scarce. Are out of danger from Indians now. Two Indians moved with us. One of them showed how he had killed a Snake Indian. His arrow was bloody. Told where he shot him and how he tore off the scalp. I could not help but shudder. We are alone (Williams 1984:144).

- ° P. V. Crawford wrote on August 20, 1851, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

The surroundings here are most delightful. We found Cayuse Indians here, with peas and potatoes for sale. All well (Crawford 1924:162).

- ° Charles A. Brandt wrote on August 31, 1851, near the descent into the Grande Ronde Valley:

We saw the first Cayuse Indians here. They are fine looking fellows and talk English very well. They have gardens and raise some vegetables and grains (Brandt 1851:23).

- ° Harriet Talcott Buckingham noted on September 8, 1851:

Thousands of horses - many of them curiously spotted feed upon the mountain side. Hundreds of Indians of the Nez Percies tribe, are camped here, & lazily greet us with invitations to swap, saw one child almost if not quite white among them. The women are all dressed in native costumes of dressed antelope skins - fringed & ornamented with moccasins on their dainty little feet. They came to see us mounted astride of great sleek horses, & laugh & chatter among themselves like just so many gay school girls. Their long black hair is braided into two long plaits that hang down & on top of the head is a gay little hat shaped like a flower pot -- made of woven grass -- it serves to pick berries in or to drink out of, as it holds water it being so closely woven. Brass rings are to be seen on waist & ankle they have an air of maidenly reserve that wins respect. The men are all fine specimens of physical development, & have not yet become contaminated with the vices of white men and the whole tribe are very superior to any we have yet seen. One pretty squaw took my knitting & very proudly took a few stichs -- the remains of some of the teachings of Mrs Whitman that had been remembered

Grass was tall & luxurious in this Indian Paradise (Buckingham 1984:49-50).

- ° Elizabeth Wood wrote about September 9, 1851, regarding meeting Indians in the Blue Mountains:

A large number Indians followed us here, for the purpose of trading with the emigrants. They will exchange a good pony for a good cow, or give a squaw for a pony! or a pony for \$100 (Wood 1984:177).

- ° John S. Zieber wrote on September 17-18, 1851, in the Grande Ronde Valley about trading relations with the Indians and their character:

Last night the Indians we had met in the day came to our camp and brought large black-looking fish which they traded to us and seemed to be very friendly. Upon being invited to partake of some supper they took off their hats and caps and in their language asked a blessing, at least such it was supposed to be. They sat round our

fire and talked and answered questions and gave us the names of different things. At about 9 o'clock they sang a hymn and prayed in their language. The same was repeated this morning by daybreak. The tune of the matin hymn was plaintive and sweet, very good time was kept and all of their party joined in singing. We traveled 15 miles and camped within 4 miles of the Indian camp. Many of them came to see us and to swap.

Thursday, September 18--This morning we reached the Indian camp on a small creek and here trading commenced for corn, peas, potatoes and berries. They also had roots and ponies. A number were bought of them, after which we went 4 miles farther up one of the most beautiful valleys I ever saw and camped at a spring. The Indians were again with us in number, and anxious to trade peas and ponies, the latter for cows (Zieber 1921:329).

- ° Jared Fox wrote on July 28, 1852, while in the Blue Mountains:

The mountains now at this place are considerably covered with timber as far off as I can see. Saw plenty of Indians today & lots of the best of ponies. Gave an old Indian some dinner & he laid off his hat & returned thanks before he eat to the giver of all good. Sage brush has stepped out now we come to timber & I am right glad (Fox 1852).

- ° E. W. Conyers wrote on August 29, 1852, while camped on the Grande Ronde River:

While camped at this place we had a great many Indian visitors. One tall, slim young squaw, daughter of a chief, dressed in a black velvet dress, who claimed to be the wife of a Hudson's Bay man by the name of McClane [William McBean], who, she said, had deserted her. A short time afterward another lot of Indians came riding up on horseback to our camp. Among them was one small-sized squaw with light auburn hair, and her features that of a white woman. She had a small papoose strapped to her back. While standing out a few feet from our wagon, viewing the arrival and departure of the different squads of Indians, I noticed a small-sized Indian riding towards our camp on a full gallop. Just then I heard some one just back of me exclaim: "I wonder where that d--d Indian came from." On looking around I saw that it was a full-blood Indian that had made this remark. I said to him, "You seem to talk the white man's language quite well. Where did you learn it?" He answered that he had lived with Mr. Whitman a long time, and he had taught him to speak and read the white man's language. He told me that his name was "Dick," and that Mr. Whitman was a very good man. While at this camp we lost our horse. Mr. Burns, being fearful that the Indians would try to steal her, had tied her with a strong rope to the back end of our wagon and only a few feet from the head of his bed, thinking that no one could take her away without him knowing it, but the cunning red man was a little too foxy for us. They stole the horse, rope and all, without us knowing anything about it

until the next morning. William and two or three others from our camp went out in the valley looking for the horse, but naturally failed in their efforts. While out in the valley they heard a number of persons singing an old Methodist hymn. Thinking it was some emigrant company that was holding a meeting, they approached the grove where the meeting was being held, and, to their surprise, discovered that it was a large body of Indians who had met in the grove for the purpose of holding a religious meeting. I suppose they had heard "the good news of the gospel" from the lips of the Rev. Whitman. Not desiring to disturb the services, the boys withdrew and returned to camp, minus the horse (Conyers 1906:492-494).

- ° E. W. Conyers wrote on August 31, 1852, on his second day in ascending the Blue Mountains about Indians who visited the camp:

Soon after going into camp two Indians of the Nez Perce tribe visited our camp and, without any invitation, concluded to remain with us all night. They had traded a pony to some emigrant for a steer, and some one had taken the liberty of confiscating the steer for their own use, and these two Indians, who were well armed, were on the hunt for the thieves. We gave them their supper, which seemed to please them very much, and by the way they caused the food to disappear one would think that this was their first meal for a month past. They both had the appetite of a hungry bear. It had the appearance of trying to fill a barrel which had no head in it. They consumed one pint of sugar each with their meal. After supper was over all had to partake of the pipe of peace. Finally, the pipe was passed to Mrs. Burns, who was rather inclined to rebel, never having smoked tobacco, and then the very thought of putting the stem of that old pipe in her mouth was to her worse than taking a dose of castor oil. She gently took her apron and with it wiped the stem of the pipe, and then merely touched the stem to her lips. This act of hers caused a smile to come over the countenance of both Indians, but it seemed to satisfy them. Suffice it to say, we kept a close watch all that night. The Indians were up and off quite early this morning, before breakfast, on the hunt for the emigrant who had stolen their steer (Conyers 1906:494-495).

- ° John Tully Kerns wrote on September 1-2, 1852, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

Saw quite a number of the Nez Perce tribe of Indians here, who appear to be more intelligent, clean and sociable than any Indians I ever saw. Their chief (Ellis) was taken to the States and educated by Dr. Whitman and seems much of a gentleman. They have some good horses, as good as I ever saw in any country, and are eager to trade them for cattle. I traded off a couple of cows which were about give out, to them and got two very good ponies for them and five dollars in money

Thursday, September 2 . . . The Indians are after us yet to trade for cows. Oxen they will not have. Their squaws are good looking and dress quite tasty, ride fine horses and on saddles beautifully decorated with beads. 2215 miles (Kerns 1917:181-182).

- ° Cornelia A. Sharp wrote on September 2, 1852, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

We were visited by a great many Indians, including all sorts and sizes (Sharp 1904:184).

- ° James Aikin, Jr., wrote on September 15, 1852, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

plenty of Kioose (Cayuse) Indians with vegetables to sell. . . (Aikin 1909:271).

- ° Amelia Stewart Knight wrote on August 16, 1853, upon arriving in the Grande Ronde Valley:

. . . have camped close to a spring, which runs through it, there are also two or three trading posts here, and a great many fine looking Kayuse Indians riding round on their handsome ponies.-- (Knight 1986:65-66).

She continued on August 17, 1853:

. . . bought some fresh Salmon of the Indians this evening, which is quite a treat to us, it is the first we have seen (Knight 1986:66).

- ° Amelia Stewart Knight wrote on August 19, 1853, in the Blue Mountains:

without water after looking in vain for water, we were about to give up as it was near night, when husband came across a company of friendly Kayuse Indians about to camp who showed him where to find water, half a mile down a steep mountain, and we have all camped together, with plenty of pine timber all around us (Knight 1986:66-67)

- ° John or David Dinwiddie wrote on August 26-27, 1853, on entering the Grande Ronde Valley:

Turned down the stream about one mile and camped at a little grove, where some Indian families reside, they were very friendly and were gratified to have us to camp there, they can talk English well. A number of Indians in the valley trading, have a large number of fine horses and cattle to trade they are fine smart looking Indians, they are of the Nez Perces (Pierced Noses) Indians. . . .the valley belongs to the Nez Perces Indians, their country extends north to the Columbia River, on that River they principally reside.

Indian Relations: Positive

Saturday [August] 27th Traveled across the valley and camped at the foot of the mountain, the mountain here is covered with pine timber, it is eight miles across it, here is a small creek--here was several hundred Indians [Nez Perce] that came in for the purpose of trading, they had a great many fine horses to sell, they had Potatoes, peas and some apples to trade but asked high prices for them, these Indians have made considerable advance toward civilization, and seem anxious to learn the customs and manners of the white. (Dinwiddie 1928:11-12)

- ° George Belshaw wrote on September 1, 1853:

This round valey is right in the blue Mountains and quantities of Indians and Poneys.

they sell their poneys to the Emigrant and some potatoes and peas. they appear very friendly see plenty of large pines and furs (Belshaw 1960:44).

- ° Basil Longworth wrote on September 2, 1853:

. . . we found ourselves in a beautiful place called Grande Ronde Valley. Here we were met by a host of Indians who wished to sell us peas, potatoes, etc., they also desired to purchase a number of articles (Longworth 1959:54).

- ° George N. Taylor wrote on September 9-10, 1853:

The Grand rond Valley is About Sixteen mls wide by About thirty Long Surounded by high Mn on All Sides the Valley is Covered with fine grass running on this grass are Large droves of the finest Looking horse Owned by the Kiuse and Nesperse Indians They are good traders They Come here to Gather Cammice for Winter use. . . .

Sept 10th To day we Layed by to Lett the Cattle rest In Course of the day there was A great many Indians About the camp were Busy trading for Guns Clotheing Blankets and Sutch Like Articles (Taylor 1853:24)

- ° Samuel Handsaker wrote on September 13, 1853, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

[September] 13th These Indians are of the Cayouse tribe - are very numerous and wealthy - and are the first we have seen that would not beg. Their wealth consists in horses and cattle. Of the former, I am told that they average 400 to each person; and prettier ponies I have never seen. The most of them have more or less white about them. The Indians never go on foot, but must ride; no matter how short a distance. They will go in a gallop all the time (Handsaker 1965:29-30).

- ° George Miller West, an emigrant of 1853, recalled:

We pass on over the divide and descend into Grand Round Valley. Here was an abundance of good feed. Here were many Indians. A Chief wishing to hire a carpenter. I was pointed out to him. He said he would see me in the morning. Next morning he came bringing a cart of what he would pay me in. Two of his daughters. Young girls perhaps sixteen and eighteen. He told me if I would stay and build him a mill, I could take my choice of the girls and that he would give me one thousand ponies beside.

Coquetted with the young ladies and found either willing and each wanted me to choose her but I had no intention of stopping. Mr Indian and his men were greatly disappointed at my refusal (West n.d.:11).

- ° Celinda Hines wrote on September 5, 1853, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

We were thronged with indians nearly all on ponies. It reminded me very forcibly of an old fashioned general trading. They had plenty of money \$50.00 gold pieces which they probably got by selling horses to emigrants. After dinner we went 8 miles to the other side of the valley. Camped near a pretty mountain stream. Indian lodges near. Thronged with indians during our stay. Some belong to the Kayuses some to the Nez Perces. At our noon camp [unreadable] perce chief with whom [unreadable] some acquaintance. He seemed very pleasant & spoke Eng. with such a pleasing awkwardness as to amuse us very much. Others were there who had seen uncle. Before noon we met many mostly women on ponies who said they were travelling to the Shoshone country. They had peas with them for food which they would swap for flour or bread. One proposed to swap her baby for a shirt. These indians here seem more intelligent & happy than any we have seen (Hines 1986:120-122)

- ° Elizabeth Austin wrote on September 4, 1854, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

Monday, Sept. 4th We traveled 8 miles today and stopped near a stream of water at the foot of the mountains. A great many Indians came to trade. It rained all night last night (Goodell and Austin 1988:123-124).

Indian Relations: Negative

Almost all relations between Indians and travelers in the Grande Ronde Valley and Blue Mountains were positive. The few accounts of negative perceptions were unusual. James Clyman's blaming the Indians for purposefully burning the hills with vindictive purpose was a reflection on his lack of understanding of the Indian use of fire as a means of manipulating nature. Two travelers did not appreciate the smells from the Indian camp. Considering the poor personal hygiene and infrequent washing of clothing, the emigrants had little room to complain!

- ° James Clyman wrote on September 27, 1844, to blame the Indians for a fire sweeping through the region near the entrance to the Grande Ronde Valley. Clyman had no evidence of Indian involvement.

[September] 27th . . . As we caught our horses for our afternoons travel Some Indian as is their habit when they discover Strangers in their country set fire to the grass about a half mile ahiad of us our rout being N. & a strong south wind blowing the fire kept ahead of us through the hills about 6 or 8 miles and when we overtook the fire we had some difficulty in passing it but all got through nearly suffocated with smoke & dust & entered the grand Round vally the whole mountains which surround this vally completely enveloped in fire and Smoke (Clyman 1984:119-124).

- ° William Wright Anderson wrote on August 19, 1848, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

here we saw several Cyse Indians they showed no sines of hostility one of our [company] bought a pony of one of them for which he gave a boat but the Indian soon became dissatisfied and wanted to rue so to keep peace the man rue back agan and we drove to the top of the mountain and camped . . . (Anderson 1848:39).

- ° Honore-Timothee Lempfrit wrote on September 8, 1848, about an encounter with Indians atop the Blue Mountains:

. . . having arrived at the summit we saw a group of horsemen riding towards us and shouting at the top of their voices. For a moment I was apprehensive, but was soon reassured when the good Indians came up to us. I much admired their beautiful horses. Soon, however, we had to take our leave of them as their provisions they were carrying with them were putrid! This was indeed a travelling stench as the air was polluted everywhere they had been (Lempfrit 1984:138).

- ° Philura Vandeburgh Clinkinbeard, an emigrant of 1864, later recalled:

Here we passed Indian camps and rank-smelling places they were. The tanning deerskins, the drying meat, the piles of dried fish,

Indian Relations: Negative

the careless disposal of refuse, all in all their camps were not pleasant places. Even long-deserted camps where the floors of the lodges were grass-grown retained the odor. We children insisted that we could smell an Indian camp a mile (Clinkinbeard 1952:88).

Future Prospects: Agriculture

Nineteenth century travelers through the Grande Ronde Valley and Blue Mountains were primarily agrarians. Living in an era when Americans celebrated the yeoman as the backbone of democracy and a natural producer with an intuitive sense of justice, they embraced the pastoral ideal. The Grande Ronde Valley and mountain meadows in the Blues beckoned alluringly with agricultural potentials. Nature seemed to have willed that this region would someday yield to the hand of the Euroamerican, bend to his plow, and feed his livestock.

- ° Robert Stuart, an eastward bound fur trapper from Astoria, wrote on August 7, 1812, about the Grande Ronde Valley:

It [Hot Lake] is much frequented by Elk, which animal is tolerably plenty in the adjacent mountains, and it would appear from their numerous horns, strewn every where round the pond, that they visit it most in the spring of the year; continuing a few miles farther through the plain, a large Creek [Catherine Creek] comes from the S. E. and nearly opposite its mouth, another from the west, both of which join the Glaize [Grande Ronde] River a little way about its re-entrance into the narrows, where it is upwards of one hundred yards wide. This plot is at least 60 miles in circumference, in but few places swampy, of an excellent soil, and almost a dead level; with the Glaize and its two branches just mentioned meandering in every direction through it--the banks of these streams are high and muddy, covered in particular places with dwarf Cottonwoods, and the residue in a large growth of Willows, which afford an inexhaustible stock of food for the incredible multitudes of the Furr'd race who reside in their bosoms, but the S. East fork excels both the others, particularly in the number of its inhabitants of the Otter tribe--A few Deer and Racoon are the only animals you may add to the Elk, Beaver, and otter as being natives of this tract-- (Stuart 1953:71-72).

- ° Nathaniel Wyeth, an American fur trapper, wrote about the Grande Ronde Valley on October 12, 1832:

[October] 12th The party here remained one day in a valley [Grande Ronde] of about 20 miles long and 15 wide of a very fertile soil in this valley (Wyeth 1899:172).

- ° Sarah White Smith wrote on August 27, 1838, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

[August] 27th. We are encamped in a beautiful place on the creek where the soil is good for cultivation (Drury 1966[3]:107).

- ° Joseph Williams wrote on September 8, 1841:

Future Prospects: Agriculture

[September] 8th. We staid on the Grand Round, a beautiful plain, about twenty miles long and ten broad. It is well calculated for farming, and well watered. Here we pass some beautiful pines, spruce, and fir trees (Williams 1843).

- ° Medorem Crawford wrote on September 10, 1842:

Sept. 10. Below was a most beautiful valley as I ever saw. We found good grass, a delightful road, & a fertile country in the valley, we crossed some small water courses and camp on a beautiful Creek at 3 o'clock . . . (Crawford 1897:19).

- ° Overton Johnson and William Winter wrote in September, 1843:

There are some Balm trees on the River, and the Mountains are covered with Pine. -- Much the largest portion of the soil is very rich, and the whole is covered with a superior quality of grass (Johnson and Winter 1846:32).

- ° Peter Hardeman Burnett wrote on October 1, 1843:

October 1st. We this day came to the "Grand Round," the name of an immense valley, one hundred miles in circumference, which will vie in fertility with the valley of the Missouri, or indeed, with any spot in the world (Wilkes 1845).

- ° James W. Nesmith wrote on September 29, 1843:

Friday, September 29. Soil to-day assumed a more fertile appearance than any I have seen west of the mountains, in some places covered with beautiful green grass, giving it the appearance of spring (Nesmith 1906:353).

- ° John C. Fremont wrote on October 17, 1843:

About two in the afternoon we reached a high point of the dividing ridge, from which we obtained a good view of the Grand Rond--a beautiful level basin, or mountain valley, covered with good grass, on a rich soil, abundantly watered, and surrounded by high and well-timbered mountains; and its name descriptive of its form--the great circle. It is a place--one of the few we have seen in our journey so far--where a farmer would delight to establish himself, if he were content to live in the seclusion which it imposes. . . .

The old grass had been lately burnt off from the surrounding hills, and, wherever the fire had passed, there was a recent growth of strong, green, and vigorous grass; and the soil of the level prairie, which sweeps directly up to the foot of the surrounding mountains, appears to be very rich, producing flax spontaneously and luxuriantly in various places.

Analysis of the Grand Rond soil.

Future Prospects: Agriculture

Silica	70.81
Alumina	10.97
Lime and magnesia.	1.38
Oxide of iron.	2.21
Vegetable matter, partly decomposed	8.16
Water and loss	5.46
Phosphate of lime	<u>1.01</u>
	100.00

The elevation of this encampment is 2,940 feet above the sea.

(Fremont 1970:545-547).

- ° William Winter and Overton Johnson crossed the Blue Mountains in 1843 and published their assessment of the region in 1846:

The Blue Mountains, which form the Eastern boundary of the Walawala Valley, cover an extent of country about seventy-five miles broad, and are, we believe, about nine-tenths timbered; through these mountains there are numerous small valleys, furnishing in many places, good soil, and every where fine pasture, upon which stock of every description can be kept in good condition throughout the year. But as the valleys in the mountains do not, perhaps, cover more than one twentieth of the whole area, this portion of country could only sustain a sparse population, and keep a limited amount of stock (Winter and Johnson 1846:137).

- ° Samuel B. Crockett wrote at Linnton on the Willamette River on February 16, 1845, about his travels through northeastern Oregon:

Between Fort Bousa and the blue mountains the country is hilly and moantaneous and is very difficult for waggons to pass, but immediately east of the blue mountains is a section of very rich and beautifull country and if it were not for the great number of indians their it would be a good chance for settlements (Crockett 1845).

- ° Joel Palmer wrote on September 11, 1845, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

This bottom affords an excellent situation for a settlement, possessing more advantages in that respect, than any found since our departure from the lower Platte river (Palmer 1847:53).

- ° Absalom B. Harden wrote on August 30, 1847, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

the valleys is very rich and fertile and would purduse grain in abundence if tilled but no one to til the soil here but indians and thay will not do it (Harden 1847).

- ° Loren B. Hastings wrote on October 3, 1847, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

Future Prospects: Agriculture

The Grand Ronde is an interesting place; it is a round prairie about 20 miles in diameter, with a very black, rich soil and good grass surrounded by the majestic Blue mountains covered with winter green trees. A small river called Grande Ronde river runs through the center and any number of good springs breaking out at the foot of the mountain; this 'some day' will be a good settlement (Hastings 1926:22).

- ° Elizabeth Dixon Smith wrote on October 6, 1847, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

O if grand round was west of the Cascade mountains how soon it would be taken up it is level and covered with grass and watered with brooks and springs it has a river flowing through it no timber except on the river but the mountains which surround it are promisquisly covered with pine and fur (Smith 1983:136).

- ° Benjamin Cleaver wrote on August 18, 1848, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

This grand Rond Bottom is very fertile (Cleaver 1848)

- ° Honore-Timothee Lempfrit wrote on September 6, 1848, about the Grande Ronde Valley:

It is really one of the loveliest places in the whole world. Just imagine an enormous arena measuring about fifteen miles wide by twenty-five miles long, entirely surrounded by the most beautiful wooded mountains and watered by two lovely rivers. The extremely fertile soil supports a luxuriant vegetation and to the south there are some lovely rolling hills that seem to beg to be put under cultivation, being fatigued by producing nothing but trees whose branches fall to the ground from old age (Lemfrit 1984:129).

- ° William J. Watson wrote on August 17, 1849:

. . . we came to the Grand Rond, which is one of the few places in which the white man who is fond of a retired life could make his home. It has a splendid soil, and various small creeks running through it thickly set with bushes of various kinds, and surrounded by high and picturesque mountains, covered with lofty pine trees, and about fifteen miles in diameter. It has a very rich soil covered with grass (Watson 1851:39).

- ° John Tully Kerns wrote on September 1, 1852:

This is a valley nearly round in shape and has Powder river and Grand Ronde rivers, delightful waters uniting and coursing north through its center. Besides several spring branches which trinkle down the lofty mountain sides and make their way to the river, through it. It is about twenty-five miles in diameter and would give homes to 1,500 or 2,000 settlers. There are high mountains on

all sides, most of them covered with forests of pine and fir timber (Kerns 1852:181-182).

- ° John or David Dinwiddie wrote on August 26, 1853:

. . . the valley is about 20 or 25 miles in extent, high mountains enclose it on every side, through the middle of the valley flows Grand Ronde River, from South west to North west. Its banks lined with cottonwood, balm of gilead, elder, cherry and willow, many spring brooks coming down from the mountain several small creeks course through it and empty themselves into the river their courses marked frequent clumps of green trees, part of the mountains covered with dark forests. Verily this is a place to please the eye of a farmer the soil is of an excellent quality, producing an abundant crop of grass of different varieties, among the rest I noticed clover, a species of timothy, bunch grass, and flax, the valley contains an area of about four or five hundred square miles of tillable land, and will one day contain a heavy population. Timber may be procured from the mountains with little trouble . . . (Dinwiddie 1928:11-12).

- ° Basil Longworth wrote in the Blue Mountains on September 5, 1853:

We traveled through a heavy forest of pine timber and many beautiful sites for splendid rural dwellings and rich farms (Longworth 1959:54-55).

- ° Basil Longworth wrote near Lee's Encampment atop the Blue Mountains on September 6, 1853:

This day the road was very stony and rough but not mountainous and in many places the ground was poor. For the last seven days' travel most of the land has a rich soil and in one day will be a densely populated community (Longworth 1959:54-55).

- ° Samuel Handsaker wrote on September 12, 1853, about the Grande Ronde Valley:

[September] 12th A drive of eight miles this morning over bad roads brought us into the Grande Ronde valley. It is perhaps the richest tract of land that the emigrant has seen since leaving the Missouri river and he rejoices at seeing soil once more, which if property cultivated, would yield good returned for his labor. Vegetables are raised here on a small scale by the Indians which they "swap" to the emigrants. [Handsaker wrote "returned.'](Handsaker 1965:29-30).

- ° Sarah Sutton wrote on August 14, 1854, on approaching the Grande Ronde Valley:

. . . saw some handsomer situations for farms than I saw in Ill. the land very rich and the side of the mountains covered with pine

Future Prospects: Agriculture

and fur and beautiful place to build by scattering fur trees and springs. we have stopt for the night within 3 miles of G round on a good spring, grass good fur timber very pretty near us the hills low, but we beleive it too cold to live here as there is now frost every night (Sutton 1988:76-77).

- ° John Crawford wrote on September 19, 1861:

Some of the Emigrants conclude to stay & try their luck in this beautiful valley raised a pole & the stripes & stars (Crawford 1861).

- ° Harriet A. Loughary wrote on August 11, 1864, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

Beautiful grass six feet high is being cut and vegetables and small fruits in great abundance. The little town of Lagrande with 200 inhabitants is located in the valley. We leave this place after dinner, climbing a steep hill a mile in length, take the old emmigrant road to Grand Ronde river and camp for the night (Loughary 1989:156).

- ° S. B. Eakin, Jr., wrote on August 7, 1866:

Several of us started out ahead of the train to find grain to feed in the mountains. It was just harvest time and no new grain and old grain was scarce. We arrived in "La Grande" about noon, where we found barley at \$2.75 per cwt. "Gold." After about an hour's stop we proceeded two or three miles west of the village and camped for noon on Grand Round River, at the crossing . . . (Eakin 1970:25).

- ° Frank Stevens wrote on July 8, 1880:

Thursday, July 8th: Started from camp in good season and traveled on over some hilly country and then came down a very steep, long hill, into the Grand Ronde Valley and camped for dinner. Came on a few miles and came to Union, a pretty little town and county seat, and is beautifully ornamented with trees and gardens. Came on a few miles from town and camped for the night. We are but in the edge of this valley, but find it the best we have seen, and as we go on it keeps getting better. On all sides the mts. are covered with timber, so the people have plenty for fencing and [illegible]. All along is a clear stream of water and the ground is as level as a floor. I would be contented to stay here if I could get land, but the biggest part of it is all taken and nothing remains but what has been picked over (Stevens 1880:25).

Future Prospects: Timber Harvest

The timber of the Blue Mountains drew almost universal praise and wonderment from the travelers. Few had ever before witnessed such majestic stands of conifers. Some guessed at the height of the trees; others measured the trunks to confirm their estimations. A few saw the stands of timber, "winter green trees" as one phrased it, as reminders of places where they had formerly lived. Some even calculated the dollar value of the timber or the numbers of rails they could split from a tree. Many calculated the proximity of the forests to the meadows of the Grande Ronde Valley and the ease with which they could enclose new farms in a time before the invention of barbed wire.

- ° Cyrus Shepard wrote on August 29, 1834, about the commercial value of timber on the Blue Mountains:

This mountain (or rather these mountains) are principally covered with timber such as pitch pine, spruce, bald spruce, fir hemlock, etc., some of the pines are large and in Massachusetts would be worth \$20 or \$30 apiece (Shepard 1834:60-61).

- ° Absalom B. Harden wrote in the Grande Ronde Valley on August 30, 1847:

here the mountains is beautiful clothed with yellow pine beautiful and tall (Harden 1847)

- ° Absalom B. Harden wrote on September 1, 1847, in the Blue Mountains:

here is beautiful timber tho it is verity of pine and fur timber theas mountains is all beautifuly set with a heavey groth of timber (Harden 1847)

- ° Dr. Thomas White, an emigrant of 1852, wrote on April 19, 1853, about the prospects of the Grande Ronde Valley:

. . . the Grand Round is a beautiful vally, shut in by mountains, on all sides, except a gap at the west, for the ingress & another at the east for the egress of the Grand round River, which runs nearly through the middle of it, carr[y]ing with it a belt of cottonwood timber. this vally lys at the east base of the Blue mountains, & contains not less than 6 Townships of the very best Land watered in all directions by springs, & spring brooks, & the grand round River, with timber all around the vally on the mountains, & in great abundance in the Blue mountains, out of which comes the Grand Round River, a stream larger than the Pegion, with fine oppertunities for milling (White 1964:18).

- ° John or David Dinwiddie wrote on August 26, 1853:

. . . part of the mountains covered with dark forests. Verily this is a place to please the eye of a farmer the soil is of an

Future Prospects: Timber Harvest

excellent quality, producing an abundant crop of grass of different varieties, among the rest I noticed clover, a species of timothy, bunch grass, and flax, the valley contains an area of about four or five hundred square miles of tillable land, and will one day contain a heavy population. Timber may be procured from the mountains with little trouble. . . (Dinwiddie 1928:11-12).

- ° William J. Watson wrote on August 20, 1849, about the timber he saw on the third day of travel in the Blue Mountains:

To day we were early in motion, and crossing a small stream thickly timbered with small pine trees about a foot in diameter, and from fifty to two hundred feet high, which we often saw in the mountains which were everywhere covered with them, making the most beautiful groves that I ever beheld, some of them two hundred feet high, and thickly set with gum grass, which gave them a most enticing appearance, after traveling several hundred miles, seeing not a tree along the parched up valley of Snake River, where the wild sage assumed the place of the tall, beautiful pines, and the hot sands instead of a rich soil covered with a variety of rich grass. (Watson 1851:39-40).

- ° Osborne Cross assessed the timber on the Blue Mountains on September 10, 1849:

The soil on the mountains is of a dark vegetable mould, and thickly covered with timber, consisting of hemlock and fir, hardly surpassed by any in the United States. The timber is not generally as large as that on the banks of the Willamette, but equally as tall and abundant (Cross 1850:95-96).

- ° Elizabeth Wood wrote about September 9, 1851, regarding the timber she saw on the eastern slopes of the Blue Mountains:

As we ascended the high hills upon leaving this delightful valley, we found that the trees which looked like bushes, were of the very largest and tallest growth. Some of them I was told would make 300 rails, and they would, evidently, the best kind of saw logs (Wood 1984:177).

- ° Jared Fox wrote on July 29, 1852, about timber in the Blue Mountains:

Considerable of the trail today has led through thick & tall timber, pine & spruce mostly, very tall & straight. I measured one old one by the side of the road with my rule & it measured 125 feet and was broke off about 6 inches through at top & gone. It was about 2 feet through (Fox 1852).

- ° Samuel Dexter Francis on September 11, 1852, expressed pleasure over the timber in the Blue Mountains:

Future Prospects: Timber Harvest

The soil looks good and the handsomest timber I ever saw, most of it pitch pine or a specie of the yellow, some fur, verry strait, tall and some pretty large, but I suppose not a begining to what it is ahead (Francis 1852:105).

- ° Lydia Rudd wrote on September 11, 1852, in the Blue Mountains:

these mountains are covered with the largest and beautiful timber the yellow pine mixed with the fir (Rudd 1852)

- ° Charlotte Stearns Pengra wrote on August 25, 1853, about timber in the Blue Mountains:

Have traveled 18 miles over the mountains and stones, have had the pleasure of excellent shade most of the way as we have had much of the time since strikeing the mountains, they are finely timbered with Fir Pine and Hemlock many of the trees would measure from 150 to 160 feet in hight, are encamped at Lees encampment (Pengra 1966:54-55).

- ° Maria Parsons Belshaw wrote on September 2, 1853, on ascending the Blue Mountains:

Such hills as never were viewed by us poor mortals before, or such beautiful tall straight pine trees from one hundred to one hundred and fifty feet high, from 1 to 3 feet thick (Belshaw 1932:242).

Future Prospects: Mining

In the early 1850s emigrants found traces of gold in northern Malheur County. While a few washed the gravels, all pushed on to the Willamette Valley. During the summer of 1861, however, prospectors rigorously explored the surface mineral resources of northeastern Oregon and north-central Idaho. Their investigations confirmed excellent placer and lode deposits. Travelers along the Oregon Trail met the miners and witnessed the spread of new communities which followed in the wake of the gold rush.

° John Crawford wrote on September 17-18, 1861, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

Sept. 18 Wednesday Branch of Grand Ronde River Gentlemen from Coffins camp stayed with us last night & this morning at 7 we all started across the valley over beautiful level country fine soil & beautiful prospect 7 miles to camp on a Small Creek at foot of hill--number of prospectors & miners are congregated here & prospects of gold are good, an attempt at settlement is being made distance 7 miles had fresh potatoes & onions.

Sept. 19 Thursday Grand Rond Lay be today. Capt. with a guide went by a pack trail to Walla Walla Miners & prospectors continually arriving & leaving. Some of the Emigrants conclude to stay & try their luck in this beautiful valley raised a pole & the stripes & stars (Crawford 1861).

° Poetic sentiments upon emigration to the Grande Ronde Valley in 1862 from E. S. McComas' "My Journey O'er the Plains:"

Come all ye jolly miners, come listen to my song,
Tis about my journey oer the plains, twill not take you long.
Twas on the 14th day of May in the spring of sixty-two,
All things being ready, I bade my friends adieu.

I left my home in Iowa through mud and cold and rain,
And started for the west to take a trip across the plain,
Bound for Salmon River, that boasted land of gold,
To try and make my fortune, as others had, I'm told.

.....

And now on Powder River we have landed safe and sound,
With our pick and our shovels we'l go to digging up the
ground,
While the boys back in Iowa must go to war and fight,
We'l stay here till water comes, and then we are all right.

And when the war is over, and our fortunes we have made,
Its then we'l have no use for our pick and our spade.

Future Prospects: Mining

Heres a health to the girls that are waiting for us to come,
For then we soon shall see the dear ones at home.

(McComas 1954:64-65).

° E. S. McComas wrote on July 22, 1864:

July the 22d. Busted again. On the first day of July, 1864 a company of ten men was organized in La Grande known as the La Grande Mining Co., the object of said company being to mine for gold on Grande Ronde River and its tributaries. The capitol stock of said Co. was five thousand dollars. We expended about \$800.00 & found that the diggings would not "pan out." The company busted after paying up all liabilities. Well this has been my luck in mining and I now here record one resolution which I will adhere to from this on untill I leave this country--Resolved--That I never will again invest a "colon" in any mining ground (placer) without seeing the "prospects" "panned out" from the "bed rock" myself and being firmly and fully convinced that it is a "big thing" "you bet" (McComas 1954:37).

Natural History: Animals

Travelers through the Grande Ronde Valley and Blue Mountains in the nineteenth century encountered a variety of animals. Some looked at the creatures as potential sources of food; others worried about the screams of cougars in the dark forests and the threats to themselves and their livestock. Among the animals mentioned were the following:

Fish:	salmon trout
Mammals:	bear beaver elk deer raccoon otter cougar (panther) squirrel wolf
Birds:	hens (grouse ?) meadowlark pheasant sandhill crane
Crustaceans:	crayfish

- ° Robert Stuart, while crossing the Blue Mountains and headed east on August 5, 1812, wrote:

. . . we encamped on the right bank one mile below the narrows, and in the evening shot two Salmon and a Beaver (Stuart 1953:71).

- ° Robert Stuart, an eastward bound fur trapper from Astoria, wrote on August 7-8, 1812, about animals in the Grande Ronde Valley:

Friday 7th It [Hot Lake] is much frequented by Elk, which animal is tolerably plenty in the adjacent mountains, and it would appear from their numerous horns, strewed every where round the pond, that they visit it most in the spring of the year. . . .

. . . with the Glaize [Grande Ronde River] and its two branches just mentioned meandering in every direction through it--the banks of these streams are high and muddy, covered in particular places with dwarf Cottonwoods, and the residue in a large growth of Willows, which afford an inexhaustible stock of food for the incredible multitudes of the Furr'd race who reside in their bosoms, but the S. East fork excels both the others, particularly in the number of its inhabitants of the Otter tribe--A few Deer and

Natural History: Animals

Raccoon are the only animals you may add to the Elk, Beaver, and otter as being natives of this tract-- (Stuart 1953:71-73).

- ° Nathaniel Wyeth, an American fur trapper, visited the Grande Ronde Valley on October 12, 1832, and mentioned the presence of salmon:

[October] 12th in this valley saw extensive camps of Indians about one month old here they find salmon in a creek running through it . . . (Wyeth 1899:172).

- ° Cyrus Shepard wrote on August 27, 1834:

Wednesday 27th August 1834 Some of our company shot three fine, large trout, the largest weighing six or seven pounds - two indians again passed us soon after with each a horse load of the same sort of fish some of which it was thought would weigh at least fifteen pounds -- encamped on a small river about a mile from an indian village and supped on boiled fish (Shepard 1834:59).

- ° Nathaniel Wyeth wrote on August 31, 1834, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

[August] 31st. Made 15 miles N. N. W. good soil and not very hilly and nooned at the Grand Ronde Killed 5 Hens today. On allowance still (Wyeth 1899:231).

- ° John Kirk Townsend wrote on September 1, 1834, about encountering a cougar or panther in the Blue Mountains:

September 1st. Last evening, as we were about retiring to our beds, we heard, distinctly, as we thought, a loud halloo, several times repeated, and in a tone like that of a man in great distress. Supposing it to be a person who had lost his way in the darkness, and was searching for us, we fired several guns at regular intervals, but as they elicited no reply, after waiting a considerable time, we built a large fire, as a guide, and lay down to sleep.

Early this morning, a large panther was seen prowling around our camp, and the hallooming of last night was explained. It was the dismal, distressing yell by which this animal entices its prey, until pity or curiosity induces it to approach to its destruction. The panther is said to inhabit these forests in considerable numbers, and has not unfrequently been known to kill the horses of a camp. He has seldom the temerity to attack a man, unless sorely pressed by hunger, or infuriated by wounds (Townsend 1978:163-164).

- ° Peter Hardeman Burnett wrote on October 1, 1843:

October 1st. We this day came to the "Grand Round," the name of an immense valley, one hundred miles in circumference, which will vie in fertility with the valley of the Missouri, or indeed, with any spot in the world. Trees of all kinds are sprinkled throughout its

surface; shrubs, flowers, brooks and singing birds, meadow lark, and other winged game, diversify it, with many other of the attractions of more lavish regions, and its general temperature is guaranteed by the evidence of its prodigal vegetation (Wilkes 1845).

- ° Joel Palmer wrote on September 11, 1845, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

The streams are generally lined with timber, and abound in salmon and other varieties of fish. Upon the sides of the mountains and extending down into the valley are found beautiful groves of yellow pine timber. These mountains are places of resort for bear, deer, and elk (Palmer 1847:53).

- ° James Clyman, while crossing the Blue Mountains, wrote on September 29, 1844:

saw but little sign of any wile animals Except Pheasants which are plenty in some parts of this range & live upon the berries of winter green which grows in Quantities in many places (Clyman 1984:123-124).

- ° Honore-Timothee Lempfrit wrote on September 8-9, 1848, about discovering crayfish in the Grande Ronde River in the Blue Mountains:

Then we came to a little valley through which flowed a river abounding in crayfish. When our company arrived I showed them a basketful of them

9th September Today we had an excellent camping spot, a very nice situation completely surrounded by tall fir-trees. Right beside us flowed a river abounding in fish and in the shallow parts of the river one could scoop up quantities of crayfish (Lempfrit 1984:137-183).

- ° David Maynard wrote on September 2, 1850, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

Saw sandhill cranes and sage hens in plenty (Maynard 1906:60).

- ° Charles A. Brandt wrote on September 2, 1851, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

Some went hunting and others stayed in camp. We saw some Oregon squirrels. They look like the gray squirrels of the states but not so large (Brandt 1851:23).

- ° E. W. Conyers wrote on August 28, 1852, upon his arrival in the Grande Ronde Valley:

Shortly after camping two men came into the camp with a good supply of bear meat. They had taken an old Indian trail about four miles

back, near Clover Valley, which was a cut-off leading into the Grand Ronde Valley. On their way they had to pass through a strip of pine timber, where they run onto a large black bear, which they killed, and brought some of the meat to camp with them. They took supper with us and gave us a piece of the meat, and also informed us where we could find the balance of the carcass. Mrs. Burns cooked some of the meat for our supper, of which we all partook with a good relish. After our bear-meat feast several boys of our camp went back to where the bear was killed and brought in the remainder of the meat. We had bear meat for several days. When they went after the bear meat Mr. Goodnough took his dog with him. The dog became so frightened at the sight of that dead bear that he took sick and died in about one week afterward (Conyers 1906:493-494).

- ° John Newton Lewis wrote in the Blue Mountains on September 29, 1852:

this day we found some red and white clover and some timothy we also found some squirrels but they are of the pine squirrels about half as big as the gray squirrel in the states and of a brownish color we daily hear the complaints of the suffering emigrants

- ° Cecelia Adams and Parthenia Blank wrote on October 4, 1852, in the Blue Mountains:

Today saw two very small black squirrels (Adams and Blank 1986:303).

- ° Henry Allyn wrote on August 15, 1853, in the Blue Mountains:

John and I go out to hunt the mules and kill four mountain squirrels (Allyn 1024:428).

- ° Sarah (Sally) Perkins wrote on September 1, 1853, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

September 1. laid by and caught some fish and a coon cold nite pleasant day (Perkins 1986:146-147).

- ° Harriet A. Loughary wrote on August 14, 1864, near Lee's Encampment in the Blue Mountains:

Panthers and wolves made the night hideous with their screaming. To ward them off we kept fires burning all night (Loughary 1989:156-157).

- ° Frank Stevens crossed from Somerville to Walla Walla and wrote on July 13 and 14, 1880. While in the Blue Mountains on July 13, he wrote:

John Goldsby and myself were traveling on foot ahead of the wagons, and were a little over a quarter of a mile from them, when we heard the brush crack and we looked in that direction and saw a large

cinnamon bear only about 20 or 30 yds. away from us. It was at the foot of a large fir tree, and seemed to be so busy a rooting around the tree that he did not see us, and we could not see his head. We were unarmed and thought we did not wish to encounter him in such a way, so we retreated in good order back to the wagons and all hands took their rifles and went to the place where we saw him, but Bruin had taken the hint and peeled out. There is a great many of them in these mts. and they say the cinnamon is next to the grizzly in being savage (Stevens 1880:26-27).

Natural History: Plants

Travelers in northeastern Oregon noticed a variety of plants. The forests of conifers attracted primary attention. Some, however, noted the meadows of camas, blooming in the spring, which yielded an important food resource for the Indians. Others spoke of wild flowers, berries, wild cherries, plants in the forest understory, and even moss. A few attempted to identify the various meadow species they found in the Grande Ronde Valley. The written descriptions suggest that many who passed through this region were keen observers of nature.

Trees:	balm of Gilead/cottonwood willow cherry/choke cherry red thorn apple/shrub apple alder yellow birch larch pitch pine/yellow pine spruce hemlock fir balsam
Shrubs:	elderberry huckleberry whortleberry serviceberry snowball yellow currant black currant laurel Oregon grape
Meadow Plants:	camas flax clover/red colver/wild clover bluegrass bunchgrass "broom corn" grass June grass timothy
Miscellaneous:	black moss

° Nathaniel Wyeth, an American fur trapper, mentioned the presence of camas in the Grande Ronde Valley on October 12, 1832:

[October] 12th in this valley saw extensive camps of Indians about one month old here they find salmon in a creek running through it and dig the Kamas root but not an Indian was here at this time (Wyeth 1899:172).

- ° Nathaniel Wyeth wrote on October 13, 1832, about plants in the Blue Mountains:

13th [October] Arose early and continued our route until 9 ock and stopped for breakfast of bad Horse meat on a creek of some size where we found the red thorn apple and a few cherries (Wyeth 1899:172-173).

- ° Cyrus Shepard wrote on August 27-28, 1834:

Wednesday 27th August 1834 . . . in the course of the afternoon came in with a number of Hiouse indians who were digging camas root on the prairie of which they have a large quantity -- it is roasted and used as a substitute for bread . . . (Shepard 1834:59)

- ° Cyrus Shepard wrote on August 29, 1834, about the vegetation of the Blue Mountains:

This mountain (or rather these mountains) are principally covered with timber such as pitch pine, spruce, bald spruce, fir hemlock, etc., some of the pines are large and in Massachusetts would be worth \$20 or \$30 apiece -- There is a kind of black moss on the trees in these mountains which the indians use for food, after having bruised and mixed it with camas root -- fire has by some means been communicated to the woods and has not only overrun the mountains but much of the adjoining country our journey has been rendered much more unpleasant of late in consequence of the smoke with which the atmosphere is filled (Shepard 1834:60).

- ° Washington Irving wrote in 1836 about Captain Bonneville's visit to the Grande Ronde Valley in 1834.

The Indians then resort to it to hunt. They likewise come to it in the summer time to dig the camash root, of which it produces immense quantities. When this plant is in blossom, the whole valley is tinted by its blue flowers, and looks like the ocean when overcast by a cloud (Irving 1868:330-331).

- ° Narcissa Whitman wrote on August 28, 1836, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

[August] 28th The Cammas grow here in abundance & it is the principal resort of the Cayouses & many other tribes to obtain of it, of which they are very fond. It resembles an onion in shape & colour, when cooked is very sweet, taste like a fig. Their manner of baking them is very curious. They dig a hole in the ground, throw in a heap of stones, heat them to a red heat, cover them with green grass, upon which they put the Cammas & cover the whole with

earth, when taken out it is black. This is the chief food of many tribes during winter (Drury 1963[1]:90).

- ° Thomas Jefferson Farnham wrote on September 21, 1839, about vegetation in the Blue Mountains:

In the forenoon, the trail ran over a series of mountains swelling one above another in long and gentle ascents, covered with noble forests of yellow pine, fir, and hemlock. Among these were frequent glades or rich pasture land; grass green, and numerous brooks of pure water leaping from the cliffs, or murmuring among the shrubbery. The snow-ball, the wax plant, the yellow and black currant--a species of whortleberry--the service berry--choke cherry--the elder--the shrub maple--and all the beautiful flowers that gem a mountain landscape during its short summer, clothed the ground (Farnham 1843[2]:120-121).

- ° Peter Hardeman Burnett wrote on October 1, 1843, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

October 1st. In this region abounds a peculiar vegetable called Kamas root, which has a sweet and pleasant taste, and which is also very nutritious food. It is about the size of a partridge egg, and is cured by being dried upon hot stones. We purchased large quantities of it from the numerous Indians we found in the vicinity (Wilkes 1845).

- ° Peter Hardeman Burnett wrote on October 2, 1843, about the timber on the Blue Mountains:

We passed during the later part of this day, through large bodies of heavy pine timber, and I will take this occasion to remark, that the timber of the Blue Mountains were the first considerable bodies we had seen since we left the banks of the Kansas (Wilkes 1845).

- ° John C. Fremont wrote on October 17, 1843, at entering the Grande Ronde Valley:

October 17. On either side, the mountains here are densely covered with tall and handsome trees; and, mingled with the green of a variety of pines, is the yellow of the European larch (pinus larix,) which loses its leaves in the fall. From its present color, we were enabled to see that it forms a large proportion of the forests on the mountains, and is here a magnificent tree, attaining sometimes the height of 200 feet, which I believe is elsewhere unknown (Fremont 1970:545-546).

- ° Fremont on October 20, 1843, wrote about the magnificent conifers of the Blue Mountains:

. . . we made an early start, continuing our route among the pines, which were more dense than yesterday, and still retained their

magnificent size. The larches cluster together in masses on the sides of the mountains, and their yellow foliage contrasts handsomely with the green of the balsam and other pines. After a few miles we ceased to see any pines, and the timber consisted of several varieties of spruce, larch, and balsam pine, which have a regularly conical figure. These trees appeared from 60 to nearly 200 feet in height, the usual circumference being 10 to 12 feet, and the pines sometimes 21 feet. In open places near the summit, these trees became less high and more branching, the conical form having a greater base (Fremont 1970:548).

- ° Fremont on October 21, 1843, described measuring the conifers of the Blue Mountains:

Some of the white spruces which I measured to-day were twelve feet in circumference, and one of the larches ten; but eight feet was the average circumference of those measured along the road. I held in my hand a tape line as I walked along, in order to form some correct idea of the size of the timber. Their height appeared to be from 100 to 180, and perhaps 200 feet, and the trunks of the larches were sometimes 100 feet without a limb; but the white spruces were generally covered with branches nearly to the root. All these trees have their branches, particularly the lower ones, declining (Fremont 1970:549).

- ° James Clyman, camped in the Grande Ronde Valley, wrote on September 28, 1844:

this vally is also verry favourable to the groth of the Cammerce [camas] root a root much esembling & onion in appearance but of a Sweet rich tast when roasted after the manner of the Indians (Clyman 1984:119-124).

- ° Samuel B. Crockett wrote at Linnton on the Willamette River on February 16, 1845, about his travels through northeastern Oregon:

The blue mountains are not high but they are thickly covered with tall pine timber which was the first body of timber worth notice that we passed through after we left the frontiers of Missouri (Crockett 1845).

- ° John E. Howell wrote on September 11, 1845:

11, Thursday. Tr. through valley of Powder river Crossed ridges of Mts. Camp in the edge of Grande Rond. Powder river has wide bottoms and forms a considerable valley some of which is good soil producing willows and other shrubs grass, rushes, Flax clover &c on the west side of this valley a lofty range of the Blue mountains which produce the large straight and lofty pine, spruce and Fir in great abundance, good grazing on those mts & good springs near the valley but not plenty in the interior (Howell 1907:150).

- ° Joel Palmer wrote on September 11, 1845:

September 11. The bottoms are of rich friable earth, and afford grass of various kinds, among others that of red clover. There is a root here found in great abundance, and known as the camas, which is held in high repute by the Indians for some medicinal qualities it is thought to possess; wild flax and a variety of other plants grow in luxuriance, like to those I have observed in the western prairies. The streams are generally lined with timber, and abound in salmon and other varieties of fish. Upon the sides of the mountains and extending down into the valley are found beautiful groves of yellow pine timber (Palmer 1847:53).

- ° Joel Palmer wrote on September 14, 1845, in the Blue Mountains:

The timber growing in this region is principally yellow pine, spruce, balsam fir, and hemlock; among the bushes I noticed laurel (Palmer 1847:56).

- ° Absalom B. Harden wrote on August 31, 1847, about the timber in the Blue Mountains:

these mountains is clothed with beautiful short leaf pine timber some calls it yellow fir but it is pine (Harden 1847).

- ° Charles A. Brandt wrote on August 31, 1851, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

Mountains are covered with timber some of which is 200 feet high (Brandt 1851:23).

- ° Harriet Talcott Buckingham noted on September 8, 1851, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

Grass was tall & luxurious in this Indian Paradise (Buckingham 1984:450).

- ° Eliaabeth Wood noted on September 8, 1851, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

This valley is very fertile, its area is about 10,000 acres, fenced in with very high mountains, covered with fine trees. Its fertile soil produces several kinds of luxuriant grass -- blue grass, timothy, clover, red top, and 'broom corn' grass, that looks like oats, only the head is not heavy enough (Wood 1984:176-177).

- ° Jared Fox wrote on July 28, 1852, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

Going down a terrible hill just before we got on to it I gathered some good rye. The valley is covered grass & wild grain. The wild wheat is up to the horses backs, the red top is a foot short of that. The June grass and red clover up to your knees (Fox 1852:43).

Natural History: Plants

- ° E. W. Conyers wrote on August 28, 1852, at the foot of Ladd Canyon:

Here we laid by and camped for the night. Here we found plenty of good wood, water, and the best of grass. At this camp we obtained our first ripe cherries--choke cherries (Conyers 1906:492).

- ° John Tully Kerns wrote on September 2, 1852, about the Grande Ronde Valley:

The soil is rich and is covered with a luxuriant growth of grass, wild clover and herd grass (Kerns 1917:182).

- ° Abigail Jane Scott wrote on September 2, 1852, in the Grande Ronde Valley:

This valley is near ten miles in width and covered with luxuriant look(ing) grass; high mountains are it, the most of them covered with pine, balsam fir, cedar, and other trees Grand Round river runs through the western part of the valley; it's banks are adorned with willow birch, bitter cottonwood, & alder, in the valley, and pine, cedar, balsam fir, birch and larch, where it meanders among the mountains (Scott 1984:121-122).

- ° Cornelia A. Sharp wrote on September 3, 1852, on her first day in the Blue Mountains:

Our road was over the Blue mountains, which were very steep and rugged. We camped in a pine grove. Spring about half a mile from camp; excellent water; good camp; abundance of Oregon grapes (Sharp 1904:184-185).

- ° John or David Dinwiddie wrote on August 26, 1853:

. . . the valley is about 20 or 25 miles in extent, high mountains enclose it on every side, through the middle of the valley flows Grand Ronde River, from South west to North west. Its banks lined with cottonwood, balm of gilead, elder, cherry and willow, many spring brooks coming down from the mountain several small creeks course through it and empty themselves into the river their courses marked frequent clumps of green trees, part of the mountains covered with dark forests. Verily this is a place to please the eye of a farmer the soil is of an excellent quality, producing an abundant crop of grass of different varieties, among the rest I noticed clover, a species of timothy, bunch grass, and flax, the valley contains an area of about four or five hundred square miles of tillable land, and will one day contain a heavy population. Timber may be procured from the mountains with little trouble . . . (Dinwiddie 1928:11-12).

- ° Harriet A. Loughary wrote in the Blue Mountains on August 14, 1864:

All halt and fill our wagons full of the bushes loaded with the best of blue huckleberries Go on to Leès encampment, a catchpenny ranch out in these mountains . . . (Loughary 1989:156-157).

Special Quotations

Some travelers passing through the Grande Ronde Valley and the Blue Mountains displayed a special ability to express their experiences and observations. The following are potentially useful quotations:

° The Blue Mountains:

Nature stretched her bare and mighty arms around us! The mountains hid the lower sky, and walled out the lower world! We looked upon the beautiful heights of the Blue Mountains, and ate among its spring blossoms, its singing pines, and holy battlements, ten thousand feet above the sea.

Thomas Jefferson Farnham, September 21, 1839

We continued over the mountain, passing through heavy timber. The timber is so thick in many places that you could not see a man 10 steps. I believe that there is pine trees 200 feet high & note more than 2 feet through.

William T. Newby, October 4, 1843

We passed during the latter part of this day, through large bodies of heavy pine timber, and I will take this occasion to remark, that the timber of the Blue Mountains were the first considerable bodies we had seen since we left the banks of the Kansas.

Peter Hardeman Burnett, October 2, 1845

On either side, the mountains here are densely covered with tall and handsome trees; and, mingled with the green variety of pines, is the yellow of the European larch (pinus larix), which loses its leaves in the fall.

John C. Fremont, October 17, 1843

The blue mountains are not high but they are thickly covered with tall pine timber which was the first body of timber worth notice that we passed through after we left the frontiers of Missouri.

Samuel B. Crockett, February 16, 1845

Special Quotations

It is a remarkable circumstance that when individuals are engaged in conversation, their voices can be heard distinctly at a quarter of a mile distance

Joel Palmer, September 13, 1845

The scenery is grand and beautiful, and cannot be surpassed. . . .

Joel Palmer, September 14, 1845

The Blue Mts are a beautiful range of Mts. They are well timbered and afford good grazing.

John E. Howell, September 16, 1845

we Started and traveled 10 miles over rocks the greater part of our time and when no rocks the dust was just like ashes a nuisance to Stifel man and beast

Absalom B. Harden, September 2, 1847

The further I went the more enchanted I was with what I discovered. Oh! How many castles in Spain did I build while riding past these lovely hills covered with magnificent fir-trees.

Honore-Timothee Lempfrit, September 8, 1847

Here we began climbing the Blue mountains, and if they don't beat the devil.

Samuel James, September 2, 1850

From the top of the hill we had a splendid view. Such as Pilgrims to Oregon only are permitted to behold. We could see the snow capped peak of the Blue Mountains far behind us.

Charles A. Brandt, September 4, 1851

The hills here are all covered with fine timber. Some of them are awful steep, however. We went up one today and it took twenty-two head of cattle to haul up one wagon, and there was not much in the wagon either.

Elizabeth Wood, September 9, 1851

Sage brush has stepped out now we come to timber & I am right glad.

Jared Fox, July 28, 1852

We passed 3 graves today, one was marked Mrs. Theresa S. McLaddon died Aug. 11, 1851 aged 22 years. We past one dead ox.

Jared Fox, July 29, 1852

This day's travel has been in the Blue mountains, and so far they have given us a rough passage.

John Tully Kerns, September 3, 1852

worse Road than yesterday O the condition this road places men in this the Sabath & I have never though[t] of it till the children told me after the Sun was down

Rev. Jesse Moreland, September 5, 1852

the grass is like hen teeth the timber is very thick and tall pine and fur

John Newton Lewis, September 26, 1852

Mrs. Nordyke died about daylight an she was buried about 10 oc and we remaind in camp until the 28th

John Newton Lewis, September 27, 1852

Found the best of grass and encamped in a pine grove, it being the first time we have camped in the timber for 1,500 miles.

Henry Allyn, August 14, 1853

So by locking and unlocking each wagon about fifty times and tumbling and sideling on till dark we found water, but no grass, except very scattering among the thick pine.

Henry Allyn, August 15, 1853

Commenced the ascent of the Blue Mountains it is a lovely morning, and all hands seem to be delighted with the prospect, of

Special Quotations

being so near the timber again, after weary months of travel, on the dry dusty sage plains

Amelia Stewart Knight, August 18, 1853

about noon we found a murdered man in a pine grove his pockets were rifeled and he was shot through the head we buried him as well as circumstances would admit of

Catherine Amanda Stansbury Washburn, August 27, 1853

. . . we are now upon the main ridge of the blue mountains, Altitude 5,400 feet, I presume these mountains take their name from their dark blue appearance being densely timbered with pine timber . . .

John or David Dinwiddie, August 30, 1853

Drove 19 miles from grand round river to a branch of the same is 18 miles the hardest drive that my team has had on the whole Journey

George Belshaw, September 2, 1854

It has been go up and go down. Such hills as never were viewed by us poor mortals before

Maria Parsons Belshaw, September 2, 1854

Saw 8 graves, on one it was said "found dead his horse near him the man was shot through the head" saw 19 dead cattle.

Maria Parsons Belshaw, September 2, 1854

I never saw as crooked a road in my life. It was Gee and Haw both at once to keep off of trees. Some of the trees are rubbed one third of the thickness through by the wagon hubs, heavy tall pine and fir.

Maria Parsons Belshaw, September 3, 1854

° Prospects of the Grande Ronde Valley:

It is a place--one of the few we have seen in our journey so

far--where a farmer would delight to establish himself--if he were content to live in the seclusion which it imposes.

John C. Fremont, October 17, 1848

This bottom affords an excellent situation for a settlement, possessing more advantages in that respect, than any found since our departure from the lower Platte river.

Joel Palmer, September 11, 1845

this grand round valley is as level as house floor

Absalom B. Harden, August 29, 1847

came down into grand round O if grand round was west of the Cascade mountains how soon it would be taken up

Elizabeth Dixon Smith, October 6, 1847

The extremely fertile soil supports a luxuriant vegetation and to the south there are some lovely rolling hills that seem to beg to be put under cultivation

Honore-Timothee Lempfrit, September 6, 1848

This valley is a fine, dark soil, very level; and as water issues from the base of the mountains which completely surround it, it may be easily irrigated, and is, for a settlement, the prettiest place I have passed on the route.

Osborne Cross, September 8, 1849

About 2 o'clock we came to a very long steep hill overlooking the beautiful valley. It appeared to be the most beautiful valley I had ever looked upon. The hills dressed in green, with springs of water running from the sides, with groves of willows and cottonwood, and thousands of ponies grazing, and Indians driving in all directions.

John Johnson, July 30, 1851

Came down the mountain into Grand Ronde vally - a perfect gem - an oasis in a desert

Harriet Talcott Buckingham, September 8, 1851

Special Quotations

The valley is covered grass & wild grain. The wild wheat is up to the horses backs, the red top is a foot short of that. The June grass and red clover are up to your knees.

Jared Fox, July 28, 1852

Gave an old Indian some dinner & he laid off his hat & returned thanks before he eat to the giver of all good

Jared Fox, July 28, 1852

This brought us to the summit of the mountain, overlooking the Grand Ronde Valley, one of the prettiest and most welcome sights seen on the whole route.

E. W. Conyers, August 28, 1852

This is the best and most beautiful place we have seen on the whole road, or, in fact, in our lives, and is said to be a fair specimen of western Oregon. If so, our expectations will be more than filled.

John Tully Kerns, September 1, 1852

Grand Ronde is a butiful place, thare is the handsomest land I ever saw

Samuel Dexter Francis, September 7, 1852

after crosing the valey to the west side whare we leave it we found it to be one of the best valeys in the world it is well watterd and cleare of gravel and just as ritch soil as the west can scare up

John Newton Lewis, September 25, 1852

Verily this is a place to please the eye of a farmer the soil is of an excellent quality, producing an abundant crop of grass of different varieties. . . .

John or David Dinwiddie, August 26, 1853

On the mountain Overlooking the grand ronde is one of the finest Scenes I ever beheld In my Life The Grand rond Valley is

About Sixteen mls wide by About thirty Long Surounded by high Mn on
All sides

George N. Taylor, September 9, 1853

It is perhaps the richest tract of land that the emigrant has
seen since leaving the Missouri river and he rejoices at seeing
soil once more, which if properly cultivated, would yield good
returned for his labor.

Samuel Handsaker, September 12, 1853

We are but in the edge of this valley, but find it the best we
have seen, and as we go on it keeps getting better.

Frank Stevens, July 8, 1880

° Impressions of the Indians:

These Indians have decidedly a better appearance than any I
have met; tall and athletic in form, and of great symmetry of
person; they are generally well clad, and observe pride in personal
cleanliness.

Joel Palmer, September 12, 1845

here we incampt and the indians came to us in abundance some
30 or 40 tho they were very friendly and traded to us som of there
horses for cattle and shirts & Brought us plenty of Salmon fish and
Sold for shirts and powder and lead

Absalom B. Harden, August 30, 1847

Among the group of Indians I noticed a man of excellent
physique. He was of good height and he had an aquiline nose.
Around his neck was a long string of bear claws.

Honore-Timothee Lempfrit, September 7, 1848

The men are all fine specimens of physical development, & have
not yet become contaminated with the vices of white men and the
whole tribe are very superior to any we have yet seen.

Harriet Talcott Buckingham, September 8, 1851

Special Quotations

there is a great many Indians here and they a[re] ritch rich
they hav[e] a good herd of poneys

Catherine Amanda Stansbury Washburn, August 24,
1853

Turned down the stream about one mile and camped at a little
grove, where some Indian families reside, they were very friendly
and were gratified to have us to camp there, they can talk English
well.

John or David Dinwiddie, August 26, 1853

The indians here seem more intelligent & happy than any we
have seen.

Celinda Hines, September 5, 1853

° Descent into the Grande Ronde Valley

Got onto Grand Round over a ten mile hill. Most of the
drivers quaked in getting their wagons down.

Samuel James, August 6, 1850

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APPENDIX

THE GRANDE RONDE VALLEY AND BLUE MOUNTAINS:
IMPRESSIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF TRAVELERS AND EMIGRANTS,
THE OREGON TRAIL, 1812-1880

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February 16, 1991

Beckham and Associates Report No. 2

Grande Ronde Valley

Prior to 1832:

- ° Thomas Jefferson Farnham wrote in 1839 about Indian use of the Grand Ronde Valley prior to the Snake River forts:

The Skyuse are also a tribe of merchants. Before the establishment of Forts Hall and Boisais, they were in the habit of rendezvousing at 'La Grande Ronde,' an extensive valley in the Blue Mountains, with the Shoshonies and other Indians from the Saptin, and exchanging with them their horses for furs, buffalo robes, skin tents, &c. But since the building of these posts, that portion of their trade is nearly destroyed (Farnham 1843[2]:142).

1812:

- ° Robert Stuart, an eastward bound fur trapper from Astoria, wrote on August 7-8, 1812:

Friday 7th It was 6 A.M. before our horses were collected and loaded; our route lay along the mountains, on the south side of the big Flat, for 11 miles; then winding to the east for 9 more, came to a gap, out of which issued a small branch [Ladd Creek], where we encamped for the night. --about 7 miles from this place, to the westward and close to the hills, is a sulphur lake, 300 yards in circumference, fed by a spring in the south east corner, which appeared nearly 10 feet square and as greatly agitated as if boiling--at a short distance, the vapour was excessively noisome, and for half a mile round the olfactory nerves were sensibly affected thereby--

It is much frequented by Elk, which animal is tolerably plenty in the adjacent mountains, and it would appear from their numerous horns, strewd every where round the pond, that they visit it most in the spring of the year; continuing a few miles farther through the plain, a large Creek [Catherine Creek] comes from the S. E. and nearly opposite its mouth, another from the west, both of which join the Glaize [Grande Ronde] River a little way about its re-entrance into the narrows, where it is upwards of one hundred yards wide. This plot is at least 60 miles in circumference, in but few places swampy, of an excellent soil, and almost a dead level; with the Glaize and its two branches just mentioned meandering in every direction through it--the banks of these streams are high and muddy, covered in particular places with dwarf Cottonwoods, and the residue in a large growth of Willows, which afford an inexhaustible stock of food for the incredible multitudes of the Furr'd race who reside in their bosoms, but the S. East fork excels both the others, particularly in the number of its inhabitants of the Otter tribe--A few Deer and Racoon are the only animals you may add to the Elk, Beaver, and otter as being natives of this tract--

The river at the extremity of this prairie is very deep, but it there enters a range of mountains, much superior in size to those thro' which we descended along its borders--

It falls into the Snake or Kimooemee river, about 30 miles above its junction with the Pacheecum, and is called, by the aborigines at its entrance, Koos-koos-kee.

Saturday [August] 8th Set out let, and continued up the branch for 8 miles E.S.E. then 6 S.S.E. to the westerly bend of a large creek [Powder River], but whether it is the S.E. fork of the glaize, or a tributary stream of the Kenooemu, am unable to say . . . (Stuart 1953:71-73).

1825:

- ° Peter Skene Ogden led his Hudson's Bay Company brigade through the Grande Ronde Valley during the first week of November, 1825. The party left Flathead Post on Clark's fork of the Columbia in December, 1824, and worked in the Rockies and Great Salt Lake basin before moving west through the Snake watershed to Fort Nez Perces. Ogden's last diary entry was on Burnt River:

Sunday [October] 30th. Raised Camp we proceeded about 1 mile when we left Burnt River & took a Small Fork of B.R. in ascending it the Country level we came about 8 miles and encamped early. Course South. As I am now three days march from Fort Nez Perces I purpose Starting tomorrow with two men. 4 Beaver (Ogden 1950:93).

1826:

- ° In June, 1826, a portion of Ogden's Snake Country brigade passed through the Grande Ronde Valley on its way to Fort Nez Perces. While on Burnt River prior to crossing into the John Day watershed, Ogden wrote on June 28-29, 1826:

Wednesday [June] 28th. Started early and proceeded to the Forks of Burnt River and encamped--and lost no time in making the proper arrangements for seperating to morrow morning, we saw tracks of horses in the Fort Nez Perces road which we suppose must be either our men or Indians but we suppose the former I wish may prove to be so Weather very sultry but no muschitoes one blessing if we have no other.

Thursday [June] 29th. At an early hour this morning I seperated with Mr. [Finan] McDonald . . . (Ogden 1950:195).

1827:

- ° Peter Skene Ogden departed Fort Nez Perces on September 11, 1827, on his Snake Country brigade. He crossed the Blue Mountains via the Walla Walla watershed and reached the Grande Ronde Valley on

September 15. He wrote on September 15-17, 1827:

Saturday, [September] 14th [15th]. At 7 a.m. we started, advanced one mile and reached Clay River or commonly called Rivere de Grande Ronde. This river discharges in the south branch of the Columbia [Snake River], about two days march across land from Fort Nez Percy. At 1 p.m. we reached the Grande Ronde and encamped. Our four traps met with no success, but I regret to observe, although the water is still warm two of the springs were broke. I had no opinion of the springs before leaving Fort Vancouver and I am of opinion I shall not be disappointed. I wish however it were otherwise. Shortly after we were encamped four Cayouses paid us a visit and report a party of American trappers were on their way to Fort Nez Percy, they still separated from them three days since. It may be so, but until I see them I shall not be convinced.

Sunday, [September] 15th [16th]. At sunrise we started, at the same time I sent Mr [Thomas] McKay with a trading assortment to the Indian camp to procure horses. From the number of swamps, we were obliged to make a most circuitous route ere we could find a suitable fording place. We proceeded on until we reached the south end of the Grande Ronde and encamped at 4 p.m. Although we were marching the greater part of the day we have not made great advance in our journey--not more than nine miles. In the evening Mr McKay rejoined us having traded two 2 year old horses at a reasonable price, averaging each fifteen skins Indians Tariff; more they would not part with.

Monday, [September] 16th [17th]. Cold blowing day. At 6 a.m. we started and on leaving our encampment we ascended a steep and stony hill. We then had level country and on making the first fork of Powder River we encamped in good time, as shortly after it commenced raining and continued till late in the evening. Course south--distance twelve miles--twenty traps set (Ogden 1971:6-7).

1828:

° Peter Skene Ogden left Fort Nez Perces on September 22 for his 1828-29 expedition to the Snake River country. Crossing the Blues via the Walla Walla watershed, he wrote on September 26-28, 1828:

Friday, [September] 26th. Started at an early hour 6 a.m. and encamped on the Grand Ronde at 2 p.m. Our horses considerably fatigued, eight remaining in the rear, late in the evening reached the encampment. Wild horses are very unfit for a long journey. The two trappers joined us with four beaver, so much to commence with.

Saturday, [September] 27th. Started at 7 a.m., crossed over the Grande Ronde, ascended high stony hills, advanced six miles and encamped on a small brook. At an early hour this morning twelve

trappers started with their traps, they are to rejoin us in two days. Very sultry.

Sunday, [September] 28th. It was 8 a.m. ere we were in readiness to start, and at 2 p.m. we reached the Forks of Powder River and encamped. Some of the trappers came in with nine beaver (Ogden 1971:97-98).

1829:

- ° Peter Skene Ogden traveled through the John Day River watershed and ascended the Blue Mountains near Dale, Oregon. Near the summit at the present site of Bear Wallow Forest Service Station Ogden could look into the Grand Ronde region. He wrote on July 8, 1829:

Wednesday, [July] 6th [8th]. At the dawn of day we commenced loading our horses, and soon after started and to commence our day journey we had a most tremendous hill to ascend and also very stony. On reaching the summit I had a view of the Grande Ronde to the eastward of us and in a northern course as far as the eye can see appears stony and the hills covered with pines. We proceeded until 1 p.m. when I had the satisfaction of having a distant view of the Galhanry Mountains on the north side of the Columbia. We continued on until 2 p.m. when we encamped. Distance fifteen miles. Course north. As the track to Fort Nez Percez is now well known to the majority of the party and no danger to be apprehended in this quarter and feeling anxious to receive the tidings from friends, I shall tomorrow accompanied by two men take my departure for the Fort. This ends my fifth trip to the Snake Country, and so far as regards my party have no cause to complain of our success (Ogden 1971:166).

1832:

- ° Nathaniel Wyeth wrote on October 10-12, 1832:

[October] 10th Moved N. and down creek about 15 miles and found the rest of the party who had come on the main trail in an average N. W. direction about 45 miles This day rain this creek from where we struck it to this place runs in an extensive plain of fertile soile equal to the best I ever saw of about 5 mil[e]s average width here we raised a great smoke and am told by our Indian that the Nez Perces will see it and come to smoke with us

[October] 11th To the S. W. of us is a range of snow clad Mts. [Elkhorn Range of the Blue Mountains] the Indian says it is 7 days to Wallah Wallah. This creek runs about N. E. by E.

[October] 11th [Wyeth repeated the date] Started at 8 ock and moved about N. N.: W. 30 miles over high ground of good soil.

[October] 12th Left the party after killing a horse of the poorest kind for food in order to go ahead to find indians or whites or food The party here remained one day in a valley [Grande Ronde] of about 20 miles long and 15 wide of a very fertile soil in this valley saw extensive camps of Indians about one month old here they find salmon in a creek running through it and dig the Kamas root but not an Indian was here at this time we put out in a N. W. direction and ascended the hills which soon became wooded with good timber our course this day was about N. N. W. and 40 miles I had with me an Indian and three men and a little horse meat we camped this night in the woods without water (Wyeth 1899:172).

° John Ball wrote on October 11-14, 1832:

[October 11] We made some thirty miles a day some days over the prairies, for when we arrived at the mountains we were in a sad plight. We were thoroughly exhausted by hard travel and the horses were no better.

October 12 Having nothing to eat, we killed an old horse, and as hungry as we were, we did not relish it. We vowed if we killed another we would take a young one. The meat of a good horse tastes like venison.

October 13 Captain Wyeth took four men and the best horses and started ahead for Walla Walla, requesting me to follow the next day. Traveling was hard and the ground frozen. We continued traveling north northwest and came to a broken plain (Ball 1902:96).

1834:

° Cyrus Shepard wrote on August 27-28, 1834:

Wednesday 27th August 1834 Made a journey of about twelve hours -- The cows and horses became quite weary and we did not arrive at an encampment till past sunset -- in the course of the afternoon came in with a number of Hiouse indians who were digging camas root on the prairie of which they have a large quantity -- it is roasted and used as a substitute for bread, also met a part of Mr. Bonneyville's camp - had to pass over some difficult hills thickly strewed with small stones making travelling very unpleasant -- Some of our company shot three fine, large trout, the largest weighing six or seven pounds - two indians again passed us soon after with each a horse load of the same sort of fish some of which it was thought would weigh at least fifteen pounds -- encamped on a small river about a mile from an indian village and supped on boiled fish -- Enjoyed evening prayer in an unusual degree --

Thursday 28th August 1834 Awoke in a peaceful frame and committed myself to Him who alone is able to save -- Tarried all day in camp for the refreshing of animals -- A.M. visited the indians in

company with Br. Lee, were treated in a most friendly manner asked into a lodge and had broiled salmon, cherries, etc., set before us -- Many of the indians came to our tent and passed several hours -- They have given four valuable horses to the mission for which Br. L gave them presents in return -- The indians tarried till nearly night when we had prayers, etc. The friendly manner in which we have been received by the indians is oweing in a great measure under God to Mr. McCay who has used his influence to recommend us in their favour -- The gift of horses is quite providential -- Afflicted with severe headache (Shepard 1834:59).

° Jason Lee wrote about his travels of August 27-28 on August 29, 1834:

1834 Friday, August 29. Make a severe march on Wednesday [August 27]. Twelve hours with the cows, 36 miles over some mountains difficult for the animals being covered with small stones. Saw some of the Kioos squaws digging cammas. Camped near the Kioos Village. Thursday [August 28] did not move camp. Walked a mile to the village to look for salmon and cammas, as our provisions were nearly spent, but they no salmon and were lean with their cammas. I suppose some of the Kioos who had been with us informed the chief that we were there and our objecting in coming to this country. We were invited into the chief's lodge. Dried salmon, choak cherries and water were set before us, of which we partook and conversed as well as we could by signs and the few words of Nez Perce that we had learned, but we were sadly puzzled to understand each other. The chief of the Walla Walla tribe was there and he showed me some old papers with scraps of writing on them and a calendar showing the day of the month with Sunday distinctly marked--written--I presume by some gentleman of the H[udson's] B[ay] Company. I then, in red ink, wrote my name and Daniel [Lee]'s, stating what we were, dated it and gave it to him and he seemed pleased with it. He soon made a sign for me to follow him, and he took me out and presented me an elegant horse and one of the Kioos presented Daniel a fine horse and one of the fattest I ever saw. We invited them to come to our lodge and in the afternoon two chiefs and others, more than could get into our tent came, and the Kioos chief and a brave, I think, gave me each a horse. I gave them knives, fish hooks, awls, etc., not of great value, but of considerable importance to them, in return. We smoked with them, sang a hymn, and commended them to God in prayer, and then dispersed, and prepared to go, some of us, and sup with Capt. Bonneville and wandering traders, in company with Capt. Stewart, and were treated in a very friendly manner. Started early this morning [August 29] in pursuit of the horse gave me by the Wallah Wallah chief, he having broke his halter and gone. Met the chief coming to see us start, and told what I was after. He immediately returned to his lodge and sent a man for the horse and took me into the lodge and asked me if I would have something to eat. He wished to try my skill in medicine and presented a sick girl, probably afflicted with headache. I gave him some camphor, with directions how to use it. He accompanied me to our camp and the Kioos chief and others came to see us off, Mr. Shepard and I

before the rest, and gave us a hearty shake of the hand and called us friends (Lee 1916:255-256).

- ° Nathaniel Wyeth wrote on August 30-September 1, 1834:

[August] 30th. Made 8 miles up one creek through Cut Rocks during which time killed one Salmon and Two Otter so much provisions and Nooned on the Walla Walla trail West Fork the East being the one I descended on my first Tour [in 1832] afternoon made N. N. W. on the Trail. Here plain and good 15 miles at 5 of which crossed another Fork of Powder River but dry at 5 more a little water and at camp a little and but a little country rolling and soil good. At our camp two lodges of Kiuses

[August] 31st. Made 15 miles N. N. W. good soil and not very hilly and nooned at the Grand Ronde where I found some Kiuse Indians, Capt Bonneville and two of Mckays men and learned that Capt. Stewart and Mr. Lee passed two days before. Afternoon took the Walla Walla Trail N. N. W. 12 miles and camped at a very small Prairie with a little stream going N. W. Killed 5 Hens today. On allowance still (Wyeth 1899:231).

- ° John Kirk Townsend wrote on August 31, 1834:

Our route this morning, was over a country generally level and free from rocks; we crossed, however, one short, and very steep mountain range, thickly covered with tall and heavy pine trees, and came to a large and beautiful prairie, called the Grand ronde. Here we found Captain Bonneville's company, which has been lying here several days, waiting the arrival of its trapping parties. We made a noon camp near it, and were visited by Captain Bonneville. This was the first time I had seen this gentleman. His manners were affable and pleasing, and he seemed possessed of a large share of bold, adventurous, and to a certain extent, romantic spirit, without which no man can expect to thrive as a mountain leader. He stated that he preferred the "free and easy" life of a mountain hunter and trapper, to the comfortable and luxurious indolence of a dweller in civilized lands, and would not exchange his homely, but wholesome mountain fare, and his buffalo lodge, for the most piquant dishes of the French artiste, and the finest palace in the land. This came well from him, and I was pleased with it, although I could not altogether agree with him in sentiment, for I confess I had become somewhat weary of rough travelling and rough fare, and looked forward with no little pleasure to a long rest under a Christian roof, and a general participation in Christian living.

With the captain, came a whole troop of Indians, Kayouse, Nez Perces, &c. They were very friendly towards us, each of the chiefs taking us by the hand with great cordiality, appearing pleased to see us, and anxious to point out to us the easiest and most expeditious route to the lower country. These Indians are, almost universally, fine looking, robust men, with strong aqualine

features, and a much more cheerful cast of countenance than is usual amongst the race. Some of the women might almost be called beautiful, and none that I have seen are homely. Their dresses are generally of thin deer or antelope skin, with occasionally a bodice of some linen stuffs, purchased from the whites, and their whole appearance is neat and cleanly, forming a very striking contrast to the greasy, filthy, and disgusting Snake females. I observed one young and very pretty looking woman, dressed in a great superabundance of finery, glittering with rings and beads, and flaunting in broad bands of scarlet cloth. She was mounted astride, --Indian fashion, --upon a fine bay horse, whose head and tail were decorated with scarlet and blue ribbons, and the saddle, upon which the fair one sat, was ornamented all over with beads and little hawk's bells. The damsel did not do us the honor to dismount, but seemed to keep warily aloof, as though she feared that some of us might be inordinately fascinated by her fine person and splendid equipments, and her whole deportment proved to us, pretty satisfactorily, that she was no common beauty, but the favored companion of one high in office, who was jealous of her slightest movement.

After making a hasty meal, and bidding adieu to the captain, and our friendly Indian visitors, we mounted our horses, and rode off. About half an hour's brisk trotting brought us to the foot of a steep and high mountain, called the Blue. This is said to be the most extensive chain west of the dividing ridge, and, with one exception perhaps the most difficult of passage (Townsend 1978:161-163).

- ° Washington Irving wrote in 1836 about Captain Bonneville's visit to the Grande Ronde Valley in 1834. Irving based the account on notes and interviews with the fur seeker.

This is a beautiful and very fertile valley, about twenty miles long and five or six broad; a bright cold stream called the Fourche de Glace, or Ice River, runs through it. Its sheltered situation, embosomed in mountains, renders it good pasturing ground in the winter time; when the elk come down to it in great numbers, driven out of the mountains by the snow. The Indians then resort to it to hunt. They likewise come to it in the summer time to dig the camash root, of which it produces immense quantities. When this plant is in blossom, the whole valley is tinted by its blue flowers, and looks like the ocean when overcast by a cloud.

After passing a night in this valley, the travellers in the morning scaled the neighboring hills, to look out for a more eligible route than that upon which they had unluckily fallen; and, after much reconnoitering, determined to make their way once more to the river, and to travel upon the ice when the banks should prove impassable. On the second day after this determination, they were again upon Snake River . . . (Irving 1868:330-331).

company with Br. Lee, were treated in a most friendly manner asked into a lodge and had broiled salmon, cherries, etc., set before us -- Many of the indians came to our tent and passed several hours -- They have given four valuable horses to the mission for which Br. L gave them presents in return -- The indians tarried till nearly night when we had prayers, etc. The friendly manner in which we have been received by the indians is oweing in a great measure under God to Mr. McCay who has used his influence to recommend us in their favour -- The gift of horses is quite providential -- Afflicted with severe headache (Shepard 1834:59).

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1836:

° Narcissa Whitman wrote on August 28, 1836:

[August] 28th This morn lingered with Husband on the top of the hill that over looks Grand Round for berries, untill we were some distance behind camp. Have no distressing apprehensions now the moment we are out of sight of camp for we have entirely passed the dangerous country. Always enjoy riding alone with him, especially when we talk about home home friends. It is then the tedious hours are sweetly decoyed away. We decend a very steep hill in coming into Grand Round at the foot of which is a beautiful cluster of pine trees, pitch and spruce, but no white pines like that I have been accustomed to see at home. Grand Round is indeed a beautiful place. It is a circular plain, surrounded with lofty mountains & has a beautiful stream coursing through it, skirted with timber quite large timber. The scenery while passing through it in some places is delightful & the soil rich, in other places we find the white sand & sage as usual, so peculiar to this country. We nooned upon the Grand Round River.

The Cammas grow here in abundance & it is the principal resort of the Cayouses & many other tribes to obtain of it, of which they are very fond. It resembles an onion in shape & colour, when cooked is very sweet, taste like a fig. Their manner of baking them is very curious. They dig a hole in the ground, throw in a heap of stones, heat them to a red heat, cover them with green grass, upon which they put the Cammas & cover the whole with earth, when taken out it is black. This is the chief food of many tribes during winter. After dinner we left the plains & ascended the Blue Mountains . . . (Drury 1963[1]:90).

° Eliza Spalding wrote on August 30, 1836:

August 30, 1836 Passed through the G[rand] Round to day -- this is a large & very beautiful plain, -derived its name from its appearance, it is circular, surrounded by sloping mountains covered with Pines & Spruce - a beautiful river well timbered passes through it - the soil has the appearance of fertility & to the eye of the traveler who for many weeks has seen nothing by rugged & barren deserts, it presents a very grand appearance (Drury 1963[1]:196).

1838:

° Myra Eells wrote on August 25-26, 1838:

Saturday, August 25th.--Rode ten hours, forty miles; encamped on a creek as we came into Grand Ronde valley; crossed ten creek; Mrs. Conner sick and Mr. C., Mr. Smith and wife stop with her and do not get into camp.

Sunday, August 26th.--Stay in camp to-day; a beautiful place. Two men go on because they think they will find better grass for their horses. About ten o'clock Messrs. S. and C. and wife came into camp; Mrs. C. brings an infant daughter; suppose she rode twenty-five miles yesterday, fifteen to-day. In the afternoon, Mr. Eells read a sermon from Deut. 29:29; one Nez Perce present. Feel that we are near Dr. Whitman's, but not where we shall find our location (Eells 1889:87-88).

° Mary Richardson Walker wrote on August 25-27, 1838:

August 25th Just as we approached Grand Round, we descended a longer hill than I ever walked down before. Connor's wife was confined. She followed camp about 30 miles. At noon she collected fuel & prepared dinner. Gave birth to a daughter before sunset.

August 26th Another quiet Sabbath. The squaw came into camp about 10 with her child in her arms. Smart as could be. Grand Round is a Grand Round.

August 27th As the company was catching up, Mr. Rogers horse threw him, hurt him considerably. He made out to ride as far as Big Creek where we left him . . . Crossed Grand Round & camped at a beautiful place for settlement (Drury 1963[2]:115).

° Sarah White Smith wrote on August 26-29, 1838:

[August] 26th. Sabbath. This morning we travelled 5 miles to meet the company encamped in the borders of Grand Round. This afternoon religious exercises. Mr. Eells preached. Our native woman appears well as ever.

[August] 27th. Monday. Set out early this morning, but had not left the encampment when an accident happened to one of our company. Brother Rogers was thrown from his horse & so badly hurt that he was unable to move with the company. Mr. S. bled him & we moved ten miles & overtook the company. Here we found Mr. Rogers too ill to proceed further. Mr. S. & myself, with one of the hired men remained behind with him while the company went on. We are encamped in a beautiful place on the creek where the soil is good for cultivation.

[August] 28th. Tuesday. This morning I washed & after three this afternoon we moved about 10 miles over a beautiful plain. Encamped on a creek. Indian boy's mother with us. Mr. R. some better.

[August] 29th. Wednesday. Left the encampment early. Travelled 20 miles & reached the Blue Mountains. Passed a village of Kyuses. Stopped at noon at the foot of the mountains . . . (Drury 1966[3]:107).

1839:

- ° Sidney Smith wrote on September 18-20, 1839:

Wed [September] 18th 30 m. & campd on a Small Stream a mountain on either Side

Thurs [September] 19th 25 m. and campd at the foot of the blue mountains we nooned at the Lonely pine [in the Baker Valley] So Called from the fact that their is no other pine in Sight and this Rears its head in the prairie like a towering monument as a guide for the Lonly travelr of the Prairia

20th [September] Frid 25 m and Campd at the foot of the Blue Mountains (Hafen and Hafen 1955:88).

- ° Thomas Jefferson Farnham noted on September 20, 1839:

About twelve o'clock, came to a very steep descent, a mile in length. The upper part of it was so precipitous that the animals with packs were obliged to make a zigzag track of a mile, to descend the half that distance; the lower part was less precipitous, but covered with loose volcanic rocks. Among these the horses plunged and bruised themselves badly; but fortunately none were seriously injured. Some rich soil in the valleys; heavy groves of yellow pine, spruce, and hemlock; quaking-asp on the streams, and in the ravines. From high swells, over which ran the trail, we saw an extensive valley, deeply sunken among the lofty mountains in the north-east. It appeared to be thickly coated with grass, some portions dry, others green. The meadow lark made its appearance to-day. Toward night, we came again into the valley which we had entered at mid-day, and encamped under a majestic yellow pine. Freezing breezes swept down from the woody mountain around us, and made our fire, blazing high under the dark groaning boughs, extremely agreeable. Travelled twenty-five miles (Farnham 1843[2]:119-120).

1840:

° Alvin Thompson Smith wrote on August 9-12, 1840:

Sabath August 9th Staid at the lone tree [Lone Pine in Baker Valley] & kept the sabath & had a Bible class & Prayer meeting.

August 10th traveled 25 miles in sight of snow camped on spring creek

August 11th traveled 25 miles over some of the blue hills & some of the rich fertile bottom [of the Grande Ronde Valley]

August 12th saw some Indians early this morning some of them came to camp before breckfast & we engaged one for a pilot camped in the grand round packed up & traveled 1 mile to a spring at the foot of the mountain & camped for the day in among the pines (Smith 1840).

1841:

° Joseph Williams wrote on September 8, 1841:

[September] 8th. We came to Gunpowder River [Powder River], a small stream. The next day we staid on a pleasant plain, where beautiful springs come down from the spurs of the Blue Mountains. We staid on the Grand Round, a beautiful plain, about twenty miles long and ten broad. It is well calculated for farming, and well watered. Here we pass some beautiful pines, spruce, and fir trees. After crossing the mountain, we staid at the foot of it, on the margin of a small creek. We had some frost this morning (Williams 1843).

1842:

° Medorem Crawford wrote on September 10, 1842:

Sept. 10. Saturday verry cold morning. Horses far from camp. Started at 8 oclock found good places for camping which we might have come to last night. Commenced rising gradually at 10 oclock continued to rise until 12 when we came to a tremendous hill to descend. The mountains on our left were close by they rose gradually and were covered with Pine Trees. Our descent lasted for near an hour, about midway of the hill was a little water course crossing our path & afforded us a resting place around this place were several Pine Trees. I noticed the White Pine and the Spruce Pine. Some were verry tall & slim. From this little grove down the hill was more difficult all were obliged to dismount for safety. It was verry sidling and uncomfortable rocky. Below was a most beautiful valley as I ever saw. We found good grass, a delightful road, & a fertile country in the valley, we crossed some small water courses and camp on a beautiful Creek at 3 o'clock good

grass, & water & an abundance of wood traveled 20 miles found several well beaten trails leading from camp but none appeared fresh. After dark two Indians came to camp on horseback. They were of a different tribe from any which we had seen. They had traps and appeared to have been out but a short time. They told us that we could get to Wala Wala in 3 days (Crawford 1897:19).

1843:

- ° Overton Johnson and William Winter wrote in September, 1843:

Thirty-three miles from Powder River, we descend abruptly, some three thousand feet, into the Grand Round; which is a level plain, about ten miles wide, and twenty miles long, surrounded by Mountains, and traversed by the Grand Round River, which comes in from the West, runs nearly to the middle of the plain in several channels, joins with another branch, bears away to the left and leaves the plain at its Northern extremity, through a low gap. --Numerous small creeks and rivulets, run through all parts of the valley, from the surrounding Mountains. There are some Balm trees on the River, and the Mountains are covered with Pine. -- Much the largest portion of the soil is very rich, and the whole is covered with a superior quality of grass (Johnson and Winter 1846:32).

- ° Peter Hardeman Burnett wrote on October 1, 1843:

October 1st. We this day came to the "Grand Round," the name of an immense valley, one hundred miles in circumference, which will vie in fertility with the valley of the Missouri, or indeed, with any spot in the world. Trees of all kinds are sprinkled throughout its surface; shrubs, flowers, brooks and singing birds, meadow lark, and other winged game, diversify it, with many other of the attractions of more lavish regions, and its general temperature is guaranteed by the evidence of its prodigal vegetation. The Grand Round is nearly circular in its form and lies embosomed in the Blue Mountains, which here, like their predecessors before described, are covered from bottom to top with lofty pines in studded forests. The bottom of this magic circle is rich, level prairie land, trelliced with crystal springs issuing from its surrounding mountain border, which, with but slight assistance from the art of man, could easily be made to irrigate the whole surface of the valley.

In this region abounds a peculiar vegetable called Kamas root, which has a sweet and pleasant taste, and which is also very nutritious food. It is about the size of a partridge egg, and is cured by being dried upon hot stones. We purchased large quantities of it from the numerous Indians we found in the vicinity.

In this region also may be found one of the most wonderful creations of nature, existent in the world. This is a pond, or

well, of boiling salt water, hot enough for cooking purposes, and bottomless in its depths. The steam arising from it may be seen at the distance of several miles, and resembles the vapor arising from a salt furnace. It occasioned no small degree of conjecture among the various savants and philosophers of our party, and not a few were the opinions expressed as to its cause. McFarley [John McHaley], however, gave the most satisfactory account of any, to the inquirers. He represented the meridian of Grand Round to be exactly opposite to Mount Vesuvius, on the other side of the globe; that the tremendous volcano "had been burning along afore Christ, and it stood to reason, as it eat deeper and deeper into the bowels of the earth, it must eventually come out on the other side." He believed this spring to be an indication of its approach to the western surface, and that "the superincumbent weight of water upon the spot was all that kept it for a time from bursting to a vent." He then added his deliberate opinion, that ere long, the area of Grand Round would be the scene of a tremendous eruption and the circle of mountains which hemmed it in, would be the rim of its crater.

This notion created no small alarm among some of our folks, and a very extensive opinion prevailed that it was better to move on as soon as possible, and give Vesuvius a chance.

I should have mentioned before, that on entering the "Grand Round," we had to descend an abrupt declivity of three or four hundred feet, covered with loose rocks, as large, and, in some cases larger, than a man's head. This was by far the worst hill we had yet descended, but by locking both hind wheels, and with teams so well trained as ours, we all descended in about three hours without hurt or injury to a single soul, and no damage was done to our truck beyond a slight crush of one side of a wagon body (Wilkes 1845).

° William T. Newby wrote on October 2, 1843:

(October 2) We struck the devide in a fue miles. The hill in going down to the ground is very bad, the worst hill I ever saw wadgeons go down. We went 7 miles after we went down the hill. In campments good evry 2 or 5 miles. Dist[ance] 16 [miles] (Newby 1939:236).

° Peter Hardeman Burnett wrote about the Grande Ronde Valley in October, 1843:

On October 1st we came into and through Grande Ronde, one of the most beautiful valleys in the world, embosomed among the Blue Mountains, which are covered with magnificent pines. It was estimated to be about a hundred miles in circumference. It was generally rich prairie, covered with luxuriant grass, and having numerous beautiful streams passing through it, most of which rise from springs at the foot of the mountains bordering the valley. In

this valley the camas-root abounds, which the the Indians dried upon hot rocks. We purchased some from them, and found it quite palatable to our keen appetites (Barnett 1880:125).

° James W. Nesmith wrote on September 29-30, 1843:

Friday, September 29. Trailed sixteen miles and encamped in Grande Ronde, a beautiful bottom prairie about six miles across and surrounded by mountains capped with snow. Had some difficulty in entering the Ronde in consequence of the big hill [Ladd Canyon] which it was necessary for us to descend. Soil to-day assumed a more fertile appearance than any I have seen west of the mountains, in some places covered with beautiful green grass, giving it the appearance of spring.

Saturday, September 30. Trailed six miles across Grande Ronde. Encamped at the foot of the mountains, and lay by in the afternoon (Nesmith 1906:353).

° John C. Fremont wrote on October 17-18, 1843:

October 17. . . . From the waters of this stream [Powder River], the road ascended by a good and moderate ascent to a dividing ridge, but immediately entered upon ground covered with fragments of an altered siliceous slate, which are in many places large, and render the road racking to a carriage. In this rock the planes of deposition are distinctly preserved, and the metamorphism is evidently due to the proximity of volcanic rocks. On either side, the mountains here are densely covered with tall and handsome trees; and, mingled with the green of a variety of pines, is the yellow of the European larch (pinus larix,) which loses its leaves in the fall. From its present color, we were enabled to see that it forms a large proportion of the forests on the mountains, and is here a magnificent tree, attaining sometimes the height of 200 feet, which I believe is elsewhere unknown. About two in the afternoon we reached a high point of the dividing ridge, from which we obtained a good view of the Grand Rond--a beautiful level basin, or mountain valley, covered with good grass, on a rich soil, abundantly watered, and surrounded by high and well-timbered mountains; and its name descriptive of its form--the great circle. It is a place--one of the few we have seen in our journey so far--where a farmer would delight to establish himself, if he were content to live in the seclusion which it imposes. It is about 20 miles in diameter; and may, in time, form a superb county. Probably with the view of avoiding a circuit, the wagons had directly descended into the Rond by the face of a hill so very rocky and continuously steep as to be apparently impracticable; and, following down on their trail, we encamped on one of the branches of the Grand Rond river, immediately at the foot of the hill. I had remarked, in descending, some very white spots glistening on the plain, and, going out in that direction after we had encamped, I found them to be the bed of a dry salt lake, or

marsh, very firm and bare, which was covered thickly with a fine white powder, containing a large quantity of carbonate of soda, (thirty-three in one hundred parts.)

The old grass had been lately burnt off from the surrounding hills, and, wherever the fire had passed, there was a recent growth of strong, green, and vigorous grass; and the soil of the level prairie, which sweeps directly up to the foot of the surrounding mountains, appears to be very rich, producing flax spontaneously and luxuriantly in various places.

Analysis of the Grand Rond soil.

Silica	70.81
Alumina	10.97
Lime and magnesia.	1.38
Oxide of iron.	2.21
Vegetable matter, partly decomposed	8.16
Water and loss	5.46
Phosphate of lime	<u>1.01</u>
	100.00

The elevation of this encampment is 2,940 feet above the sea.

October 18. It began to rain an hour before sunrise, and continued until 10 o'clock; the sky entirely overcast, and the temperature at sunrise 48°.

We resumed our journey somewhat later than usual, traveling in a nearly north direction across this beautiful valley; and about noon reached a place on one of the principal streams, where I had determined to leave the emigrant trail, in the expectation of finding a more direct and better road across the Blue mountains. At this place the emigrants appeared to have held some consultation as to their further route, and finally turned directly off to the left; reaching the foot of the mountain in about three miles, which they ascended by a hill as steep and difficult as that by which we had yesterday descended to the Rond (Fremont 1970:545-547).

1844:

° James Clyman wrote on September 27-28, 1844:

[September] 27th . . . Passed through a beautiful vally this fore noon well grassed but to dry for cultivation a Timbred mountain close to our left the same seen range yestarday morning As we caught our horses for our afternoons travel Some Indian as is their habit when they discover Strangers in their country set fire to the grass about a half mile ahiad of us our rout being N. & a strong south wind blowing the fire kept ahead of us through the hills about 6 or 8 miles and when we overtook the fire we had some difficulty in passing it but all got through nearly suffocated with

smoke & dust & entered the grand Round vally the whole mountains which surround this vally completely enveloped in fire and Smoke neare Sundown we discovered a man rideing rapidly toward us which proved Mr [James] Watters from Willamitt waiting for his family which he expects to come in this seasons imigraton made 26 miles and encamped close under the Bleue Mountains in company with Mr. Watters & Mr. [Rice?]

[September] 28 Concluded to ly still to day and rest ourselves and horses before taking the Blue Mountains which we are informed will be two days without grass this is a well watered well grassed vally but the thick smoke preventes me from seeing the probatile Size or extent I think however it is not large Remained in camp to day which was Quite warm although we had a white frost last night as we have had for several nights past. Encamped in this vally are several hundred Indians of the Skuse nation now amalgamated with Shepaptin or Pierce nose nation 30 or 40 of these people visited us this afternoon & from whom we traded a little cammerce [camas] they bringing with them some peas & Squashes of their own raising they seemed to be anxious to see our wagons & cattle they being anxious to trade horses of which they have great Quantities for cattle & appear to be rapidly advancing in civilization this vally is also verry favourable to the groth of the Cammerce [camas] root a root much esembling & onion in appearance but of a Sweet rich tast when roasted after the manner of the Indians the smok appeared to encrease (Clyman 1984:119-124).

° Edward Evans Parrish wrote on October 15-16, 1844:

Tuesday, Oct. 15.--We have a pleasant morning, not cold as it has been for some days past. We are a long way, but not half way up the hill. Started early and had a stony road part of the way, and part very fine. The Grand Round River hill was bad to go down. Nooned at the river and went up the other side, as bad or worse than the hill up the mountain. We are camped on the top of the river hill about one mile from the Grand Round River, in company with the other wagons that left us last evening. The kindness of Mr. Welch who assisted us up the hill was an advantage to us (Parrish 1888:113-114).

1845:

° Samuel B. Crockett wrote at Linnton on the Willamette River on February 16, 1845, about his travels through northeastern Oregon:

Between Fort Bousa and the blue mountains the country is hilly and moantaneous and is very difficult for waggons to pass, but immediately east of the blue mountains is a section of very rich and beautifull country and if it were not for the great number of indians their it would be a good chance for settlements. The blue mountains are not high but they are thickly covered with tall pine timber which was the first body of timber worth notice that we

passed through after we left the frontiers of Missouri (Crockett 1845).

° John E. Howell wrote on September 11-12, 1845:

11, Thursday. Tr. through valley of Powder river. Crossed ridges of Mts. Camp in the edge of Grande Rond. Powder river has wide bottoms and forms a considerable valley some of which is good soil producing willows and other shrubs grass, rushes, Flax clover &c on the west side of this valley a lofty range of the Blue mountains which produce the large straight and lofty pine, spruce and Fir in great abundance, good grazing on those mts & good springs near the valley but not plenty in the interior.

12, Friday. Trav. across the Grand Round a beautiful and rich valley of land probably containing one thousand square miles surrounded by the Blue Mountains which appear to be rich grass clover and is abundant here. The mountain scenery is grand. Camp at the foot of the Mt. on a branch (Howell 1907:150).

° Joel Palmer wrote on September 11-12, 1845:

September 11. This day we traveled about twelve miles; for the first five or six miles, the road was quite level and good; it then follows a ridge dividing Powder river and Grand Round; this portion of the road is very uneven and stony. The road leading down into the valley of Grand Round, is circuitous, and its difficulty of travel enhanced by its roughness; it is about one and a half miles in length, to where it reaches the bottom. Grand Round is a valley, whose average width does not exceed twenty miles, and is about thirty miles in length; a stream of water of some twenty yards in width passes through this valley, receiving considerable addition to its volume from the many rivulets that pour down their waters from the mountains, by which this valley is enclosed. The bottoms are of rich friable earth, and afford grass of various kinds, among others that of red clover. There is a root here found in great abundance, and known as the camas, which is held in high repute by the Indians for some medicinal qualities it is thought to possess; wild flax and a variety of other plants grow in luxuriance, like to those I have observed in the western prairies. The streams are generally lined with timber, and abound in salmon and other varieties of fish. Upon the sides of the mountains and extending down into the valley are found beautiful groves of yellow pine timber. These mountains are places of resort for bear, deer, and elk.

This bottom affords an excellent situation for a settlement, possessing more advantages in that respect, than any found since our departure from the lower Platte river. North of this and at the distance of about twenty miles, is another valley similar in appearance to this, but of greater extent. The streams having their course through this valley empty into Lewis river, which is

eight or ninety miles to the north. Our camp was at the foot of the hill, convenient to a spring branch. At twilight we were visited by four or five of the Caaguas, the tribe alluded to previously.

An incident quite worth of note, occurred at this place. The chief (Aliquot by name) who had joined us at our other encampment, and had pursued this day's journey in company, had pitched his tent some three hundred yards to the rear of our camp. In the evening, in strolling about the camp, I came near his tent, and entered with the intention of employing his squaw in the soling of my moccasins; while she was engaged in this employment, a conversation had sprung up between the old chief and myself, in which he took occasion to ask me if I were a christian, as also whether there were many upon the road; to which questions I of course answered in the affirmative, supposing that he merely wished to know, whether I classed myself with the heathen or christians. On my return to our camp, some one of our party proposed that we should while away an hour or so, in a game at cards, which was readily assented to. We had but engaged in our amusement, when the old chief Aliquot made his appearance, holding a small stick in his hand; he stood transfixed for a moment, and then advanced to me, raising his hand, which held the stick in the act of chastising me, and gently taking me by the arm, said "Captain--Captain--no good; no good." You may guess my astonishment, at being thus lectured by a "Wild and untutored savage," twenty five hundred miles from a civilized land. I inwardly resolved to abandon card playing forever.

September 12. This day we traveled about seven miles; the road runs across the upper end of Grand round, to a small spring branch, when it again ascends the mountains. At this spring branch we pitched our camp, and while here, were visited by great numbers of Indians, including men, squaws and papooses. These Indians have decidedly a better appearance than any I have met; tall and athletic in form, and of great symmetry of person; they are generally well clad, and observe pride in personal cleanliness. They brought wheat, corn, potatoes, peas, pumpkins, fish, &c. which they were anxious to dispose of for cloths, calico, nankins and other articles of wearing apparel; they also had dressed deer skins and moccasins; they had good horses, which they offered in exchange for cows and heifers; they would gladly exchange a horse for a cow, esteeming the cow as of equal value. They remained with us throughout the day, and when evening approached returned to their lodges along the river two miles distant. I noticed a few of the Nez Perces (Pierced Noses) tribe of Indians among them. Both of these tribes are under the influence and control of two Presbyterian missionaries, Dr. Whitman and Mr. Spalding, who have resided among them for the last ten years; the former among the Caaguas, which inhabit the country bordering on Wallawalla river and its tributaries, the Blue mountains and Grand round: the latter among the Nez Perces who inhabit the country lying along the Lewis river, and its tributaries, from the eastern base of the Blue

mountains to the Columbia river. These missionary establishments are of a like character to those farther north. As I shall have occasion to speak of these missionaries, as also the beneficial results which have flowed from their residence among the savages, I will return to my travels.

Some of our party becoming scant of provision, started for Dr. Whitman's the missionary establishment referred to above, intending to rejoin us at Umatillo river, my old friend Aliquot generously proffered his services as pilot for them, which were readily accepted (Palmer 1847:53-55).

° William Findley wrote on October 5, 1845:

Oct. 5 Traveled 6 miles to the Grand Round. Here is the worst mountain we had to come down. From the foot of the mt. to where we went up the mountain again, is 8 miles. Here we camped at the Grand Rounde. This is one of the most beautiful valleys we've seen on the trip. Mr. Hastings in his description doesn't more than give appearance in point of quality, though I think the valley is not quite so large from East to East as he describes but from North to south is about right. [He wrote describes.] (Findley 1845:10).

1847:

° Absalom B. Harden wrote on August 29-30, 1847:

August the 29 we Started and traveled 7 miles and came to a very bad road this first 7 miles was very good road then we assended a hill and [traveled] over rocks for 6 miles futher at the End of the 6 miles we came to a very Steep lonng hill it is 2 mills lonng from where you first begin to desend it and powerful rocky then we came to the grand round valley at the foot of this hill hear is a beautiful valley suerrounded with mountains on Every side these changes of mountains is very high this grand round valley is as beautiful a cuntry as to the site and the Land but the timber is scarce and what there is in pine and white fur tho this valley is clothed with grass in abundance and good water the mountains through this cuntry has considerable of fur timber on them but it is Small and tall we saw several head of oxen today that had given out plenty of grass all over theas mountains & little raveens we could have campt today every 2 or 3 mills but hear is good camp tho wood is scarce but water and grass plenty we have not saw aney indians today but plenty of fresh sine this grand round valley is as leavel as a house flor

August the 30d 1847 we Started and traveled 7 mills across the Southern End of the grand round and came to Blew mountains hear we incampt and the indians came to us in abundance some 30 or 40 tho they were very friendly and traded to us som of there horses for cattle and shirts & Brought us plenty of Salmon fish and Sold for shirts and powder and lead some of the boys swapped good rifels

for A horse that is give a gun for a good horse the road today has bin very good and leavel here is grass water and wood here the mountains is beautiful clothed with yellow pine beautiful and tall the valleys is very rich and fertile and would purduse grain in abundance if tilled but no one to til the soil here but indians and they will not do it (Harden 1847).

° Loren B. Hastings wrote on October 3, 1847:

Sunday, moved up a ridge of the Blue mountains and crossed over into the Grande Ronde; some of the road today very good and some very rocky; very bountiful groves of timber on both sides of the road. Left the road and camped at the foot of Blue mountains. Four Cayuse Indians came to our camp. The Grand Ronde is an interesting place; it is a round prairie about 20 miles in diameter, with a very black, rich soil and good grass surrounded by the majestic Blue mountains covered with winter green trees. A small river called Grande Ronde river runs through the center and any number of good springs breaking out at the foot of the mountain; this 'some day' will be a good settlement (Hastings 1926:22).

° Elizabeth Dixon Smith noted on October 6, 1847:

passed over one difficult stony mountain came down into grand round O if grand round was west of the Cascade mountains how soon it would be taken up it is level and covered with grass and watered with brooks and springs it has a river flowing through it no timber except on the river but the mountains which surround it are promisquisly covered with pine and fur we camped on grand round (Smith 1983:136).

1848:

° Benjamin Cleaver wrote on August 18, 1848:

we continued west until we came in sight of the Grand Ronde Bottom we here had a long hill to go down Say about one mile it is not very Steep. But there is a good number of loos stones on the Road. we see on these Mountains some fine groves of Pine & Cedar. This grand Rond Bottom is very furtile we find one good camping place at the foot of the hill & another in about 6 miles & from this camp to the west side of the Bottom is about 4 miles, here we camped. . . (Cleaver 1848).

° William Wright Anderson wrote on August 19, 1848:

August the 19th we ascended a high mountain leaveing Jacksions Company behind we traveled 8 miles over high rolling mountains through pine groves and falen timber to grand round river here the river passes through a deep narrow heavy timbered canyon here we saw several Cyse Indians they showed no sines of hostility one of

our [company] bought a pony of one of them for which he gave a boat but the Indian soon became dissatisfied and wanted to rue so to keep peace the man rue back agan and we drove to the top of the mountain and camped . . . (Anderson 1848:39).

° Honore-Timothee Lempfrit wrote on September 5-7, 1848:

5th September . . . The trail that led down to the plateau was very steep with numerous spiral turns. Those people who were on foot sometimes took a shortcut, a little path that was extremely steep and therefore very dangerous. I had already reached the prairie that lay at the foot of the plateau when I could not help but admire the courage of an American lady. In order to get down the hill this lady got hold of a plank from an abandoned waggon and after placing her child at one end of it she positioned herself at the other end. Then by making a little movement she set the plank in motion and slid straight down to the floor of the prairie without the slightest mishap. However I shuddered to think of the danger she was courting.

6th September At last we arrived in the middle of this famous plateau called "Le Grand Rond." It is really one of the loveliest places in the whole world. Just imagine an enormous arena measuring about fifteen miles wide by twenty-five miles long, entirely surrounded by the most beautiful wooded mountains and watered by two lovely rivers. The extremely fertile soil supports a luxuriant vegetation and to the south there are some lovely rolling hills that seem to beg to be put under cultivation, being fatigued by producing nothing but trees whose branches fall to the ground from old age.

Two Indian nations have established their lodges at the foot of these lovely hills, the Nez Perces and the Cayuse

We camped on the heights of the Grand Rond by the banks of the smaller of the two rivers that cross this immense prairie from south to north. The time is after dinner, about 4 to 5 in the evening. I go for a short walk so that I can explore the country around us. Very soon the Indians come to seek me out to tell me that the two Great Chiefs of this Nation have come with their whole retinue to pay me a visit.

"Wait a moment" I said to myself, "This now is the real thing, I am going to find myself in the presence of their Eminences! Well the, let us go and see these Great Chiefs." I set of at a gallop.

When I arrived I was told that the chiefs were awaiting me in the tent of the Canadian who would serve us as interpreter. Then came the solemn moment! Gathered round a great fire were thirteen Indians. Two of whom were Thuote (Tawatoe) and Five Crows. Both were dressed the European fashion. They were wearing caps made from high quality blue cloth. Thuote sported a green suit, a red

waistcoat and pale blue trousers made from a very fine material. Five Crows was also carefully dressed. They took off their caps as they greeted me. I walked around the assembled group, shaking hands with everyone.

Then the Great Chief spoke for a short while and the good Canadian immediately repeated in translation the reason for this official visit. [Lempfrit listened to speeches from the two chiefs and then explained that he had come to mount a mission to the Indians of the Oregon country. The chiefs then said they wanted to host a "festival" the following day.]

7th September [Lempfrit described the gathering of Americans and Indians for the great "festival."]

We arranged ourselves in a semicircle and then we advanced slowly to meet the procession. Now we are face to face! A dozen Indians mounted on superb horses had small drums that they tapped lightly with little drumsticks. The drums were bound around with horsehair and the sound they produced could either be muffled or very loud according to the wishes of the player. Behind them came the singers beating out the measure by striking the saddles of their horses. We were the first to halt. Then the long line of horses peeled off to the right and to the left and the two flags were brought up and set up beside our own. The white flag had a red cross at its centre and the other flag, the one that had inspired so much fear in the hearts of our Americans, was a red flag emblazoned with the arms of the United States! The Great Chiefs Five Crows and Thuote (Tawatoe) came forward while their Indian musicians played a fanfare. They shook hands with us, then several horsemen rode up and circled round our flags and immediately the peace-pipe ceremony got under way. I noticed that in circumstances such as these it is the newcomers who are expected to provide the tobacco. As we were unaware of the etiquette required by the ceremony the Indians let us see the great peace-pipe empty, then a huge amount of tobacco was hastily brought up.

Later on the two Great Chiefs requested me to follow them into the Canadian's tent. It was there that they repeated to me in essence what they had said the previous evening but this time I learned that this festival had been prepared especially for me, the objective being to commit me to come and establish my mission amongst their people! Then they brought me a large roll of papers. I thought I would find there the letters they had told me about, but instead, I found fourteen beautifully coloured engravings. These were the fourteen stations of the Road to the Cross. They told me that they had been given them by a Catholic Father. I also found other religious engravings amongst which was a Catholic Ladder. These were the letters they had to deliver to me! I told them to take great care of these things and that we would hang them up in the church I would come and build for them. After this short conversation I went back to have a look at the festival.

As the Great Chief had earlier announced that trading could take place most of the Indians had gone off to fetch horses and other items of barter. They came back shortly bringing some magnificent horses that we could acquire for very little; for example a very poor gun or blanket could be exchanged for a horse that in France would cost at least one hundred Louis. I spent a little time walking about among the rows of Indians as I wanted to study the variety of their costumes and more especially the colours of them. I had previously noticed that there were eighty-three horsemen on the right and only about thirty on the left. I was told that the reason why the group on the right consisted entirely of women while the group on the left were all men.

Shortly afterwards a large number of men and women carrying baskets filled with potatoes and Indian corn arrived. Sometimes there were two riders on the same horse, a man sitting up front and a woman sitting behind on the rump of the animal. This sight called to my mind the observation of an American lady, who came up to me, and having separated me from the other people in our party, showed me an Indian woman eating the lice on her man's head! The Indian woman searched them skilfully and nibbled them as we might relish a grain of salt! I have no idea what exquisite taste this good Indian woman could possibly find in this condiment! Perhaps it might have tasted like crab sauce!

Among the group of Indians I noticed a man of excellent physique. He was of good height and he had an aquiline nose. Around his neck was a long string of bear claws. I was told that this decoration was a trophy representing his victories. Apparently he had killed several bears and had therefore been given permission to make a necklet with the claws of this formidable animal.

The festival went on until evening. It was not until about 7 o'clock that the chief's messenger called out to the crowd that the party was over and that everyone should return to their villages. In a few minutes the huge swarms of Indians had vanished (Lempfrit 1984:128-135).

1849:

° William J. Watson wrote on August 17, 1849:

Leaving here, and crossing the division ridge, and ascending a long and somewhat steep hill, then descending a long, steep hill, we came to the Grand Rond, which is one of the few places in which the white man who is fond of a retired life could make his home. It has a splendid soil, and various small creeks running through it thickly set with bushes of various kinds, and surrounded by high and picturesque mountains, covered with lofty pine trees, and about fifteen miles in diameter. It has a very rich soil covered with grass. During the evening we were visited by several Ceyuse Indians, and their chief, who had papers to show that he was

innocent of the death of Whiteman [sic], stating that he was very sorry and cried very much concerning it (Watson 1851:39).

° Osborne Cross wrote on September 8-10, 1849:

We travelled until about 2 o'clock, p.m. over an uneven country, then descended a mountain for a mile and a half, which brought us into the Grand Ronde, a beautiful valley, or more properly a basin, for it is entirely surrounded by the Blue mountains on the north and northwest, and spurs of mountains to the east, one of which we had travelled over during the day. At the base of the mountain we crossed a small brook, which came from the deep gorge to our left, and, after running along at the base of one we had just ascended, passes through the Grand Ronde valley, and falls into the Grand Ronde river, which is a delightful cold stream, that comes immediately from among the mountains. We continued our march through the valley until we reached a small stream near the head of the valley, where the road ascends. Here we stopped for the day, intending to remain a day or two, before attempting to cross the Blue mountains.

This valley is a fine, dark soil, very level; and as water issues from the base of the mountains which completely surround it, it may be easily irrigated, and is, for a settlement, the prettiest place I have passed on the route. The range among the hills and in the valley is very fine for grazing, while it is well protected by the mountains against the northern winds in winter. The thick wood would give shelter to cattle and all other stock, while the valley and mountains would supply them abundantly with grass to subsist on during the winter. The only objection, therefore, which can be made to this section of country is the great difficulty of getting produce to the Columbia river; but this could be easily remedied, and the day is not far distant, no doubt, when a railroad will overcome these objections, as the distance between here and the Dalles is but 205 miles, as the road now runs, passing through the Eumatilla valley, which would avoid the high hills, and present not the least obstruction, while there is timber enough to be found here and at the Dalles to build a railroad to the Atlantic ocean.

September 9.--The morning was much clearer than when we entered the valley; and it gave us a fine view of the range of the mountains to the north and west, as well as the extend of this beautiful valley, which surpassed any we had seen on the march.

A number of Indians came to our camp last evening and this morning, bringing some of their most inferior horses with them, to exchange for blankets, tobacco, and trinkets. These animals were very wild and equally vicious, as they could scarcely be approached without our running the risk of being bitten or kicked by them. They are generally rode with a lariat, fastened simply around the lower jaw, while a small pad, with wooden stirrups, constitutes the saddle. The Indians never mount their horses on the left side, and the

bridle is of but little use to them in guiding, as it is principally done by pressing the legs close to the side of the animal, and the least touch of the bridle is sufficient to guide in any direction.

Having been directed to proceed to the Dalles to make necessary arrangements for transporting the troops by water to Fort Vancouver on their arrival, I hired a guide, and also several horses, which would enable me to travel the distance without any delay, and made every arrangement for an early start in the morning.

September 10.--Having made all necessary preparations last evening, I started this morning at half-past six o'clock, in company with Lieutenant Lindsey and two soldiers, as an escort (Cross 1850:95-96).

1850:

- ° Samuel James wrote on August 6, 1850:

Aug. 6 West side of Grand Round A most beautiful site for a farm on leaving Powder River valley. Got onto Grand Round over a ten mile hill. Most of the drivers quaked in getting their wagons down. The best of land, grass and water, An enchanting place. 25 [miles] (James 1850)

- ° David Maynard wrote on September 1-2, 1850:

Sunday, September 1. Started at half past 4, after being up with team nearly all night. Came on to the Good camp at spring. On our way here at Powder river we killed a noble salmon, taking breakfast out of him, and a fine dish it was. I just wish my family had such a fish to work at. From Fort Boise 114 miles. Encamped at first spring on the Grand Ronde.

September 2. Left camp at 6½. Stopped and let the team feed twice before noon. Came on to the bluffs, 7½ miles at 11. Took dinner. Saw sandhill cranes and sage hens in plenty. in the Ronde found the best grass we have seen since we left home. Here we began climbing the Blue Mountains . . . (Maynard 1906:60).

1851:

- ° John Johnson wrote on July 30, 1851:

About 2 o'clock we came to a very long steep hill overlooking the beautiful valley. It appeared to be the most beautiful valley I had ever looked upon. The hills dressed in green, with springs of water running from the sides, with groves of willows and cotton wood, and thousands of ponies grazing, and Indians driving in all directions (Johnson 1851:18).

- ° Lucia Loraine Williams noted on August 9-10, 1851:

It is called the Grand Rond. It resembled an enchanted valley. As we wound around the hill before descending into it found plenty of Cayuse Indians.

10. Moved at the foot of Blue Mountains (Williams 1984:144).

- ° Amelia Hadley, ill during the journey through northeastern Oregon, summarized the route into the Grand Ronde in early August, 1851:

. . . 14½ miles to grand round, plenty of water and grass in that distance. Then you have a splendid country of fine grass. 7½ to a branch north side grand round, here you enter the blue mountains (Hadley 1984:92).

- ° Susan Amelia Cranston noted on August 10-11, 1851:

Sunday 10th Traveled 14 miles 6 in forenoon over a level road through a rich bottom at the foot of the mountains crossed a number of spring branches stopped an hour at noon in the afternoon we had a very rough rocky road along a long stony hill to go up and down Encamped at night in the edge of Grand round on a little stream good camp

Monday 11th Traveled 7 miles across Grand round which is a circular prairie bottom surrounded by mountains covered with timber. The river passes through the westerly part of the bottom and its course is northeast empties into Lewis or Snake river encamped at the base of a long hard hill the river being some two miles to our right Staid during the day Had good camp (Cranston 1984:123).

- ° P. V. Crawford wrote on August 19-20, 1851:

August 19. This day we traveled fourteen miles on the west side of Powder river. The road has been over gentle ridges and across small creeks coming in from the west all the way. Here the valley is striped with small streams of clear, cold water all along the west side of the valley. This night we are camped at a spring at the foot of the dividing ridge between Powder river and the Grand Ronde valleys.

August 20. This day we traveled fourteen miles; two miles over a ridge brought us to a valley with numerous springs. We traveled down the valley three or four miles, and over a sidling, stony ridge, to the top of the Grande Ronde hill, then down a long, steep-sidling to Grande Ronde valley. Here we found and passed some of our advanced company repairing a broken wagon. Eight miles across the head of the valley brought us to a small creek at the foot of the hill, where the road leaves the valley. Here we encamped on good grass, water and wood. The surroundings here are most delightful. We found Cayuse Indians here, with peas and potatoes for sale. All well (Crawford 1924:161-162).

- ° Charles A. Brandt wrote on August 31-September 2, 1851:

August 31st. Six miles brought us to where we leave the [Powder River] valley. We found some sick people here. The ailment was flux. An old lady by name of Rice died here. We saw the first Cayuse Indians here. They are fine looking fellows and talk English very well. They have gardens and raise some vegetables and grains. We went up a steep hill and 8 miles brings us to Grand Rond River and down the worst hill we have had on the trip. Mountains are covered with timber some of which is 200 feet high.

[September 1, 1851: No diary entry]

September 2d. The river here is 30 yards wide and one foot deep. Layed in camp today. Some went hunting and others stayed in camp. We saw some Oregon squirrels. They look like the gray squirrels of the states but not so large. Several light showers of rain fell today. Temperature rather cool. I sold my horse today (Brandt 1851:23).

° Harriet Talcott Buckingham noted on September 8, 1851:

[September] 8 Came down the mountain into Grand Ronde vall[e]y - a perfect gem - an oasis in a desert The descent was made with difficulty - the wagons being chained & let down with ropes much of the way.

Grand Ronde river flows & winds through this basin surrounded by high hills

Thousands of horses - many of them curiously spotted feed upon the mountain side. Hundreds of Indians of the Nez Percies tribe, are camped here, & lazily greet us with invitations to swap, saw one child almost if not quite white among them. The women are all dressed in native costumes of dressed antelope skins - fringed & ornamented with moccasins on their dainty little feet. They came to see us mounted astride of great sleek horses, & laugh & chatter among themselves like just so many gay school girls. Their long black hair is braided into two long plaits that hang down & on top of the head is a gay little hat shaped like a flower pot -- made of woven grass -- it serves to pick berries in or to drink out of, as it holds water it being so closely woven. Brass rings are to be seen on waist & ankle they have an air of maidenly reserve that wins respect. The men are all fine specimens of physical development, & have not yet become contaminated with the vices of white men and the whole tribe are very superior to any we have yet seen. One pretty squaw took my knitting & very proudly took a few stichs -- the remains of some of the teachings of Mrs Whitman that had been remembered

Grass was tall & luxurious in this Indian Paradise (Buckingham 1984:49-50).

° Elizabeth Wood noted on September 8, 1851:

Monday the 8th we descended a very steep hill, which took an hour to get down, into a valley called the Grand Rounds. This valley is one of Nature's beauty spots, and at the foot of the hill we were met by a great many Indians waiting to see the emigrants. This valley is very fertile, its area is about 10,000 acres, fenced in with very high mountains, covered with fine trees. Its fertile soil produces several kinds of luxuriant grass -- blue grass, timothy, clover, red top, and 'broom corn' grass, that looks like oats, only the head is not heavy enough (Wood 1984:176-177).

° J. A. Powell wrote in his undated diary of 1851:

thence to foot of Blue Mountains (water and grass all along)

22 [miles]

(Powell 1851)

° John S. Zieber wrote on September 17-18, 1851:

Wednesday, September 17--Last night the Indians we had met in the day came to our camp and brought large black-looking fish which they traded to us and seemed to be very friendly. Upon being invited to partake of some supper they took off their hats and caps and in their language asked a blessing, at least such it was supposed to be. They sat round our fire and talked and answered questions and gave us the names of different things. At about 9 o'clock they sang a hymn and prayed in their language. The same was repeated this morning by daybreak. The tune of the matin hymn was plaintive and sweet, very good time was kept and all of their party joined in singing. We traveled 15 miles and camped within 4 miles of the Indian camp. Many of them came to see us and to swap.

Thursday, September 18--This morning we reached the Indian camp on a small creek and here trading commenced for corn, peas, potatoes and berries. They also had roots and ponies. A number were bought of them, after which we went 4 miles farther up one of the most beautiful valleys I ever saw and camped at a spring. The Indians were again with us in number, and anxious to trade peas and ponies, the latter for cows (Zieber 1921:329).

1852:

° Jared Fox wrote on July 28, 1852:

Wednesday 28. Passed 8 miles good road & rather tolerable and hardly that and 8 miles of the worst possible road, too much for man or beast. At noon found one of my waggon tire broke but patched it up. The 8 miles good road was through Grand Droude Valley. Going down a terrible hill just before we got on to it I gathered some good rye. The valley is covered grass & wild grain. The wild wheat is up to the horses backs, the red top is a foot short of that. The June grass and red clover up to your knees (Fox 1852:43).

° E. W. Conyers wrote on August 28-29, 1852:

August 28--Saturday.--We started at 7 a.m. Here the road rises the bluffs again. Two and one-half miles over an exceedingly steep and rocky ridge brought us into a beautiful little valley called "Clover Valley," and probably derived its name from the wild clover found growing in the valley. There are many fine cold springs of water to be found in this valley. We came up the valley about one-half mile, and then we traveled three miles more over hills and hollows, and a very rough and rocky road. And dust! Well, we have

become so used to the dust, which generally is from two to six inches deep, that we do not think of making any mention of it. This brought us to the summit of the mountain, overlooking the Grand Ronde Valley, one of the prettiest and most welcome sights seen on the whole route. Two miles more down a long, steep and rocky hill brought us into the valley. We crossed a nice, cool spring branch just at the foot of the mountain, and the entrance to the valley. Here we laid by and camped for the night. Here we found plenty of good wood, water, and the best of grass. At this camp we obtained our first ripe cherries--choke cherries. We are now said to be in the Papawa tribe of Indians. They are a very friendly tribe, religious, and have learned to observe the Sabbath.

They have any quantity of fine-looking ponies. Shortly after camping two men came into the camp with a good supply of bear meat. They had taken an old Indian trail about four miles back, near Clover Valley, which was a cut-off leading into the Grand Ronde Valley. On their way they had to pass through a strip of pine timber, where they run onto a large black bear, which they killed, and brought some of the meat to camp with them. They took supper with us and gave us a piece of the meat, and also informed us where we could find the balance of the carcass. Mrs. Burns cooked some of the meat for our supper, of which we all partook with a good relish. After our bear-meat feast several boys of our camp went back to where the bear was killed and brought in the remainder of the meat. We had bear meat for several days. When they went after the bear meat Mr. Goodnough took his dog with him. The dog became so frightened at the sight of that dead bear that he took sick and died in about one week afterward.

August 29--Sunday.--We laid by today until noon, letting our cattle rest and feast on the good grass that abounds in great abundance in this vicinity. At 1 p.m. we started on our way and traveled eight miles across this beautiful valley, to the Grand Ronde River. Here we camped. Good grass and water, and the best of wood, and plenty of it, close at hand. While camped at this place we had a great many Indian visitors. One tall, slim young squaw, daughter of a chief, dressed in a black velvet dress, who claimed to be the wife of a Hudson's Bay man by the name of McClane [William McBean], who, she said, had deserted her. A short time afterward another lot of Indians came riding up on horseback to our camp. Among them was one small-sized squaw with light auburn hair, and her features that of a white woman. She had a small papoose strapped to her back. While standing out a few feet from our wagon, viewing the arrival and departure of the different squads of Indians, I noticed a small-sized Indian riding towards our camp on a full gallop. Just then I heard some one just back of me exclaim: "I wonder where that d--d Indian came from." On looking around I saw that it was a full-blood Indian that had made this remark. I said to him, "You seem to talk the white man's language quite well. Where did you learn it?" He answered that he had lived with Mr. Whitman a long time, and he had taught him to speak and read the white man's

language. He told me that his name was "Dick," and that Mr. Whitman was a very good man. While at this camp we lost our horse. Mr. Burns, being fearful that the Indians would try to steal her, had tied her with a strong rope to the back end of our wagon and only a few feet from the head of his bed, thinking that no one could take her away without him knowing it, but the cunning red man was a little too foxy for us. They stole the horse, rope and all, without us knowing anything about it until the next morning. William and two or three others from our camp went out in the valley looking for the horse, but naturally failed in their efforts. While out in the valley they heard a number of persons singing an old Methodist hymn. Thinking it was some emigrant company that was holding a meeting, they approached the grove where the meeting was being held, and, to their surprise, discovered that it was a large body of Indians who had met in the grove for the purpose of holding a religious meeting. I suppose they had heard "the good news of the gospel" from the lips of the Rev. Whitman. Not desiring to disturb the services, the boys withdrew and returned to camp, minus the horse (Conyers 1906:492-494).

° John Tully Kerns wrote on September 1-2, 1852:

Wednesday, September 1--Traveled only about ten miles, which brought us to the Grand Ronde valley. The road for the first six miles was good; we then ascended a stony ridge and traveled over a stony road for one and on-half miles, then ascended into a small valley about one mile in width, then ascended another stony ridge, which we followed some distance and then descended the most difficult and highest hill we have yet seen, into the Grand Rond. This is the best and most beautiful place we have seen on the whole road or, in fact, in our lives, and is said to be a fair specimen of western Oregon. If so, our expectations will be more than filled. This is a valley nearly round in shape and has Powder river and Grand Ronde rivers, delightful waters uniting and coursing north through its center. Besides several spring branches which trinkle down the lofty mountain sides and make their way to the river, through it. It is about twenty-five miles in diameter and would give homes to 1,500 or 2,000 settlers. There are high mountains on all sides, most of them covered with forests of pine and fir timber. Game abound everywhere around. Saw quite a number of the Nez Perce tribe of Indians here, who appear to be more intelligent, clean and sociable than any Indians I ever saw. Their chief (Ellis) was taken to the States and educated by Dr. Whitman and seems much of a gentleman. They have some good horses, as good as I ever saw in any country, and are eager to trade them for cattle. I traded off a couple of cows which were about give out, to them and got two very good ponies for them and five dollars in money. The weather was very pleasant all day, making it more pleasant traveling than usual. 2207 miles.

Thursday, September 2--Traveled eight miles across to where our road left the Grand Ronde valley. Road good and weather fine.

Have a much fairer view of the valley than from where we were camped on last evening, and is certainly the most beautiful place I ever gazed upon. The soil is rich and is covered with a luxuriant growth of grass, wild clover and herd grass. The Indians are after us yet to trade for cows. Oxen they will not have. Their squaws are good looking and dress quite tasty, ride fine horses and on saddles beautifully decorated with beads. 2215 miles (Kerns 1917:181-182).

° Cornelia A. Sharp wrote on September 1-2, 1852:

Wednesday, September 1 This day we made some twelve miles. Passed over the dividing ridge between Powder river and Grande Ronde, which was very rough and difficult. Our camp was near a spring, about six miles in the valley.

Thursday, September 2 This day we remained in camp. We were visited by a great many Indians, including all sorts and sizes (Sharp 1904:184).

° Abigail Jane Scott wrote on September 1-3, 1852:

September 1 We traveled (sixteen) miles this day; We at first followed along the river for one mile and then turned across the valley crossing the river twice; In nine miles we came to a small slough where we got water for our cattle; grass is good; we here halted for two hours and then directed our course over plains and bluffs till we reached the brow of a mountains overlooking the Grand Round; We then descended this mountain and ascended a (rocky) ridge which has the longest and most of difficult descent of any hill which we had yet encountered; The dust (would) blow (for a time) in clouds, hiding the wagons teams and roads entirely from our view, when a sudden contrary breath of air would clear away the dust for a few moments enabling us for a time to proceed; The rocks so filled the road, that any one who had not begun to "see the elephant" would have been afraid to have attempted the descent; When we came to the base of the mountain we were delighted to find ourselves (safely) in "Grand Round"; We were all hungry and tired, and hastily preparing our supper, we gladly retired to rest

September 2d We traveled eight miles through the Grant Round valley when we came to the foot of the mountain and encamped to rest our cattle preparatory to ascending the mountain

This valley is near ten miles in width and covered with luxuriant look(ing) grass; high mountains are it, the most of them covered with pine, balsam fir, cedar, and other trees Grand Round river runs through the western part of the valley; it's banks are adorned with willow birch, bitter cottonwood, & alder, in the valley, and pine, cedar, balsam fir, birch and larch, where it meanders among the mountains; this stream is about four rods in width & six inches in depth Mr Swearingen remained in the Grand Round to recruit his

cattle, and our five wagons are now alone;: The indians at this place are very wealthy, they have numerous herds of horses and possess many of the luxuries of life in abundance. Contrary to our expectations we found no provisions here for sale except flour at \$40 per. cwt.

Sep 3d We came, I think, eleven miles; over the mountains; the scenery was delightful all day but the road was extremely hilly and rough; Eight miles from Grand Round brought us to the crossing of the Grand Round river; The descent of the mountain down to the river bottom was down the most dangerous looking place we had yet came down, but we reached the river without accident: After crossing we halted & prepared our dinner, and took a long rest, as our cattle were very tired in consequence of the very hard roads of the morning's travel. We then started over the mountains again and traveled three miles, when we came near an excellent spring and encamped having traveled through heavy timber almost all day

This is the first night we have camped in (heavy) timber since we left "Hundred and Two" bottom, east of St Joe. The timber here is yellow pine and balsam fir. It is worthy of note [we here lost another ox. Inserted in pencil by Tucker Scott.] that in this place common conversations can be overheard at the distance of one hundred and fifty yards, and the noise of men speaking to cattle in a loud voice sounds loud enough for a savage war whoop; Sounds echo and reverberate from hill to hill, to such a degree that the noise of discharging a rifle is equal to the report of a canon and may be heard a half dozen times reverberating from mountain to mountain (Scott 1984:120-122).

° Rev. Jesse Moreland wrote on September 2-4, 1852:

Sept 2 to[day] we passed over the Ridge Between the waters of Powder River & the Grand Ronde find water plenty the Ms around us are clothed with fine [word missing] and some of them we have for the last three days seen more timber than we have seen since we left Misorie River neatly altogether pine

Sept 3 to day we come over a part of the Blue into the grand Round Valey

Sept 4 to day we had the worst Ms we have had find good grass (Moreland 1852:45-46)

° Samuel Dexter Francis wrote on September 7, 1852:

Tuesday, September 7th Now for the Grand Rond nine miles where we arived at noon. We decended a long, steep and ruff hill. Grand Rond is a butiful place, thare is the handsomest land I ever saw (Francis 1852:105).

° Lydia Rudd wrote on September 10, 1852:

Sept 10 We have this day reached another landmark which we have been looking ahead for some time We have encamped in the the grand Ronde valley We came over the worst road and rocky road that we have yet passed over this is a very large valley probably 100,000 acres of rich land and is dead level with a number of branches runing through it and a plenty of good springs fine grass of several kinds with a mixture of the red clover It is eight miles across from east to west and we have encamped on the west side of a good stream of water at both ends of this valley is surrounded on all sides by high mountains we here found the first fresh beef that we have had since we left the states paid twenty cents a pound for it we had a grand ronde dinner The Salmon mountains are on the east of this valley and the blue mountains on the west Traveled twelve miles to day Mrs. Girtman and myself better (Rudd 1852)

° James Aikin, Jr., wrote on September 14--16, 1852:

Tuesday, September 14.--Travel 16 miles to the west side of Grand Ronde; bought some beef at 20 cents per pound; excellent grass and water; fine wood.

Wednesday, September 15.--Lay by all day; great many camped here on account of sickness and to recruit their teams; plenty of Kioose (Cayuse) Indians with vegetables to sell; Abe Gilham died.

Thursday, September 16.--Lost nine of our cattle; hunt for them all day and find them just at sunset; considerable sickness in our company (Aikin 1909:271).

° Martha S. Read wrote on September 20, 1852:

Mon Sept 20 Traveled about 14 miles. Found some tremendous hard stony Hills which come pretty hard on Lydia and I. Crossed 2 or 3 little runs. Came to what is called Grand Round. Found it to be nothing but a level spot of ground 8 miles acrost and I don't know how far the other way. We traveled 4 miles on to it and camp. Saw 3 graves today and 13 dead cattle. Weather a little warmer to day but rather windy.

Tues Sept 21 Traveled 20 miles. After traveling 4 miles we [unreadable] the other side of Grand Round. We found a trading post each side where they [unreadable] beef to sell and buy up [unreadable] lame cattle This is all there is here (Read 1986:244-245).

° John McAllister wrote on September 21, 1852:

(Sept.) 21 Cross a branch just before the _____ Ascent of Bluff is made partly by keeping up a branch A spring right of road 5

steps after crossing the ridge follow this branch to a pine grove to the left here it commenced raining on us the wind blew a brisk breeze making it a little disagreeable. Cross a bluff the descent of which is long rocky & dangerous for wagons before striking the Grand Ronde which is a beautiful level stream surrounded by mountains has mostly a rich soil & produces several kinds of grass with Grand Ronde river running through it A spring branch just after the decent The road crosses the southern end keeping near the mountain to left A spring branch about 5 miles after cross it travel about 3 miles & Cross another spring branch where you leave grand ronde & strike the Blue Mountains this ascent is a little steep & rock strike Grove of pine & after going about 3/4 mile up come to a small level where we Camped having watered the stock & supplied our vessels at the branch. plenty dry grass & pine it is still cloudy cool & drizzly (McAllister 1925:502)

° John Newton Lewis wrote on September 24-25, 1852:

sep 24th this morning we left camp early and traveld over the Mountains to the Grand Round here we encamped on a little branch just on the foot of the Mountain where we come to the valey grass good and willow for fuel here is a trading post flour is worth 50¢ per pound shugar and coffee is worth 75¢ per pound beef 25 bacon 75 and other things in proportion

25th here we are but not to our journeys end by more than conciderable after crosing the valey to the west side whare we leave it we found it to be one of the best valeys in the world it is well watterd and cleare of gravel and just as ritch soil as the west can scare up this valey is in a cove in the Mountain and is somewhat of a round shape this is the rason of its name being Land Round but it is not mis named for it is one of the Grandest valeys in the world thare is no timber in the valey but the Mountains is coverd with good timber it is 8 m. across the valey the way we rode goes . . . (Lewis 1852:29).

° Dr. Thomas White, an emigrant of 1852, wrote on April 19, 1853:

. . . the Grand Round is a beautiful vally, shut in by mountains, on all sides, except a gap at the west, for the ingress & another at the east for the egress of the Grand round River, which runs nearly through the middle of it, carr[y]ing with it a belt of cottonwood timber. this vally lys at the east base of the Blue mountains, & contains not less than 6 Townships of the very best Land watered in all directions by springs, & spring brooks, & the grand round River, with timber all around the vally on the mountains, & in great abundance in the Blue mountains, out of which comes the Grand Round River, a stream larger than the Pegion, with fine oppertunities for milling (White 1964:18).

1853:

° Orange Gaylord wrote on July 28-August 2, 1853:

July 28. Drove to Grand Ronde and nooned on the little branch at the foot of the mountain as we go down into the valley. Drove across the valley eight miles to the foot of the Blue Mountains and camped on a little spring branch. Grass and water good.

July 29. Laid in camp all day.

July 30. E. Grimes, D. Raymond, C. Hay, O. Sottle and E. Stout left the Grand Ronde Valley and O. Gaylord laid in camp. Number of wagons left the Grand Ronde Valley whilst O. Gaylord laid by--Handsell from Iowa, two wagons, ox teams; Head from Illinois, two wagons, ox teams.

July 31. Sumpter's train from Missouri, 4 wagons, ox teams; Crowley from Missouri, 2 wagons and a small drove, ox teams; Crab from Jerseyville, Illinois, 4 three-ox wagons and one mule wagon; Mooney, the Irishman from Indiana, 2 wagons, ox teams; the Iowa train from near Burlington, 7 wagons, ox teams.

August 1, 1853. Cozad's train left, 6 wagons, two horses and 4 oxen; in the afternoon two wagons and one cart, horses (Gaylord 1920:432-433).

° Henry Allyn wrote on August 14, 1853:

August 14, Sunday--Father Allyn is a little on the mend, so as our provisions are getting short and we still are 300 miles from the settlements we thought it our duty to press towards the land of destination. The first 5 miles was composed of a long ascent and a long descent which was steep, crooked, sideling and the road literally covered with rock from the size of your fist to any size not quite big enough to turn a wagon over, if you drive very careful. By locking both hind wheels and getting back in the wagons and placing your feet against the bows the drivers all escaped being thrown out. Here we come to another skinning post in the edge of the Grand Ronde Valley. Sunday as it was he deliberately walked out to skin. So he made for mules and offer to sell Indian ponies, and as he could not skin there he walked in and got a beef leg cut off at the knee and offered it to us at the low price of two dollars. As we did not see fit to be skinned with a cow's leg we pushed on to noon at the other edge of the valley. The valley here is from 10 to 15 miles wide and very fertile, surrounded by high mountains, the sides, coves and hollows covered with towering pines. Most of the ox teams lay by at the west side of the valley to cross the Blue Mountains, a 10-mile drive to the Grand Ronde River in the mountains, and as we had a 20-mile drive to make without water the next day, we drove till after sundown to reach the river. Found the best of grass and encamped in a pine

grove, it being the first time that we have camped in the timber for 1,500 miles. Though some ox teams started ahead of us at noon, we passed them and encamped about 3 miles beyond. Traveled 23 miles (Allyn 1924:428).

° Amelia Stewart Knight wrote on August 16-17, 1853:

16th Tuesday, Slow traveling on account of our oxen having sore feet, and the roads being very rocky, passed the Silvery springs. traveled 12 miles, and now we have a long steep rocky hill to descend into the Valley it is a mile long, very steep and rocky from the top of this hill, we could see a band of Indian horses in the Valley below, and being mostly white, they looked like a flock of chickens, after reaching the bottom of this hill with a good deal of difficulty, we find our selves in a most lovely Valley, and have camp close to a spring, which runs through it, there are also two or three trading posts here, and a great many fine looking Kayuse Indians riding round on their handsome ponies.--

17th Wendsday evening. crossed the Grand round Valley, which is 8 miles across, and have camp close to the foot of the mountain, good water, and feed plenty, there are 50 or more wagons camp around us, Lucy and Myra have their feet and legs poisoned, which gives me a good deal of trouble. bought some fresh Salmon of the Indians this evening, which is quite a treat to us, it is the first we have seen (Knight 1986:65-66).

° Catherine Amanda Stansbury Washburn wrote on August 23-24, 1853:

Wednes[day] [August] 23 pased some pretty pine groves and rough road came to Grand round tonight it is beautiful valey on grand River there is a trading post here owned by a friend from Iowa

thursday [August] 24 layed by to day there is a great many Indians here and they a[re] ritch rich they hav[e] a good herd of poneys they traded some with the company (Washburn 1967:27)

° Charlotte Stearns Pengra wrote on August 23-24, 1853:

Tuesday [August] 23rd Struck the Blue Mountains this morning and have traveled on them most of the day, reached Grand Round Valley after descending a very preciptous and long mountain at about 4 o'clock, traveled in the valley 5 miles and encamped to the left of the road near a small Spring, have excellent feed for the cattle. Stella is much more unwell than she was yesterday has simptoms of fever.

Wednesday [August] 24th Traveled 5 miles farther in the Valley then struck the Mountains and traveled ten miles before we reached watter, we then struck Grand Round River a small stream of good watter where we encamped for the rest of the day. The road has been very mountainous and rockey hard rideing or walking Stella

is still sick I have packed her and she seems better, the rest of the afternoon I spent in cooking and washing -- am very tired (Pengra 1966:54)

° John or David Dinwiddie wrote on August 26-27, 1853:

Friday [August] 26th Passed over a very stony mountain. Five miles brought us to the brow of the mountain here we had a long steep and very rocky descent, the worst we have had, to Grand Ronde Valley one mile. Turned down the stream about one mile and camped at a little grove, where some Indian families reside, they were very friendly and were gratified to have us to camp there, they can talk English well. A number of Indians in the valley trading, have a large number of fine horses and cattle to trade they are fine smart looking Indians, they are of the Nez Perces (Pierced Noses) Indians, the valley is about 20 or 25 miles in extent, high mountains enclose it on every side, through the middle of the valley flows Grand Ronde River, from South west to North west. Its banks lined with cottonwood, balm of gilead, elder, cherry and willow, many spring brooks coming down from the mountain several small creeks course through it and empty themselves into the river their courses marked frequent clumps of green trees, part of the mountains covered with dark forests. Verily this is a place to please the eye of a farmer the soil is of an excellent quality, producing an abundant crop of grass of different varieties, among the rest I noticed clover, a species of timothy, bunch grass, and flax, the valley contains an area of about four or five hundred square miles of tillable land, and will one day contain a heavy population. Timber may be procured from the mountains with little trouble, the valley belongs to the Nez Perces Indians, their country extends north to the Columbia River, on that River they principally reside.

Saturday [August] 27th Traveled across the valley and camped at the foot of the mountain, the mountain here is covered with pine timber, it is eight miles across it, here is a small creek--here was several hundred Indians [Nez Perce] that came in for the purpose of trading, they had a great many fine horses to sell, they had Potatoes, peas and some apples to trade but asked high prices for them, these Indians have made considerable advance toward civilization, and seem anxious to learn the customs and manners of the white (Dinwiddie 1928:11-12).

° Sarah (Sally) Perkins wrote on August 31 and September 1-2, 1853:

August 31. 12 miles heavy hills and very stoney camped on grand round river rained all day very cold pine timber

September 1. laid by and caught some fish and a coon cold nite pleasant day

September 2. cool day laid by rained all nite (Perkins 1986:146-147).

° George Belshaw wrote on September 1, 1853:

Thirsday Sep. 1st Drove 17 miles. From the last spring mentioned it is one mile to the hill and two miles over it and rocky the[n] decended into a small valey after decending the hill a spring to our right a few rods from road and good grass and good camping. One mile further we came to a cold spring 2 rods from the road and one mile more brought us to the hill that bounds the Grand round and it is four miles over a rocky road to Grand round and a long crooked hill to go down. From here it is 8 miles across this butiful valey. I campt on the other side of road a spring half mile left near some pines good water and good grass - this valey is about 15 miles wide - and good grass all along the road on both sides of the road and plenty of springs on the left.

This round valey is right in the blue Mountains and quantities of Indians and Poneys.

they sell their poneys to the Emigrant and some potatoes and peas. they appear very friendly see plenty of large pines and furs (Belshaw 1960:44).

° Maria A. Parsons Belshaw wrote on September 1, 1853:

September 1st. This morning we started with the expectation of having a hard hill to travel up, we were not disappointed. We traveled a short distance in the valley then commenced ascending the hill, took us till noon to reach the bottom of hill, and the worst has not come yet. While on the hill we had a view of Grand Round Valley. A beautiful high mountain, tall pine trees, a beautiful location, level valley clothed with grass and the river running through it. After we strike the valley travel about 13 miles, a spring to the left of road 3 rods, then 5 miles left of road on side of hill 1 mile. Here we camped. Found back of us a spring to water stock, good grass, had to go to mountains for wood. Saw 1 grave[,] 21 dead cattle[,] 2 horses, raining this afternoon good traveling 6 or 8 miles, after leaving Cold Springs on Powder River there no water[,] but grass and volcanic rock. Traveled 10 miles (Belshaw 1932:241-242).

° Basil Longworth wrote on September 2-3, 1853:

2nd. We had fine grass last night and in the morning drove five miles to springs and water. We then passed up a long hill and struck down a canyon or ravine to a small stream of water and then passed up a long hill and then down a long and stony hill of a mile and a half in length, when we found ourselves in a beautiful place called Grande Ronde Valley. Here we were met by a host of Indians

who wished to sell us peas, potatoes, etc., they also desired to purchase a number of articles.

3rd. Morning cool. We drove eight miles of level road across this valley and camped on the west side. This day about noon we had a heavy shower of rain and hail, the latter covering the ground quite thick. This valley is, I suppose, about twelve miles wide and twenty miles long--has a rich soil, is surrounded by mountains which are covered with timber, and is separated by Grande Ronde River which passes through it (Longworth 1959:54).

° Elizabeth Julia Goltra wrote on September 3-4, 1853:

Saturday [September] 3rd. Have had a very hard drive today, we crossed the main ridge of the Blue Mountains, over a very rough road and a very cold one, when once on the top we can look down in the valley beneath and see again a level road for a few miles, at night we camped in "Grand Round" valley, after a hard drive of 16 miles.

Sunday [September] 4th. Laid by till after dinner, then drove 8 miles and camped (Goltra 1970:25).

° Celinda Hines wrote on September 4-5, 1853:

[September] 4th Sunday Pleasant. Went 10 miles to water & camped for the day Road good with some hills. Mr Gray the gentleman from Oregon whom I first saw at St Louis came up & camped with us. He had a drove of sheep. He had a baggage [unreadable] teams & a light wagon drawn by horses [unreadable] oxen he was obliged to leave his heavy wagon. He then bought horses & is packing through & takes his carriage for the ladies. His sheep are some ways behind.

[September] 5th Monday Pleasant. Went about 7 miles to Grande Ronde This is a fertile valley 8 miles across & 20 miles long entirely encompassed by mountains & watered by Grande Ronde river The road comes in from the south & goes out at the west Camped for [unreadable] a valley & near the trading post. We were thronged with indians nearly all on ponies. It reminded me very forcibly of an old fashioned general training They had plenty of money \$50.00 gold pieces which they probably got by selling horses to emigrants After dinner we went 8 miles to the other side of the valley Camped near a pretty mountain stream. Indian lodges near. Thronged with indians during our stay. Some belong to the Kayuses some to the Nez Perces. At our noon camp [unreadable] perce chief with whom [unreadable] some acquaintance He seemed very pleasant & spoke Eng. with such a pleasing awkwardness as to amuse us very much Others were there who had seen uncle. Before noon we met many mostly women on ponies who said they were travelling to the Shoshone country. They had peas with them for food which they would swap for flour or bread. One proposed to swap her baby for a

shirt. These indians here seem more intelligent & happy than any we have seen (Hines 1986:120-122)

- ° George N. Taylor wrote on September 9-10, 1853:

Sept 9th Went four miles to the top of the mountain Overlooking the Grand ronde Went three miles further and we were at the Bottom of the mountain In the grand Went Eight miles to where the road Leves the ronde and Camped near A Spring and Creek here we had good Grass for the Stock On the mountain Overlooking the grand ronde is one of the finest Scenes I ever beheld In my Life The Grand rond Valley is About Sixteen mls wide by About thirty Long Surounded by high Mn on All Sides the Valley is Covered with fine grass running on this grass are Large droves of the finest Looking horse Owned by the Kiuse and Nesperse Indians They are good traders They Come here to Gather Cammice for Winter use In this Valley are Numerous Streams of water the Largest is grand ronde river

Sept 10th To day we Layed by to Lett the Cattle rest In Course of the day there was A great many Indians About the camp were Busy trading for Guns Clotheing Blankets and Sutch Like Articles our Cattle are dying Occasionally (Taylor 1853:24)

- ° Samuel Handsaker wrote on September 12-13, 1853:

[September] 12th A drive of eight miles this morning over bad roads brought us into the Grande Ronde valley. It is perhaps the richest tract of land that the emigrant has seen since leaving the Missouri river and he rejoices at seeing soil once more, which if property cultivated, would yield good returned for his labor. Vegetables are raised here on a small scale by the Indians which they "swap" to the emigrants. [Handsaker wrote "returned.']

[September] 13th These Indians are of the Cayouse tribe - are very numerous and wealthy - and are the first we have seen that would not beg. Their wealth consists in horses and cattle. Of the former, I am told that they average 400 to each person; and prettier ponies I have never seen. The most of them have more or less white about them. The Indians never go on foot, but must ride; no matter how short a distance. They will go in a gallop all the time (Handsaker 1965:29-30).

- ° George Miller West, an emigrant of 1853, recalled:

We pass on over the divide and descend into Grand Round Valley. Here was an abundance of good feed. Here were many Indians. A Chief wishing to hire a carpenter. I was pointed out to him. He said he would see me in the morning. Next morning he came bringing a cart of what he would pay me in. Two of his daughters. Young girls perhaps sixteen and eighteen. He told me if I would stay and

build him a mill, I could take my choice of the girls and that he would give me one thousand ponies beside.

Coquetted with the young ladies and found either willing and each wanted me to choose her but I had no intention of stopping. Mr Indian and his men were greatly disappointed at my refusal.

We leave the valley and would be bride. We climb the mountain over a very rough and steep road and camp for the night in the timber (West n.d.:11).

1854:

- ° Sarah Sutton wrote on August 14-15, 1854:

[August 14] 3 more of Mr Tiptons cattle died last night and this morn we came about noon 8 miles and stopt at a cold spring saw some handsomer situations for farms than I saw in Ill. the land very rich and the side of the mountains coverd with pine and fur and beautiful place to build by scatering fur trees and springs. we have stopt for the night within 3 miles of G round on a good spring, grass good fur timber very pretty near us the hills low, but we beleive it too cold to live here as there is now frost every night.

Tuesday Aug 15 the axeltree of the wagon broke to day and we had to leave it came up a very long hill and down the longest and rockyest one we have all the way all the foot of it is the round [Grande Ronde] it resembles our large prairies in Illinois with low mountains all around it covered with pine timber. the land rich and dry with a great many cold springs and the land is flat clear up to the mountains we drove for 8 miles across the edge of it and stopt and [diary stopped; Sutton died in Tygh Valley to the west] (Sutton 1988:76-77).

- ° Philip Condit wrote on August 21-22, 1854:

Monday Aug. 21 Traveled over the valley 8 miles and over the mountains 10 miles to Grand Round [Grand Ronde] river, a fine mountain stream Cy's wagon broke about two miles from the river but all seemed to bear it patiently.

Tuesday Aug. 22 Staid in camp and mended the broken wagon. Got an axel out of an old wagon and put in Cy's Rained a little for the first time in many weeks. Thundered today for the first time since we crossed the Rocky Mts. Rained tonight. All well and cattle much refreshed (Condit, P. 1854).

- ° Sylvanus Condit wrote on August 21-22, 1854:

August 21 Traveled 18 miles 8 over good roads, 10 over the mountains, camp on Grand Round river, good feed $\frac{1}{2}$ mile down the river, broke C's wagon.

August 22 Remained in camp, mended wagon (Condit, S. 1854).

° Elizabeth Austin wrote on September 3-4, 1854:

Sunday, [September] 3d We traveled about 6 miles when a man met us who was going through to Washington. It has been cold today. We got to [Grande] Round about 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

Monday, Sept. 4th We traveled 8 miles today and stopped near a stream of water at the foot of the mountains. A great many Indians came to trade. It rained all night last night (Goodell and Austin 1988:123-124).

1861:

° John Crawford wrote on September 17-20, 1861:

Sept. 17 Tuesday Small Branch of Powder River Cool this morning on the Mountains near us. Started $\frac{1}{2}$ past 7 the road crossing the stream & across a large plain which has been burnt over, nooned after 6 miles on a small stream near the hills, up a rise very stony road over the divide, fine grass the whole distance, long steep & stony decent into Grand Rond valley & camp on fine stream at foot of Hill distance 9 m. total 15 m.

Sept. 18 Wednesday Branch of Grand Ronde River Gentlemen from Coffins camp stayed with us last night & this morning at 7 we all started across the valley over beautiful level country fine soil & beautiful prospect 7 miles to camp on a Small Creek at foot of hill--number of prospectors & miners are congregated here & prospects of gold are good, an attempt at settlement is being made distance 7 miles had fresh potatoes & onions.

Sept. 19 Thursday Grand Rond Lay be today. Capt. with a guide went by a pack trail to Walla Walla Miners & prospectors continually arriving & leaving. Some of the Emigrants conclude to stay & try their luck in this beautiful valley raised a pole & the stripes & stars (Crawford 1861).

1862:

° Nancy C. Glenn wrote from Grand Round Valley, Oregon, Oct. 8, 1862:

We arrived at the upper end of this Valley the first day of the month the next day we went acrost over to a little town called Grand Round City not knowing where we would stoop or where we would spend the winter. we stopped there hearing that Fletcher Pittman and John Lewis and stopped about 15 miles below us The next day

Robert Logan, Isaac Glenn and Wm went down to see them Found that Fletcher had gone after provision the rest of his folks have gone to Wilamet Valley he staid on account of wintering his cattle . . . (Glenn 1989:19)

This is one of the most beautiful valleys in the world surrounded by high mountains William thinks it the most beautiful valley he ever saw and a plenty of the nicest timber and the best springs in the world almost I wish you were all here and had provision enough to last until you could raise some But nearly all the emigrants that has went down into Oregon this year intend coming back as soon as they can get back in the spring and I expect the land will then all be claimed up there is a real good valley on powder river we thought some of stopping there but concluded it would be to cold there this winter there is also a good valley on the Umatilla river (Glenn 1989:24)

1862:

- ° Poetic sentiments upon emigration to the Grande Ronde Valley in 1862 from E. S. McComas' "My Journey O'er the Plains:"

Come all ye jolly miners, come listen to my song,
Tis about my journey oer the plains, twill not take you long.
Twas on the 14th day of May in the spring of sixty-two,
All things being ready, I bade my friends adieu.

I left my home in Iowa through mud and cold and rain,
And started for the west to take a trip across the plain,
Bound for Salmon River, that boasted land of gold,
To try and make my fortune, as others had, I'm told.

.....

And now on Powder River we have landed safe and sound,
With our pick and our shovels we'l go to digging up the
ground,
While the boys back in Iowa must go to war and fight,
We'l stay here till water comes, and then we are all right.

And when the war is over, and our fortunes we have made,
Its then we'l have no use for our pick and our spade.
Heres a health to the girls that are waiting for us to come,
For then we soon shall see the dear ones at home.

(McComas 1954:64-65).

- ° E. S. McComas wrote on September 29-October 2, 1862:

[September] 29th. Drove 20 m. to Grand Ronde Valley. Here I overtook our old Capt. Wm. Jack and five others of our train going

down to the Dalles after provisions. Come down a hill two miles long & 10 steep into Gr. Ronde.

Oct. 1st. 1862. Last night it snowed on the mountain. Drove 11 m. 2d. Drove 5 m. beforenoon. Here we took the new road to Ft. Dalles. Crossed Grand Ronde River 16 times (McComas 1954:25-26).

1863:

° James L. Bailey wrote on September 24-25, 1863:

September 24 As we had 18 miles to make to day we were off in good season. We left Powder River Valley this morning & arived in Grand Ronda Valley before dart traveling over a very roalling country, feel good

September 25 We made but a short stay in grand Round, but had our teams joging along the valley over a very good road in the direction of Lay Grand, a small town on the south west side of the valley Here we made but a short stay and then took to the mountains. in ten miles camped (Bailey 1863)

1864:

° E. S. McComas wrote on October 1-4, 1862:

Oct. 1st. 1862. Last night it snowed on the mountain. Drove 11 m.

[October] 2d. Drove 5 m. beforenoon. Here we took the new road to Ft. Dalles. Crossed Grand Ronde River 16 times.

[October] 3[d]. Come to where we crossed and followed up Boulder Creek. Crossed this 27 times. Camped at the last crossing. Here we heard our cattle going off in the night. We thought they were being drove off, armed ourselves and went after them but found it a false alarm.

[October] 4th. Snowed on us last night. Drove 20 miles through a cold rain. Got to the foot of the mountains.

[October] 5th. Drove to Birch Creek, 5 m. Still snowing and raining. Today I seen the first corn I have seen growing since I left home. Drove 8 m., made a dry camp (McComas 1954:26).

° E. S. McComas wrote on July 22, 1864:

July the 22d. Busted again. On the first day of July, 1864 a company of ten men was organized in La Grande known as the La Grande Mining Co., the object of said company being to mine for gold on Grande Ronde River and its tributaries. The capitol stock of said Co. was five thousand dollars. We expended about \$800.00 & found that the diggings would not "pan out." The company busted

after paying up all liabilities. Well this has been my luck in mining and I now here record one resolution which I will adhere to from this on untill I leave this country--Resolved--That I never will again invest a "colon" in any mining ground (placer) without seeing the "prospects" "panned out" from the "bed rock" myself and being firmly and fully convinced that it is a "big thing" "you bet" (McComas 1954:37).

° Harriet A. Loughary wrote on August 11, 1864:

Aug 11 At noon we reach the top of the hill over Grand Ronde Valley. As we approach it we view a complete panorama of the beauty and grandeur of natures handiwork. This is a large and fertile valley nestled down at the eastern base of the Blue Mountains. Water from its icy beds in the surrounding mountains comes rippling down into the valley in every direction giving life, beauty and perpetual greenness. Beautiful grass six feet high is being cut and vegetables and small fruits in great abundance. The little town of Lagrande with 200 inhabitants is located in the valley. We leave this place after dinner, climbing a steep hill a mile in length, take the old emmigrant road to Grand Ronde river and camp for the night (Loughary 1989:156).

° Mary Louisa Black wrote on September 10, 1864:

10th We passed by Ringo yesterday evening came 8 mile to this camp. got supper after night. it is raining this morning. we are in the valey skirted by snow crested pine covered mountains. we are noonin on the summit of the Blue moun[tains] we have been coming up all the forenoon. the horses are very tired. drizzling all the time too we travailed till late through a cold rain. stoped close to a deserted store house I cooked supper in it. Tilla is very sick (Black 1990:78).

° Elizabeth Lee Porter wrote on September 23-24, 1864:

Friday--23. Hitched up this morning and come about 14 miles and camped on the Grand Ronde Valley. This is a pretty looking valley.

Saturday--24. Passed through the city of La Grande. A very pretty place. Drive on to Grande Ronde River and camped. Cloudy, looks like rain (Porter 1990:31).

° E. S. McComas wrote on October 28-30, 1864:

Oct. 28. Started from La Grande to Portland. Stopped at "Meacham's."

[October] 29th. Rode 65 miles to the 12 Mile House.

[October] 30th. Got to Umatilla. Stopped at the "Metropolitan Hotel" (McComas 1954:40).

° Philura Vanderburgh Clinkinbeard, an emigrant of 1864, recalled:

In the Grande Ronde Valley we tasted our first green vegetables. I went to a strange-looking house beside the road to buy some peas for Mother. It was the first sod house I ever saw. A little girl was there, and while her mother was getting the peas ready I talked to her and looked and looked at the queer house with its brown earth walls and roof and floor. It was all very neat and clean, the inside walls covered as they were with white canvas. I would not have thought a dirt floor could have been so hard and so clean. "It is pretty in the spring," the little girl said. "Then the whole house is covered with bright-green grass. I wish it would stay that way all the time" (Clinkinbeard 1953:87).

1866:

° S. B. Eakin, Jr., wrote on August 6-7, 1866:

(Mon.) August 6 Left camp at 6 o'clock. In the afternoon we arrived in "Grande Round Valley." The Grand Round River is a very large stream but has quite a valley. It lays just at the foot of the Blue Mountains, east side. Camped on the south side of the valley, on the side of the mountain, about 4 miles south of the town of "Union." Roads have been good today and nice weather. Butter is worth 50¢ a pound.

August 7 Moving west at our usual time. Several of us started out ahead of the train to find grain to feed in the mountains. It was just harvest time and no new grain and old grain was scarce. We arrived in "La Grande" about noon, where we found barley at \$2.75 per cwt. "Gold." After about an hour's stop we proceeded two or three miles west of the village and camped for noon on Grand Round River, at the crossing . . . (Eakin 1970:25).

1880:

° Frank Stevens wrote on July 8-12, 1880:

Thursday, July 8th: Started from camp in good season and traveled on over some hilly country and then came down a very steep, long hill, into the Grand Ronde Valley and camped for dinner. Came on a few miles and came to Union, a pretty little town and county seat, and is beautifully ornamented with trees and gardens. Came on a few miles from town and camped for the night. We are but in the edge of this valley, but find it the best we have seen, and as we go on it keeps getting better. On all sides the mts. are covered with timber, so the people have plenty for fencing and [illegible]. All along is a clear stream of water and the ground is as level as a floor. I would be contented to stay here if I could get land, but the biggest part of it is all taken and nothing remains but what has been picked over. Mr. Cole left us here today to go to his son's at Summerville in the valley, which is not on our road.

We took the road for Walla Walla, which is about 80 miles from here, and hope soon to be at the end of our journey. We are getting tired of traveling and want to find our home and settle down once more. Weather cool this morning, but warm tonight. I was up to the foot of the mt. about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from where we camped, at a hot spring, the water of which is so hot that it would scald anyone to hold him in it. It comes out of the side of the mt. and below it is a bath and wash house. The water runs down into the house with a bathroom, and then there is a tub, bowls and posts for clothes lines, and everything fixed up handy. The water is running from the spring to the bath house, gets just cool enough to bathe in, and has a strong sulphur smell. Talk of stoping here one day to wash and rest up. (The poet whom I have spoken of seems to be a man of good education, though a little light in the upper story, and as near as I could find out he had a wife and children. She got too thick with a Frenchman and eloped with him. He kept 2 of the children, and after a while they [s]tole them from him, and ever since then he has been wandering all over the country, and is not content to stay anywhere. The only thing he appears to be insane on is this: That the Freemasons are all the time following him up and keep someone watching him all the time. If he is sick he thinks the Freemasons drugged him while he was asleep, and if anything breaks about his sulky or if his pony has a sore back he lays it all to the Masons.

Friday, July 9: As there was a good place to do our washing and did not require any wood, we concluded to lay over one day for this purpose. So this morning we hitched up and moved to the Hot Spring and camped here and commenced to wash. It is the best place for that business I ever saw; you just wash clothes clean and it requires no soap at all. Borrowed a washing machine, and in a short time had the work done and out to dry; but it turned to raining, and we cannot get them dry so as to move on tomorrow. Had a shower last night. The old poet who has been traveling with us left us today. He took the road to Portland. He seemed very sorry to leave us, but assured us that he would see us again at Walla Walla. Thought I would like to climb the mts. and take a view of the valley, and after dinner John Goldsby and myself made up our minds to go to the top. We commenced climbing and went up to the first steep slant, when we took a rest and started up the second which was steeper and more difficult to ascend. After a very hard climb we arrived at a level place on the side, where there was an old deserted log house in the heavy pine and fir timber. Took another rest here and went on up another longer and steeper slope than any before. Climbed up this and after going up another shorter but steep place we were on the summit. We were about half-way up, when there came up a shower and we got under a large rock. Went on and looking back we saw the most beautiful sight we ever saw; there was a bright rainbow and from where we were we looked down on it and one end crossed to bend down into our camp at the foot of the mts. After we had been on the top a short time we saw a black cloud away down the valley, and saw it raining so we

could not see the land where it was raining, and could look over the top of the cloud. Thought it best to get out of the place where we were, and commenced to descend in double quick time, in order to reach the shelter of some pine and fir trees on the mt. side below. Had got down the first pitch, when we looked back and could not see the top we had left a short time before, and saw the clouds driving along. Below, where we then were, it commenced to rain, and after stumbling, slipping and sliding for some time we at last reached the foot, wet and tired, having been several hours in reaching the top and back.

Sat., July 10th: Started from camp about noon, on account of having to wait to dry our clothing, but it commenced to rain and we had to take them wet and run the risk of drying them on the road. Came to a boiling lake where there was a large bath house. The lake is boiling hot, and is boiling like a pot and is quite a [illegible] lake. Came on in sight of LaGrande (quite a town) and took the right-hand road before we got to it, and in a few miles we passed through Island City, a nice little town, and camped the other side of the Grand Ronde River. I like the looks of this valley, but it lays high and they say it is apt to be cold here at times and very cold in the winter. It has been raining all day, by spells, and once we had some sleet. It has been cool enough today so that an overcoat is quite comfortable. There is lots of work to do in this valley; haying is about to commence, and they pay \$1.50 a day. Wheat, barley, oats, garden vegetables and timothy all look well, though very backward. We have been some nice farms today and all have good houses and barns, and everything around them is fixed up in good shape, and people seem to be living here contented and happy.

Sun., July 11th: Raining all night and this morning, so we did not leave camp. Rained all day, but tonight it has cleared off and bids fair to be a good day tomorrow. We are so near the end of our journey that laying over is dull business. We are hearing from several different valleys, but one tells us what a good country it is in his valley, and another tells us the other way, so we don't know who to believe, and think it is best to look for ourselves. Flour here is only 8¢ per lb. and beef by the quarter 2½¢ per lb., bacon 10¢, potatoes 40¢, wheat 40¢, and everything raised in this country is cheap; wages are \$1.50 to \$2.00 a day and from 35 to 40 per month. Some things are high, but others are so cheap that it makes up for the high prices. Some fellows in camp tonight from the Wallowa Valley and give a good report of that valley. Think some of going to look at it in Oregon on the Snake River, but think we will go to Walla Walla first and see what we can strike there.

Monday, July 12th: Had to dry our clothes and did not start until about noon. Saw a flagpole in Island City which was 10 inches through at the butt and was 82 feet long. It was a tamerack. Came over and passed through Summerville, a small town on the edge of the Grand Ronde (Stevens 1880:25-26).

Crossing the Blue Mountains

1812:

- ° Robert Stuart, an eastward-bound fur trapper from Astoria, approached the Blue Mountains from the west on McKay Creek. He wrote about his party's transit of the mountains on August 1-7, 1812:

Saturday, August 1 . . . We continued up this stream [McKay Creek] 3 miles, when pursuing the same course as yesterday, over a level plain, we at the of 20 more got on another fork, wooded in a similar manner, but except in holes totally destitute of water, encamped on the north side.

Sunday, [August] 2nd Before sunrise our horses were loaded, and we proceeded 5 miles up the fork in an easterly direction, to where it divided into two branches; we took that from the south for 6 miles, to its final separation into small brooks, thence 6 more up the mountain, still going towards the mid day sun, then taking a dividing ridge, we went S.E. 8 more, and halted at 4 P.M. on a branch of the Glaize River [McCoy Creek about 17 miles west of LaGrande]. These mountains are the south east boundaries of the Columbia plains, and divide the waters of the main river from those of Lewis' in this quarter.

Monday, [August] 3rd The sun appeared with unusual splendor in the east, just as we had regained our tract; the road was over very high hills, intersected by deep ravines for 4 miles due east, thence descending into the short drains of the branch where we lay last night. We next made 9 S.S.E. to a considerable fork of the glaize [McCoy Creek], then following that 3 more, between rocks and bluffs, encamped at 1 P.M., opposite a creek coming in from the south, which rather exceeds in magnitude the one we descended--

Tuesday, [August] 4th Not long after daylight we continued down the Creek till 9 A.M., when finding a deep hole with some salmon in it, we halted 4 hours, and speared seven. Proceeded on again at 1 P.M., thro' a most enchanting tract (for a few miles) where the gloomy heavy timbered mountains subside into beautiful hills, chequered with delightful pasture grounds, which, when combined with the numerous rivelets murmuring over their gravelly serpentine beds towards the glade below, afford a scene truly romantic, and such as is seldom to be met with in these regions of solitude and gloom. We soon after entered on a similar road to that of this morning, and stopped at sunset on the left bank--Two branches came in on each side of the creek, which is extremely crooked, although the general course is about N. East--

20 miles was the extent of this days march--

Wednesday, [August] 5th The sun had made its appearance above the cliffs when we left our last nights station, the road was rugged in

the extreme, and the proximity of the mountains obliged us frequently to cross the river, a business our horses are by no means fond of: we went on but slowly, and at the end of 12 miles extricated ourselves from among rocks and precipices to enter the big flat, where on account of having broke several saddles, we encamped, on the right bank one mile below the narrows, and in the evening shot two Salmon and a Beaver.

Thursday, [August] 6th The men were busily employed yesterday afternoon, and all today, making and mending saddles, which are at last completed and will enable us to set out early in the morning--

Friday, [August] 7th It was 6 A.M. before our horses were collected and loaded; our route lay along the mountains, on the south side of the big Flat [Grande Ronde], for 11 miles . . . (Stuart 1953:69-71).

1827:

- ° Peter Skene Ogden's Snake Country brigades of 1825 and 1826 both crossed the Blue Mountains in their journeys west from the Snake River watershed. Ogden terminated his 1825 diary on the Burnt River and in 1826 he separated from McDonald's party and turned into the John Day watershed. Finan McDonald kept no diary.

In 1827 Ogden's brigade left Fort Nez Perce on September 11 and began crossing the Blue Mountains to travel to the upper Snake region:

Tuesday, [September] 10th [11th]. Although the weather was far from being settled we started at an early hour and commenced crossing over the Blue Mountains, but at eleven obliged to encamp all being drenched in rain and our property in the same state, after having travelled over steep hills and thick fallen woods which made it almost impossible for the loaded horses to pass.

Wednesday, [September] 11th [12th]. It still continuing to rain we did not raise camp. We are certainly most unfortunate in regard to weather since our starting, but in mountains we cannot expect often to meet with fair weather particularly at this season. Our guide informs us, one day more and we shall be across.

Thursday, [September] 12th [13th]. Cloudy weather and although every appearance of more rain and contrary to the wishes of many, I gave a call at day light for the horses and at 7 a.m. we started. At 3 p.m. we were across. Many of the party however did not arrive till late at night, one of the Company's mules loaded with ammunition lost, also one of the freemen's women with two loaded horses. Tomorrow search will be made. I have now crossed the Blue Mountains in their different tracks, and this last by the sources of Walla Walla River is certainly the most preferable, there being few hills of any consequence, free from stones, and would only

require the use of the axe to make it a good road, although by far the longest. By the other two roads from the number of hills and one in particular is by far the most fatiguing for loaded horses. We have still however another encampment in our route [to] the Grande Ronde, and by the other tracks we descend into it. I compute the distance from the sources of W[alla] W[alla] River across the mountain to be about twenty-five miles. General course east south east.

Friday, [September] 13th [14th]. Before the dawn of day I sent four men in quest of the load of ammunition and men started in quest of the lost woman and horses. At 12 o'clock all arrived having met with success, and although I was almost sure all would be found, still it caused me to pass rather an anxious night. All hands have been this day busily employed in making poles for their leather tents, indeed in leaving this we shall probably not for months find wood suitable, so this is a necessary precaution and our day is not altogether lost. Add to this our horse tackling, and in fact everything we have, requires drying and we have certainly a fine warm day for it. Four traps in the water. If the Cayouse will not ruin the beaver in their own lands, we must for them at least assist to diminish the number, and if we do not others probably will for us, and at no distant period.

Saturday, [September] 14th [15th]. At 7 a.m. we started, advanced one mile and reached Clay River or commonly called Riviere de Grande Ronde. This river discharges in the south branch of the Columbia [i.e., Snake River], about two days march across land from Fort Nez Percy. At 1 p.m. we reached the Grande Ronde and encamped . . . (Ogden 1971:4-5).

1828:

- ° Peter Skene Ogden departed fort Nez Perce for his 1828-29 brigade to the Snake Country and crossed the Blue Mountains to the Grande Ronde Valley. The editors of Ogden's diaries concluded that he took his 1827 route via the Walla Walla watershed to cross the Blue Mountains. He wrote on September 22-26, 1828:

Monday, [September] 22nd. This day at 8 a.m. I took my departure from Fort Nez Perces, once more for the Snake Country. At 3 p.m. I joined my party at the foot of the mountain waiting my arrival. We are this year well provided in numbers as regards horses and traps but both so far from appearances are of an indifferent quality. Still I do not complain as I am confident if we find beaver, we shall always find ways and means of taking and conveying them to the Columbia River.

Tuesday, [September] 23rd. At sun rise the horses were assembled, two found missing. As we have a long day's march and bad roads I gave orders to start, remaining in the rear with four horses to look for the stray horses. One of the men requested permission to

return to the Fort in quest of medicine, this I granted. At 10 a.m. we found the lost horses and I started, overtook the camp in the middle of the mountain. Nine of our new horses gone out.

Wednesday, [September] 24th. Our horses were soon found and at 7 a.m. we started, and reached the entrance of Grande Rondeau. At sunset all safe with the exception of half bag pease lost by one of the horses taking fright (Ogden 1971:97).

1832:

° Nathaniel Wyeth wrote on October 12-14, 1832:

12th [October] . . . we put out in a N. W. direction and assended the hills which soon became wooded with good timber our course this day was about N. N. W. and 40 miles I had with me an Indian and three men and a little horse meat we camped this night in the woods without water.

13th [October] Arose early and continued our route until 9 ock and stopped for breakfast of bad Horse meat on a creek of some size where we found the red thorn apple and a few cherries after 3 hours stop we moved across the creek which runs West and is called Ottilah [Umatilla] on ascending the opposite bluff we saw a smoke about 20 mil[e]s down on it to which we went and found some poor horses in charge of a squaw and some children the men were all out hunting they had no food but rose berrys of which we made our supper they were much fright[en]ed at our approach there having been some Indians of this tribe viz Walla Walla killed by the snakes above, and this family was murdered the night after we left them

In the morning of the 14th [of October] we put out about N. and arrived at fort Walla Walla about 5 ock in the evening distance 30 miles near the fort the river Walla Walla was crossed which is about 75 feet wide and about 2 feet deep current moderate the size of the last creek passed I was received in the most hospitable and gentlemanly manner by Peanbron [Pierre Pambrun] the agent for this post . . . (Wyeth 1899:172-173).

° John Ball wrote on October 12-16, 1832:

October 12 Having nothing to eat, we killed an old horse, and as hungry as we were, we did not relish it. We vowed if we killed another we would take a young one. The meat of a good horse tastes like venison.

October 13 Captain Wyeth took four men and the best horses and started ahead for Walla Walla, requesting me to follow the next day. Traveling was hard and the ground frozen. We continued traveling north northwest and came to a broken plain.

October 14 I had schooled myself to one meal a day, so had reserved part of my rations. Here I noticed in the western horizon something stationary, although it looked like a cloud in the bright sky. It proved (I afterwards found) the grand and snowy Mount Hood. I called the attention of the men to it. This we hailed as a discovery, and the grandest sight we had yet seen. We saw no water all day, but encamped at night on the bank of a creek which came from the west. Here we found berries which was all we had for supper. Here were many trails.

The next day [October 15] we took the one most trodden, as I felt sure this creek was the Walla Walla. We followed the old trail along the bottoms of the creek. There was some fine timber now, but nothing to eat. We came to an Indian encampment the seventeenth and got some food. Before we came to the Indians, I had proposed to the rest of the party to kill another horse, but hungry as we were, we preferred to push on. The food we got from the Indians consisted of dried bear meat and elderberries, which we bought. I did not feel as ravenous as the other men, who ate until I urged them to stop, for fear of the result. The next day [October 16 ?], after a fifteen-mile ride, we arrived at Fort Walla Walla on October 18, where we found Captain Wyeth, who had been there two or three days (Ball 1902:96-97).

1834:

° Cyrus Shepard wrote on August 29-31, 1834:

Friday 29th August 1834 --

Br. J. Lee and self set out early with the cattle and were voluntarily accompanied by two chiefs, a mile or two on the way till we had past all the bypaths that would be likely to lead us astray they then took an affectionate leave and returned to their own people - many others came to camp early before we left to take leave and manifested much friendship & affection at parting. If duty called I could very well stop with these indians and submit to the privations attending it with cheerfulness -- We soon commenced ascending a mountain which lay in our way and found the path in some places both dangerous and difficult. This mountain (or rather these mountains) are principally covered with timber such as pitch pine, spruce, bald spruce, fir hemlock, etc., some of the pines are large and in Massachusetts would be worth \$20 or \$30 apiece -- There is a kind of black moss on the trees in these mountains which the indians use for food, after having bruised and mixed it with camas root -- fire has by some means been communicated to the woods and has not only overrun the mountains but much of the adjoining country our journey has been rendered much more unpleasant of late in consequence of the smoke with which the atmosphere is filled -- came up with the rest of the company at Five o'clock P.M., (as we who drive are generally an hour or two behind) found them encamped in the wilderness among the mountains where there was but very

little verdure for the animals -- Took supper, spread our blankets under a tree and laid down for the night --

Saturday 30th August 1834

Slept in the open air under the trees and have not enjoyed a better night's lodging for a long time. This circumstance brought to my mind a passage of Scripture recorded in the Thirty-fourth chapter of Ezekiel and twenty-fifth verse. Started with the cattle before the rest of the company were ready -- Travelled over a rough steep mountain which took us most of the day to cross - Our animals are also in a poor condition to drive having had but little to eat at the last encampment -- Came in with the camp about four o'clock P.M., on a creek of pure water not far from the base of the mountain we have been crossing. Enjoyed a precious season in secret prayer.

Sabbath 31st Aug. 1834 --

The company sat out this morning with the expectation of reaching Walla Walla. Br. Edwards & myself left behind with the cattle not expecting to get through till tomorrow -- by mistake we took a different trail from the company, travelled till twelve o'clock & halted to give the animals an opportunity to feed and take some refreshment for ourselves -- resumed our journey in half an hour and continued to travel till dark when we encamped near a creek turned our horses loose, took a little refreshment and having unitedly returned thanks for the salvation of the day and intreated protection through the night, laid down to rest not knowing whether we were in the right way or not (Shepard 1834:60-61).

° Jason Lee wrote on August 29-31, 1834:

1834 Friday, August 29 . . . The fire for a few days has been raging in the woods upon the mountains a few miles distant, and the atmosphere was so filled with smoke that we could see but a short distance, and was painful to the eyes. The two chiefs knowing [that] we should be likely to miss our [route] followed us and rode with us some miles until we reached the point where there was no danger of missing the way and then took their leave. Is this not an interposition of Providence? Who would have supposed these Indians would have shown such kindness and generosity towards strangers on account of their religion? And yet this is the cause of their taking so much interest more in us than in others. They have prayer on Sunday forenoon, and run horses and dance in the a. [p.] m. In short their religion amounts to nothing more than a sort of Catholic mummerly taught them by the traders. May He who teaches us as never man was taught soon teach them the way of life and salvation opened up by the great atonement made on Calvary. We have been nine hours ascending and descending one mountain, the highest and most difficult by far that we have crossed. Found some

beautiful springs of water. Camp in the woods almost without grass.

Saturday, August 30. Started at 6 o'clock and ascended a worse mountain than yesterday. It was with great difficulty that the cows could get up at all, but we at last reached the summit and traveled most of the day on the ridge, but we lost the view of the scenery, the smoke being so dense that we could see but a few yards. Many green pitch trees were burned down, and the fire was yet consuming them. The grass is mostly burnt up. Very little grass remains and that so dry that it is turned white. Mr. Hubbard, one of Capt. Wyeth's men, came to camp having been lost from his company four days.

Sunday, August 31. Started this a. m. with the intention to reach Walla Walla tonight, as our provision is nearly spent. Left Messrs. [Cyrus] Shepard and [Phil] Edwards with the cows, to be two days to Walla Walla. An Indian told us that we could not reach Walla Walla till after dark; we therefore camped at 10 o'clock in good grazing. The men did not come with the cows as we expected, and Mr. Walker went in search of them, but did not find them. They had taken another road. I now not where it will lead them. We have just eaten the last food we have. We have had plenty of meat and a little flour, in case of sickness, until today. We should doubtless reach Walla Walla tomorrow, where we can get plenty. How thankful we ought to be that Providence has thus smiled upon us and so constantly supplied our wants. O Lord, make us grateful for they mercies. I rejoice in the privilege of being able to suspend traveling on this holy day, though I have to ride to Walla Walla without my breakfast in consequence. What our reception may be at the fort I know not, but think it will be favorable; but be that as it may, I feel no anxiety with regard to it. Lord God Omnipotent, reigneth. Amen. Bless the Lord! the heathen shall be given to his son for his heritage and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. Lord, hasten the time.

Tuesday, Sept. 2. Marched over 30 miles in 7 hours yesterday and arrived safe and hungry at Walla Walla. Immediately waited upon the Governor of the fort, Mr. Pambrun, who received me with great civility, gave me food, and sent some to the tent for others. On my return found that the brethren had arrived with the cows (Lee 1916:256-257).

° Nathaniel Wyeth wrote on August 31-September 2, 1834:

[August] 31st. . . . Afternoon took the Walla Walla Trail N. N. W. 12 miles and camped at a very small Prairie with a little stream going N. W. Killed 5 Hens today. On allowance still.

1 Sept. After about 5 miles de[s]cended a very bad mountain and followed a dry creek then assended another bad mountain and nooned without water at 8 miles of very bad going afternoon making along a

ridge of mountain 16 miles arrived at the Otilla [Umatilla] the trail plain the ground stony about N. W. course but indirect so far from the Three Butes every day has been thick smoke like fog enveloping the whole country last night we camped at 10 ock having found no water and the whole country burnt as black as my Hat affording as poor a prospect for a poor sett of Horses as need be.

2nd [September] Left camp behind and proceed across the Utilla River to the N. and up a mountain then took a slight ravine going N. W. and crossing several trails until the ravine leads to a dry willowed creek going N. E. with a little water in puddles then N. W. up a ravine to the height of land which is a gentle slope then leaving the trail and going a few Hundred yards to the left followed a Dry ravine to the Walla Walla River 22 miles in all N. W. then down the Walla Walla W. by N. 20 miles to Fort Walla Walla where I found Mr. [Pierre] Pambrun who did the honors of the Fort in his usual handsome stile also found Capt. Stewart and Mess Lees who arrived two days since. Mr. Mckay for some reason remained in the mountains (Wyeth 1899:231-232).

° John Kirk Townsend wrote on August 31-September 2, 1834:

[August] 31st. . . . About half an hour's brisk trotting brought us to the foot of a steep and high mountain, called the Blue. This is said to be the most extensive chain west of the dividing ridge, and, with one exception perhaps the most difficult of passage. The whole mountain is densely covered with tall pine trees, with an undergrowth of service bushes and other shrubs, and the path is strewn, to a very inconvenient degree, with volcanic rocks. In some of the ravines we find small springs of water; they are, however, rather rare, and the grass has been lately consumed, and many of the trees blasted by the ravaging fires of the Indians. These fires are yet smouldering, and the smoke from them effectually prevents our viewing the surrounding country, and completely obscures the beams of the sun. We travelled this evening until after dark, and encamped on a small stream in a gorge, where we found a plot of grass that had escaped the burning.

September 1st. Last evening, as we were about retiring to our beds, we heard, distinctly, as we thought, a loud halloo, several times repeated, and in a tone like that of a man in great distress. Supposing it to be a person who had lost his way in the darkness, and was searching for us, we fired several guns at regular intervals, but as they elicited no reply, after waiting a considerable time, we built a large fire, as a guide, and lay down to sleep.

Early this morning, a large panther was seen prowling around our camp, and the hallooming of last night was explained. It was the dismal, distressing yell by which this animal entices its prey, until pity or curiosity induces it to approach to its destruction. The panther is said to inhabit these forests in considerable

numbers, and has not unfrequently been known to kill the horses of a camp. He has seldom the temerity to attack a man, unless sorely pressed by hunger, or infuriated by wounds.

The path through the valley, in which we encamped last night, was level and smooth for about a mile; we then mounted a short, steep hill, and began immediately to descend. The road down the mountain wound constantly, and we travelled in short, zig-zag lines, in order to avoid the extremely abrupt declivities; but occasionally, we were compelled to descend in places that made us pause before making the attempt: they were, some of them, almost perpendicular, and our horses would frequently slide several yards, before they could recover. To this must be added enormous jagged masses of rock, obstructing the road in many places, and pine trees projecting their horizontal branches across the path.

The road continued, as I have described it, to the valley in the plain, and a full hour was consumed before we reached it. The country then became comparatively level again to the next range, where a mountain was to be ascended of the same height as the last. Here we dismounted and led our horses, it being impracticable, in their present state, to ride them. It was the most toilsome march I ever made, and we were all so much fatigued, when we arrived at the summit, that rest was as indispensable to us as to our poor jaded horses. Here we made a noon camp, with a handful of grass and no water. This last article appears very scarce, the ravines affording none, and our dried salmon and kamas bread were eaten unmoistened. The route, in the afternoon, was over the top of the mountain, the road tolerably level, but crowded with stones. Towards evening, we commenced descending again, and in every ravine and gully we cast our anxious eyes in search of water; we even explored several of them, where there appeared to exist any probability of success, but not one drop did we find. Night at length came on, dark and pitchy, without a moon or a single star to give us a ray of light; but still we proceeded, depending solely upon the vision and sagacity of our horses to keep the track. We travelled steadily until 9 o'clock, when we saw ahead the dark outline of a high mountain, and soon after heard the men who rode in front, cry out, joyously, at the top of their voices, "water! water!" It was truly a cheering sound, and the words were echoed loudly by every man in the company. We had not tasted water since morning, and both horses and men have been suffering considerably for the want of it.

[September] 2d. Capt. W[yeth] and two men, left us early this morning for Walla-walla, where they expect to arrive this evening, and send us some provision, of which we shall be in need, to-morrow.

Our camp moved soon after, under the direction of Captain Thing, and in about four miles reached Utalla river, where it stopped, and remained until 12 o'clock (Townsend 1978:163-166).

1836:

° Narcissa Whitman wrote on August 28-29, 1836:

[August] 28th . . . After dinner we left the plains & ascended the Blue Mountains. There a new & pleasing scene presented itself, mountains covered with timber through which we rode all the afternoon, a very agreeable change. The scenery reminded me of the hills in my native county Steuben.

[August] 29th Had a continuation of the same scenery as yesterday afternoon. Rode over many logs, an obstruction that we had not found in our way since we left the states. Here I frequently met old acquaintances, in the trees & flowers & was not a little delighted. Indeed I do not know as I was ever so much affected with any scenery in my life. The singing of the birds, the echo of my fellow travelers, as they were scattered through the woods, all had a strong resemblance to bygone days.

But this scene was of short duration. Only one day. Before noon we began to descend one of the most terrible mountains for steepness & length I have yet seen. It was like winding stairs in its descent & in some places almost perpendicular. We were a long time descending it. The horses appeared to dread the hill as much as we did. They would turn & wind in a zigzag manner all the way down. The men usually walked but I could not get permission to, neither did I desire it much. We had no sooner gained the foot of the mountain when another more steep & dreadful was before us. We did not mount this until we had taken some refreshment & rest. (Mount Pleasant in Prattsburg would not compare with these Mount Terribles.) Our ride this afternoon exceeded everything we have had yet & what rendered it the more aggravating the path all the way was very stony resembling a newly McAdamized road. Our horses feet were very tender, all unshod, so that we could not make that progress we wished.

The mountains in many places was covered with this black broken basalt. We were late in making camp tonight. After ascending the mountain immediately after dinner, we kept upon the main divide until sunset, looking in vain for water and a camping place. While upon this elevation, we had a view of the valley of the Columbia river. It was beautiful. Just as we gained the highest elevation & began to descend, the sun was dipping his disk behind the western horizon. Beyond the valley we could see two distant Mountains, Mount Hood and Mount St Helens. These lofty peaks were of a conical form & separate from each other by a considerable distance. Behind the former the Sun was hiding part of his rays which gave us a more distinct view of this gigantic cone. The beauty of this extensive valley contrasted well with the rolling mountains behind us & at this hour of twilight was enchanting & quite diverted my mind from the fatigue under which I was labouring. We had yet to descend a hill as long but not as steep or

stony as the others. By this time (time) our horses were in haste to see camp as well as ourselves & mine made such lengthy strides in descending that it shook my sides surprisingly. It was dark when we got into camp but the tent was ready for me & tea also, for Mr McLeod invited us to sup with him. We are now on the west side of the Blue Mountains, crossed them in a day and half.

[August] 30th In consequence of the lengthy camp yesterday & failure of animals two of the company's men left four of their behind with packs also. This occasioned some anxiety lest the wolves would destroy their beaver. Today they send back for them & we remain here untill they return or make but a short move to find more grass. In following the course of the stream on which we encamped last night, found cherries in abundance, had time to stop to gather as many as we wished. Indeed we rambled untill noon before we went into camp. The cherries are very fine equal to any we find in the States . . . [The party arrived at Fort Walla Walla on August 31, 1836.] (Drury 1963[1]:90-93).

1838:

° Myra Eells wrote on August 27-29, 1838:

Monday, August 27th.--Rode twenty-five miles today; crossed six streams, camped on a large creek. In the morning, Mr. Rogers was thrown from his horse and hurt badly, but thought it not best to be bled. We move on; Mr. Rogers soon found that he would not be able to ride, being so faint; Mr. Eells overtakes us, got Mr. Smith to go back and bleed him; Mrs. S. and myself go back; the camp stops for Mr. to come up; Mr. S. bleeds him, but he can not ride; Mr. R. thinks he can ride and overtake the camp in three hours. It was then thought best that Mr. Rogers should stop. Mr. and Mrs. Smith and Mr. and Mrs. Conner stop with him until he is able to ride.

Tuesday, August 28th.--Rode eight hours, twenty-five miles; encamped in the mountains at a beautiful spring. In the morning the Indians came to ride a piece with us; pass an Indian village in a beautiful grove of pines, suppose there are fifteen or twenty lodges in it. The Blue Mountains are covered with pine timber; crossed five creeks.

Wednesday, August 29th.--Rode seven hours, thirty miles; arrived at Dr. Whitman's; met Mr. Spaulding and wife with Dr. and wife, anxiously awaiting our arrival. They all appear friendly and treat us with great hospitality (Eells 1889:88).

° Mary Richardson Walker wrote on August 28-30, 1838:

August 28th Traveled through woods of beautiful pine & fir. Down & over hills. Encamped at pleasant spot where we met Williams coming with fresh horses to hasten us on.

August 29th Left baggage behind, and hasten on. Rode my pony through the woods & then took Mr. W's & then cantered on. Arrived at Dr. Whitman about two P.M. Found Mr. & Mrs. Spalding there. Mr. Gray & wife gone to Walla Walla. We were feasted on melons, pumpkin pies & milk (Drury 1963[2]:116).

° Sarah White Smith wrote on August 29-31, 1838:

[August] 29th. Wednesday. Left the encampment early. Travelled 10 miles & reached the Blue Mountains. Passed a village of Kyuses. Stopped at noon at the foot of the mountains where we met a man & some horses from Dr. Whitman's to hasten our arrival. The others have arrived & were anxious to see us. This afternoon we travelled the Blue Mountains covered with beautiful pines & spruce trees, 20 miles. Encamped on the summit of the mountains where we found beautiful grass for our animals. Br. Rogers is better.

[August] 30th. Thursday. This morning Mr. S., Br. Rogers & myself with an Indian to guide us started off for Dr. Whitman's, traveled 10 or 12 miles down the mountains covered with thick timber, then over a plain 10 or 12 miles to Dr. Whitman's, arrived about three in the afternoon. Were most cordially welcomed by our missionary brethren & sisters. I can hardly describe my feelings on reaching here. The place s long desired to see. I could hardly believe that the long journey & trying journey was accomplished & I had found a home . . . (Drury 1966[3]:108).

1839:

° Thomas Jefferson Farnham wrote on September 21, 1839:

A day of severe travelling. In the forenoon, the trail ran over a series of mountains swelling one above another in long and gentle ascents, covered with noble forests of yellow pine, fir, and hemlock. Among these were frequent glades or rich pasture land; grass green, and numerous brooks of pure water leaping from the cliffs, or murmuring among the shrubbery. The snow-ball, the wax plant, the yellow and black currant--a species of whortleberry--the service berry--choke cherry--the elder--the shrub maple--and all the beautiful flowers that gem a mountain landscape during its short summer, clothed the ground. At twelve o'clock, we entered a deep ravine, at the bottom of which ran a brook of sweet clear water; we dined on its bank. A dish of rich cocoa, mush, and sugar, and dried buffalo tongue, on the fresh grass, by a cool rivulet on the wild mountains of Oregon! Nature stretched her bare and mighty arms around us! The mountains hid the lower sky, and walled out the lower world! We looked upon the beautiful heights of the Blue Mountains, and ate among its spring blossoms, its singing pines, and holy battlements, ten thousand feet above the sea (Farnham 1843[2]:120-121).

[Farnham's description of the transit of the Blue Mountains

continued for another four pages.]

° Sidney Smith wrote on September 20-22, 1839:

[September] 20th Frid 25 m[iles] and Camp at the foot of the Blue Mountains;

[September] 21st Saty 25 m[iles] and camp this Night twice the first time in a deep ravine at the foot of a mountain & the 2d. time at the top of the mountain it being about 2m to the top

[September] 22nd Sund. 40 m[iles] and camp on the River Wallawalla this day we rode till about 2 Oclock at Night

[September] Mon 23d. 10 m. and we ware at Fort Wallawalla on the River Columbia (Hafen and Hafen 1955:88-89).

° Robert Shortess crossed the Blue Mountains in November, 1839:

The hills were covered with snow, the ground bare and frozen, and thick ice was on the waters; and, though only the latter part of November, winter reigned supreme on the Blue Mountains. We traveled two days in snow from one to three feet deep; our animals were so weak from hunger and fatigue as to be hardly able to make their way through the snowdrifts, and sometimes fell under their loads or became restive and could hardly be moved by the severest blows. At length we descended to the valley of Umatilla, where we found a mild spring temperature and the earth covered with an abundance of grass, green as in May. After halting a short time to give our jaded beasts a chance to satisfy their hunger, we moved on and arrived at Fort Nez Perce or Walla Walla on the tenth day from Boise. Here after a few day's rest, the writer being informed that it was too late in the season to cross the Cascade mountains, went to Dr. Whitman's mission, where he continued to work until spring (Hafen and Hafen 1955:109).

1840:

° Alvin Thompson Smith wrote on August 13-15, 1840:

August 13th [leaving camp in Grande Ronde Valley] traveled 32 miles over the blue hills some of the way a fine fine country camped in a fine hollow by cold river after decending a mountain an hour & half long

August 14th rose a mountain this morning an hour & a halves travel, long came through some fine timber & a rough country traveled 35 miles & arrived to Doctor Whitmans

August 15th staid at the doctors & hunted horses (Smith 1840)

1841:

° Joseph Williams wrote on September 10-12, 1841:

Here [in the Blue Mountains] we pass some beautiful pines, spruce, and fir trees. After crossing the mountain, we staid at the foot of it, on the margin of a small creek. We had some frost this morning. Next day we traveled over the hills, and got into the rich prairies; camped on the Umatilla River, where we saw a variety of fruits, black haws and brown cherries; and trees like the Balm of Gilead, with pods and gum on them. The Indians brought some good, sweet roots to sell us. We traveled on, and got to Dr. Whiteman's and Mr. Gray's on the Wallawalla, where the Presbyterian mission is located (Williams 1843).

1842:

° Medorem Crawford wrote on September 11-13, 1842:

Sept. 11 Sunday started at 7½ o'clock with our Indians for Guide. They took us a northern direction & put us on the companies trail about 10 o'clock we then came to the Creek which we had left in the morning and followed it down. We discovered a band of Horses on the other side of the Creek. Our Indians left us about noon and crossed the Creek to these Horses which were being driven in the same direction we were going. We saw more Horses ahead. Came to an Indian village at 2 o'clock and camped near them, traviled 18 miles.

The first thing to be attended to after we camped was to ascertain whether we could get any provisions from the Indians. We found to our great joy they had pleanty and instead of starving as we expected we were able to trade enough fish to last us to Dr. Whitmans. There were several lodges & they were well clad & had hundreds of good horses and an abundance of provision. I have seen no Indians since I started which appear so happy & well provided for as these. The beneficial influence of the Missionary Society

appears to have reached here. They attended morning and evening devotion in our camp.

12 Sept. Monday. Horses strayed far from camp and scattered among the Indians' Horses. The Indians showed moral honesty by bringing horses to us which had strayed by themselves to some distance. Started at 9½ o'clock several Indians started with us one continued & said he would go to Dr. Whitmans. Commenced raising a Mountain by degrees. Came to trees, at first quite thin & without underbrush having fine grass. But as we arose came to a densely timbered country, mostly pine & fir. The most beautiful tall straight trees. Our traveling through the timber was quite difficult as the path wound back and forth and many logs lay across it. We descended & arose a tremendous hill and about 3 o'clock our Indian Guide beckoned us to take a by path to find water, we did so and after traveling a few hundred yards found a little opening of timber & plenty of good water & some grass. Camped here for the night trav. 10 miles. Cool & cloudy considerable of rain after dark. Horses got frightened tied some up & the rest remained near.

Sept. 13 Tuesday. Started at 8½ and followed back our path until we came to the main trail when we pursued our dismal rout, Our path today led through more dense places & driving our pack animals & cattle was almost impossible. Occasionally we found a clear spot frequently several acres together and in the forenoon several little springs of water, towards evening we left the timber and found ourselves on a rolling Prairie of good soil. Continued to descend until near sunset when to our great joy we found water and wood but poor grass. Camped traveled 20 miles (Crawford 1897: 19-20).

1843:

° Overton Johnson and William Winter wrote in September, 1843:

From the Grand Round we bore to the left, and began the ascent of the Blue Mountains. It was long, but gradual. After reaching the summit, the road was generally passable, excepting some deep ravines, which were frequently very steep and rocky. A great portion of these Mountains, are covered with dense forests of lofty pine. Those portions which are destitute of timber, are generally covered with good grass, and a considerable portion of the soil appears to be fit for cultivation.

On the third day, we left the Mountains and descended to the Umatila or Uvilla River, (generally called in that country, the Uvilla,) in the valley of Walawala. From the brow of the Mountain, we had a fine view of the Cascade range, fifty miles distant, forming the Western boundary of the valley, stretching far to the North and South, with its lofty peaks of eternal snow rising among the clouds (Johnson and Winter 1846:32-33).

° William T. Newby wrote on October 3-7, 1843:

(October 3) We crawled over a bad mountain & down it to a creek, the hill very bad to go down. These is hills of the Bliew Mountain. Tha[y] are covered with the pirtiest timber I ever saw. We hav past betwene two snowey mountains for the last 3 days. We hav frequently past snow that I hav not mentioned. The grazing on the Bliew Mountain is good. Dist[ance] 7 [miles].

(October 4) We continued over the mountain, passing through hevey timber. The timber is so thick in meney places that you coldant see a man 10 steps. I believe that there is pine trees 200 feet high & not more than 2 foot through. We had a very bad road. We in camped on the mountain with out water. There was snow to day & at nite the ground froze & thare was a frost cool enough. Dis[tance] 7 [miles].

(October 5) We continued over the moun[tain], bad road, timber thick, & in camped at a smawl branch. Grazing good. The difficulty is in finding cattle, the timber is so thick. Distance 9 [miles].

(October 6) We continued over, having 1 bad hill, then a good road, & in camped with out watter. Grazing good. Dist[ance] 12 [miles].

(October 7) We got down the mountain in 4 miles. Good in campment at the foot of the hill. We fownt mild plesant wether when we got down the mountain. Good incampment in 3 miles. Then we continued on & in camped at a smawl dry branch. Grazing good, watter indifferent. [Distance] 15 [miles].

(October 8) We had 1 bad hill to clime & struck a smawl creek & incamp[ed]. Grazing good. Dist[ance] 13 [miles].

(October 9) We mooved 3 miles & incamp[e]d. Grazing good. [Distance] 3 [miles].

(October 10) We lay buy within 3 miles of Doct[or] Whitmans, a mishionary astablishment, to git provision. The Dr. had gon to Spaldings Mishion & left ev[er]ything in charge of Mr. Giger; & the emigrants was much disapointed, as the Dr. had got them to come much out of there way with promises of provisions cheep, & was surprised by high prices that we had to pay for all we got: be[e]f 10 cts, pork 25 ct[s], potatoes \$1.00, flour without bolting 7 c[ts] (Newby 1939:237-238).

° James W. Nesmith wrote on October 1-4, 1843:

Sunday, October 1. Started over the mountains. Trailed twelve miles and encamped on a small dry creek in a deep ravine. To-day E. Otey and myself went hunting. Had a beautiful prospect of the

Grande Ronde from the top of the mountains. Found the mountains covered with evergreen trees which remind me of the scenes of my childhood. They consist of pine, spruce, hemlock, fir, and tamarack or juniper. Mrs. Rubey died at Grand Ronde, and was buried October 1.

Monday, October 2. Trailed twelve miles to-day over bad roads, in many places timber to be cut. I went in advance and cut timber all day. Encamped at night on a small stream of good water.

Tuesday, October 3. Had some difficulty this morning in finding our oxen, some of them having lain down in the pine thickets. Started about ten o'clock. Trailed about three miles. Crossed a very bad ravine and encamped on the west side of it. Weather since we left Grande Ronde fine, warm and mild. Nights rather cool.

Wednesday, October 4. Weather stormy; rain and hail. We got under way and traveled twelve miles down the west side of the Blue Mountains, when we struck the Umatilla River. Went three miles down it, and encamped near some Cayuse lodges (Nesmith 1906:353-354).

° Peter Hardeman Burnett wrote on October 2-5, 1843:

October 2d. We ascended a hill, or rather a mountain, at the edge of the "Grand Round," and then descended it in an extensive declivity on the other side, ending at a fine running creek, for which I could find no name, but on the banks of which we encamped. Both of these hills, the one at the entrance and the other at the outlet of the Grand Round, might be better avoided by turning to the left upon the mountain side and passing them altogether. We passed during the later part of this day, through large bodies of heavy pine timber, and I will take this occasion to remark, that the timber of the Blue Mountains were the first considerable bodies we had seen since we left the banks of the Kansas.

October 3d. We were obliged to ascend and descend three very bad hills, and to pass over eight miles of a very rough and difficult road, a portion of it running through a track heavily timbered with pine. We cut through this a road for the wagons, and it now offers much superior facilities for those who follow.

October 4th. This day our route stretched through the still continuous pine, but they were more sparsely scattered than before, and our progress consequently was more easy. The weather was cold and bleak.

October 5th. A slight fall of snow this morning brought us to our heaviest clothing, and increased the size of our early campfires. The roads were excellent before us, but in consequence of two bad hills, and the disposition to linger round our fires, we did not

make more than eight miles, after completing which we went early to camp.

October 6th. On the 6th we descended the Blue Mountains, by an easy and gradual declination over an excellent road, and encamped on the banks of the Umatilla River near a Kiuse village. This stream, like most of the rivers we had crossed in Oregon, was nothing more than a good sized creek . . . (Wilkes 1845).

° John C. Fremont wrote on October 18-22, 1843:

October 18. . . . We resumed our journey somewhat later than usual, travelling in a nearly north direction across this beautiful valley; and about noon reached a place on one of the principal streams, where I had determined to leave the emigrant trail, in the expectation of finding a more direct and better road across the Blue mountains. At this place the emigrants appeared to have held some consultation as to their further route, and finally turned directly off to the left; reaching the foot of the mountain in about three miles, which they ascended by a hill as steep and difficult as that by which we had yesterday descended to the Rond. Quitting, therefore this road, which, after a very rough crossing, issues from the mountains by the heads of the Umatilah river, we continued our northern course across the valley, following an Indian trail which had been indicated to me by Mr. [Francois] Payette, and encamped at the northern extremity of the Grand Rond, on a slough-like stream of very deep water, without any apparent current. There are some pines here on the low hills at the creek; and in the northwest corner of the Rond is a very heavy body of timber, which descends into the plain. The clouds, which had rested very low among the mountain sides during the day, rose gradually up in the afternoon; and in the evening the sky was almost entirely clear, with a temperature at sunset of 47°. Some indifferent observations placed the camp in longitude 117°28'26", latitude 45°26'47"; and the elevation was 2,600 feet above the sea.

October 19. This morning the mountains were hidden by fog; there was a heavy dew during the night, in which the exposed thermometer at daylight stood at 32°, and at sunrise the temperature was 35°.

We passed out of the Grand Rond by a fine road along the creek, which, for a short distance, runs in a kind of rocky chasm. Crossing a low point, which was a little rocky, the trail conducted into the open valley of the stream--a handsome place for farms; the soil, even of the hills, being rich and black. Passing through a point of pines, which bore evidence of being much frequented by the Indians, and in which the trees were sometimes apparently 200 feet high and 3 to 7 feet in diameter, we halted for a few minutes in the afternoon at the foot of the Blue mountains, on a branch of the Grand Rond river, at an elevation of 2,709 feet. Resuming our journey, we commenced the ascent of the mountain through an open pine forest of large and stately trees, among which the balsam pine

made its appearance; the road being good, with the exception of one steep ascent, with a correspondence descent, which might both have been easily avoided by opening a way for a short distance through the timber. It would have been well had we encamped on the stream where we had halted below, as the night overtook us on the mountain, and we were obliged to encamp without water, and tie up the animals to the trees for the night. We had halted on a smooth open place of a narrow ridge, which descended very rapidly to a ravine or piney hollow, at a considerable distance below; and it was quite a pretty spot, had there been water near. But the fires at night look very cheerless after a day's march, when there is no preparation for supper going on; and, after sitting some time around the blazing logs, Mr. Preuss and Carson, with several others, volunteered to take the India rubber buckets and go down into the ravine in search of water. It was a very difficult way in the darkness down the slippery side of the steep mountain, and harder still to climb about half a mile up again; but they found the water, and the cup of coffee (which it enabled us to make) and bread were only enjoyed with greater pleasure.

At sunset the temperature was 46° ; the evening remarkably clear; and I obtained an emersion of the first satellite, which does not give a good result, although the observation was a very good one. The chronometric longitude was $117^{\circ}28'34''$, latitude $45^{\circ}38'07''$, and we had ascended to an elevation of 3,830 feet. It appeared to have snowed yesterday on the mountains, their summits showing very white to-day.

October 20. There was a heavy white frost during the night, and at sunrise the temperature was 37° .

The animals had eaten nothing during the night; and we made an early start, continuing our route among the pines, which were more dense than yesterday, and still retained their magnificent size. The larches cluster together in masses on the sides of the mountains, and their yellow foliage contrasts handsomely with the green of the balsam and other pines. After a few miles we ceased to see any pines, and the timber consisted of several varieties of spruce, larch, and balsam pine, which have a regularly conical figure. These trees appeared from 60 to nearly 200 feet in height; the usual circumference being 10 to 12 feet, and in the pines sometimes 21 feet. In open places near the summit, these trees became less high and more branching, the conical form having a greater base. The instrument carriage occasioned much delay, it being frequently necessary to fell trees and remove the fallen timber. The trail we were following led up a long spur, with a very gradual and gentle rise.

At the end of three miles, we halted at an open place near the summit, from which we enjoyed a fine view over the mountainous country where we had lately travelled, to take a barometrical observation at the height of 4,760 feet.

After travelling occasionally through open places in the forest, we were obliged to cut a way through a dense body of timber, from which we emerged on an open mountain side, where we found a number of small springs, and encamped after a day's journey of 10 miles. Our elevation here was 5,000 feet.

October 21. There was a very heavy white frost during the night, and the thermometer at sunrise was 30°.

We continued to travel through the forest, in which the road was rendered difficult by fallen trunks, and obstructed by many small trees, which it was necessary to cut down. But these are only accidental difficulties, which could easily be removed, and a very excellent road may be had through this pass, with no other than very moderate ascents or declivities. A laborious day, which had advanced us only six miles on our road, brought us in the afternoon to an opening in the forest, in which there was a fine mountain meadow, with good grass, and a large clear-water stream--one of the head branches of the Umatilah river. During this day's journey, the barometer was broken; and the elevations above the sea, hereafter given, depend upon the temperature of boiling water. Some of the white spruces which I measured to-day were twelve feet in circumference, and one of the larches ten; but eight feet was the average circumference of those measured along the road. I held in my hand a tape line as I walked along, in order to form some correct idea of the size of the timber. Their height appeared to be from 100 to 180, and perhaps 200 feet, and the trunks of the larches were sometimes 100 feet without a limb; but the white spruces were generally covered with branches nearly to the root. All these trees have their branches, particularly the lower ones, declining.

October 22. The white frost this morning was like snow on the ground; the ice was a quarter of an inch thick on the creek, and the thermometer at sunrise was at 20°. But, in a few hours, the day became warm and pleasant, and our road over the mountains was delightful and full of enjoyment.

The trail passed sometimes through very thick young timber, in which there was much cutting to be done; but, after travelling a few miles, the mountains became more bald, and we reached a point from which there was a very extensive view in the northwest. We were here on the western verge of the Blue mountains, long spurs of which, very precipitous on either side, extended down into the valley, the waters of the mountain roaring between them. On our right was a mountain plateau, covered with a dense forest; and to the westward, immediately below us, was the great Nez Perce (pierced nose) prairie, in which dark lines of timber indicated the course of many affluents to a considerable stream that was seen pursuing its way across the plain towards what appeared to be the Columbia river. This I knew to be the Walahwah river, and occasional spots along its banks, which resembled clearings, were

supposed to be the mission or Indian settlements; but the weather was smoky and unfavorable to far views with the glass. The rock displayed here in the escarpments is a compact amorphous trap, which appears to constitute the mass of the Blue mountains in this latitude; and all the region of country through which we have travelled since leaving the Snake river has been the seat of violent and extensive igneous action . . . (Fremont 1970:546-550).

- ° Peter Hardeman Burnett wrote about crossing the Blue Mountains in October, 1843:

On the 2d of October we ascended the mountainridge at the Grande Ronde, and descended on the other side of the ridge to a creek, where we camped. These hills were terrible. On the 3d, 4th, 5th, and 6th, we passed through the Blue Mountains, arriving at their foot on the 6th, and encamping upon a beautiful stream of water. On the morning of the 5th there was a snowstorm on the mountain. during our passage through the Blue Mountains we had great difficulty in finding our cattle, and the road was very rough in many places (Burnett 1880:125-126).

- ° Ninevah Ford, an emigrant of 1843, recalled:

Peter H. Burnett was in favor of stopping [in the Grand Ronde] and locating there but having no supplies we travelled on for the Blue Mountains cutting our way through the fallen timber. We camped many times in sight of our former nights camp. We found it very laborious and very hard cutting that Tamarack timber with our dull axes that we had not ground since we left Missouri having no grind stone to grind them & our hands being very tender--cutting those dry sticks which sprung the skin loose on our hands. But it was getting late in the season; and it devolved on some 40 persons to make that road. The lazy ones dropped back, not for the purpose of screening themselves, but to rest their cattle, so they stated, but we imputed it to their diffidence in regard to the work. It developed on the 40 persevering men to drive the wagons and cut the roads.

The women frequently would drive the teams and the men would do the work. The most of them had axes. We had shovels but it was rarely that we used them. I recollect we had to dig down the banks to get across the Grand Ronde River. When we crossed the Grande Ronde River the snow had fallen to a depth of two inches but did not lay long. I think it was in September. It was an early snow. We travelled under the guidance of an Indian pilot that Dr. Whitman had sent back. Wherever he directed us to go there we went, without searching for any other route. . . .

In some places the timber was very thick, so that you could not ride a horse through without cutting. After we got on top of the mountain the timber got lighter and more scattered and we got down the mountain comparatively easy. We got out of the timber when we

got pretty nearly down. Went to Umatilla and then accross to Walla Walla and to Whitman's station where he had established a mission (Ford 1878:11-12).

- ° William Winter and Overton Johnson crossed the Blue Mountains in 1843 and published their assessment of the region in 1846:

The Blue Mountains, which form the Eastern boundary of the Walawala Valley, cover an extent of country about seventy-five miles broad, and are, we believe, about nine-tenths timbered; through these mountains there are numerous small valleys, furnishing in many places, good soil, and every where fine pasture, upon which stock of every description can be kept in good condition throughout the year. But as the valleys in the mountains do not, perhaps, cover more than one twentieth of the whole area, this portion of country could only sustain a sparse population, and keep a limited amount of stock (Winter and Johnson 1846:137).

1844:

- ° Edward Evans Parrish wrote on October 15-18, 1844:

Wednesday, Oct. 15.--Started early for the head of the Grand Round River and drove hard over the worst road yet, hills and rocks awful. We camped along with Mr. Cave on the hill without water for the cattle. A little snow fell to-day on the high divide.

Thursday, Oct. 17.--All together again at the head of the Grand Round river and are starting at twelve o'clock for the Utilla [Umatilla] River. Drove about five miles and camped at the head of a spring on the hill. Here we had to double teams again. The road was better to-day, though bad yet. The evening not so cold as last evening.

Friday, Oct. 18--A clear morning. Hope we will get out of this mountain to-day. We got out of the mountain and camped on the Utilla [Umatilla] River. The last twenty miles of the Blue Mountains was pretty good for mountain roads. A very long hill to come down off the mountain (Parrish 1888:114).

- ° James Clyman wrote on September 29-30, 1844:

[September] 29 Sunday Left our camp in the grand Round and took up the Blue Mountains which are steep & rough but not so bad as I had anticipated from Previous information came to the grand round creek in about 10 miles the mountain so far is mostly Prairie & fairly covered with g[r]ass some parts However espicially the ravines & vallies are covred with pine & spruce timber the rocks all shew the effects of internal fires Left our nooning & proceeded on N. Westward Pased some remarkable wild & lonesome groves of pine and firr that had a dark appeearanc & the more so on account of the thick smoke that enveloped the mountain in such clouds as to

nearly hide the sun at midday continued until dusk along bare rocky rough Sides of the mountain extremely bad for wagons & encamped with out water there being but little water in these dry vitrified ridges made 26 miles saw but little sign of any wile animals Except Pheasants which are plenty in some parts of this range & live upon the berries of winter green which grows in Quantities in many places saw likewise a speeces of Laurel & Ivy on the Ridgis

[September] 30 Saddled up at day light and proceded on our way found the trail tolerable for horses in about 8 miles came to some pools of Standing water whare we took Breakfast these mountains are partially covered with Several Kinds of evergreen timber the South sides of the ridgis are bare or thinly sit with grass all the rocks & they are plenty shew the effects of fire at some remote perod the cayl [clay] is of the same kind as that found on the plains verry deep yellow with all Shades down to a pale grate Quantities of coarse pummice stone laying strewed over the ground particularly near the western desent of the mountain the western desent of the Mountain is much more easy & grduel than the eastern so far I have been but little land that would be called fit for cultivation in any of the Western States although there are a fiw Spots that would bare cultivation Made 25 miles & encamped on a Small brook or rather Spring to the right of the trail & close to the foot of the mountain (Clyman 1984:123-124).

1845:

° Joel Palmer wrote on September 13-16, 1845:

September 13. This day we traveled about seven miles. From Grand Round the road ascends the Blue mountains, and for two miles is quite steep and precipitous; and to such an extent, as to require six yoke of oxen, or more, to be attached to a wagon; from the summit of these mountains is presented a rolling country for some four miles, alternately prairie and groves of yellow pine timber. In the prairie the grass is quite dry, but among the groves of timber it is green and flourishing. The road is very stony; at the end of four miles it takes down the mountain to Grand Round river, one mile in distance; it then crosses. Here is another bottom covered with grass and bushes, where we pitched our encampment. It is a remarkable circumstance that when individuals are engaged in conversation, their voices can be heard distinctly at a quarter of a mile distance; the discharge of a gun resembles that of a cannon, and is echoed from hill to hill, the reverberations continuing for some length of time.

September 14. This day we traveled about ten miles. The road ascended the mountain for one and a half or two miles, then wound along the ridge crossing many deep ravines, and pursuing its route over high craggy rocks; sometimes directing its course over an open plain, at others through thick groves of timber, winding among

fallen trees and logs, by which the road was encumbered. The scenery is grand and beautiful, and cannot be surpassed; the country to a great distance is rough in the extreme. It may strictly be termed a timber country, although many small prairies are dotted over its surface. The valleys are beautiful and the soil presents a very rich appearance. We encamped in an opening, on the south side of a range of mountains running to the north, and found water in plenty in the bottom of the ravine, on our left, about one fourth of a mile from the road. The timber growing in this region is principally yellow pine, spruce, balsam fir, and hemlock; among the bushes I noticed laurel.

September 15. This day we traveled about nine miles, over the main ridge of the Blue Mountains. It is mostly a timbered country through which we passed; the scenery is delightful, resembling in grandeur that presented on yesterday's travel. We had a fine view of the Cascade Mountains to the west. Mount Hood, the loftiest of these, was plain to the view. It was some one hundred and fifty miles distant, and being covered with snow, appeared as a white cloud rising above those surrounding it. To the north of Mount Hood, and north of the Columbia, is seen Mount Saint Helen. We halted for the night at Lee's encampment.

September 16. We traveled about sixteen miles this day, which brought us to the Umatillo river (Palmer 1847:55-56).

° John E. Howell wrote on September 13-17, 1845:

13, Saturday. Trav. over mountains some prairie and generally open along the road but the greater portion covered with the majestic pine and that densely, beautiful mountain scenery. Camp on Grand Round River in a dense forest the first camp of the kind on the whole route.

14, Sunday. Trav. through dense forest up 4 bad hills, rocky roads, very little water. Camp on Mt. Water unhandy.

15, Monday. Trav. crossed the summit of the Blue Mts. Camp on the Umatalow river Small branch all timbered country.

16, Tuesday. Trav. half through pine forest and nearly all down hill camp on Umatalow at the foot of the Blue Mountains. The Blue Mts are a beautiful range of Mts. They are well timbered and afford good grazing. Some places in them are covered with perpetual snow.

17, Wednesday. Trav. and camped on the Umatalow river (Howell 1907:150-151).

° William Findley wrote on October 6-8, 1845:

Oct. 6 Traveled miles 8. On the Blue Mountains. Crossed the Grande Ronde River. Here we had a steep hill to go down and one to go up.

Oct 7 Traveled miles 12 on the same.

Oct 8 Traveled miles 20 to the foot of the Mountain on Uvilla River (Findley 1845:10).

1847:

° Absalom B. Harden wrote on August 31-September 3, 1847:

August 31 we Started and assended the first hill of the blew mountains 2 mills lonng a very bad hill and rockey then up and down bad hill and rockey then up and down bad hill to the grand round river which is 8 miles here we campt these mountains is clothed with beautiful short leaf pine timber some calls it yellow fir but it is pine . . . poor camp for grass but down 1 miles good grass

September the 1 1847 we Started and traveled 2 hundred yards up the Stream and Struck the foot of a Large mountain which was very bad this hill is 3/4 of a mill long then we traveled 3 or 4 mils over rocks and hills and came to what we call the blew hill which is the steepest hill we have assended tho it is short then over rocks and hills 3 mills and we Stoped and nooned and let our Cattle graze this day we have traveled through very heavey pine timber we measured som of the down timber and it was 150 feet long hear the counetry begins to look better but it is not a desirable counetry we traveled 2 mils and a very rockey road and came to the red yellow hill hear we had to doble teams tho this hill is not very lonng then we traveled 1½ mills and incampt on the mountain one ½ mile to the left and down the mountain and we found water in a small branch tho the water Stands in pools hear our cattle sufered much for want of food here is beautiful timber tho it is verity of pine and fur timber theas mountains is all beautifully set with a heavey groth of timber plenty of bear and elk in theas mountans and indians in abundance through this counetry tho thay have not done us aney injury yet they appear to be very friendely and wants to trade with us for clothing and give us fish that is Salmon and trade horses for Cows and flint Lock rifel guns Large bore at that thay want sound stocks and single trigger thay want powder and Lead & butcher knives of a Large size theas is the Kioose indians and thay have the best Stock of Horses that I Ever Saw the most beautiful made

September the 2nd we Started and traveled 10 mils over rocks the greater part of our time and when no rocks the dust was just like ashes a nuff to Stifel man and beast and the road was very hilley it is the worst road the length of it that we have traveled. you will take care to fill your Caggs in the morning for you will not

find a drop for 10 mills this point is Cawled Lees incampment hear is good grass and the pine timber is very thick tho the grass is on the hills good water and wood of corse hear we had indians to visett us

September the 3rd 1847 we made an Earley Start and filled our caggs then 16 mills brought us to umtillo river hear we found a great maney indians . . . (Harden 1847).

° Loren B. Hastings crossed the Blue Mountains on October 4-8, 1847:

October 4. Moved on the Grand R. about six miles; then ascended Blue mountain again; traveled about six miles more through winter green timber up hill and down; some of the road very rocky. Today descended a long, steep hill to Grand Ronde river and camped.

October 5. This day hunted until past noon before we found my cattle. Moved about six miles through pine, fir and larch and some other winter green trees that I could not name and camped on the mountain; good grass, but not water.

October 6. Moved on over the mountain, the road and timber as yesterday. Moved about 14 miles, came down to a small creek, watered our cattle and moved up the mountain two miles and camped in thick timber; the best of grass.

October 7. Could not find all of our cattle, yoked up what cattle we found and moved on one mile and camped. Before night we went back and found the balance of our oxen. While we were hunting cattle today, one lady (Mrs. Thatcher) was discovered walking very briskly in the thick timber and asked which way she was traveling, she said she was going to the wagons and wondered what was the reason she could not see them; but when told that she was one-half mile from the wagons and going in a contrary direction, she was not a little surprised and concluded in such thick timber as this she would not undertake to hunt cattle. This night guarded our cattle all night.

October 8. This day got an early start; in a few miles we came through the thick timber and came to large pines. The road smoother and not so hilly directly we came out of the pines and went down a long hill into the Umatilla valley; the bottom and bluffs covered with Indian ponies and good horses, too. Came to the Aitilla river and camped (Hastings 1926:22-23).

° Elizabeth Dixon Smith noted on October 7-11, 1847, the transit of the Blue Mountains:

Oct 7 ascended a mountain a mile and half long covered with pine and grass when we came to the top we found a pretty open place level and a good soil covered with grass rolled 5 miles over level land decended the mountain which was steep a[nd] difficult the men

havin to stiddy the waggons down while we women carried and led our children camped on a branch of grand round river here the men made tar out of pine here we are surrounded with mountains covered with tall pines

Oct 8 ascended a steep mountain trav[e]led through thick pine came to another mountain had to double teams to some wagons they put 9 yoke of oxen all of those mountains has a good soil covered with grass camped without water rained last night

Oct 9 doubled teams up another mountain made 15 miles camped at pine camp good feed and water me and my husband are both sick with summer complaint

Oct 10 layed by to hunt some lost cattle.

Oct 11 made 12 miles camped near a branch of the Youtilla river (Smith 1983:136-137).

1848:

° Benjamin Cleaver wrote on August 18, 1848:

we continued west until we came in sight of the Grand Ronde Bottom we here had a long hill to go down Say about one mile it is not very Steep. But there is a good number of loos stones on the Road. we see on these Mountains some fine groves of Pine & Cedar. This grand Rond Bottom is very furtille we find one good camping place at the foot of the hill & another in about 6 miles & from this camp to the west side of the Bottom is about 4 miles, here we camped. . . (Cleaver 1848).

° William Wright Anderson wrote on August 19-22, 1848:

August the 19th we ascended a high mountain leaveing Jacksions Company behind we traveled 8 miles over high rolling mountains through pine groves and falen timber to grand round river here the river passes through a deep narrow heavy timbered canyon here we saw several Cyse Indians they showed no sines of hostility one of our [company] bought a pony of one of them for which he gave a boat but the Indian soon became dissatisfied and wanted to rue so to

August the 20th we traveled 10 miles over the roughest road we have yet traveled our road was verry mountainous and rocky and verry heavy timbered with pine and fur the road wound around amongst the standing and falen timber which made it difficult driveing we camped on the side of a mountain and had to carry watter near half a mile from a small branch down on the side of the mountain

August the 21st we traveled 9 miles our road to day wound its course along the side of the mountain which was verry side long and

rocky occasionally passing through a small plaine then through thick grover of pine and hemlock we camped [p. 40] on a small branch at a place caled lees encampment to day we were met by some of the Oregon soldiers who told us there was not much danger of Indians as they had all the hostile ones run back into the mountains

August the 22nd we traveled 20 miles 10 miles brought us to the river umatilla our road today was verry good there was one hill that we came down 4 miles long it was pretty steep in places we traveled 4 miles down this river and camped here is the ruins of a cyuse village . . . (Anderson 1848:39-40)

° Honore-Timothee Lempfrit wrote on September 8-11, 1848:

8th September As we had to be on our way early that morning I bade farewell to the good Indians after the festival. At first light I was away on my horse so as to be able to explore this attractive country. The further I went the more enchanted I was with what I discovered. Oh! How many castles in Spain did I build while riding past these lovely hills covered with magnificent fir-trees. In my imagination I was already established amongst these good Indians as their priest! Soon, however, the trail became very arduous. At about 4 o'clock there was a very steep hill to go down. I made my way down the hill, leading my horse by the bridle. When I reached the bottom I came on a little American girl who had fallen off her horse. She was lying in a dust filled, dried out gully screaming at the top of her voice. I got this poor child out of the hole, luckily she was unhurt, she was just frightened. Then we came to a little valley through which flowed a river abounding in crayfish. When our company arrived I showed them a basketful of them. "Well," they said to me, "you go on ahead to catch crayfish instead of remaining behind to receive the excellent horse the Great Chief came to give you this morning. Since he did not find you he went away, taking the horse with him."

I must confess that I was rather vexed with myself for having departed so precipitately.

9th September Today we had an excellent camping spot, a very nice situation completely surrounded by tall fir-trees. Right beside us flowed a river abounding in fish and in the shallow parts of the river one could scoop up quantities of crayfish. I went on ahead with the Canadian who was travelling with us. At first we climbed a very steep path, then, having arrived at the summit we saw a group of horsemen riding towards us and shouting at the top of their voices. For a moment I was apprehensive, but was soon reassured when the good Indians came up to us. I much admired their beautiful horses. Soon, however, we had to take our leave of them as their provisions they were carrying with them were putrid! This was indeed a travelling stench as the air was polluted everywhere they had been.

We had hoped to find water but we had to go on for twelve more miles before found any. Our horses were spent, the oxen refused to go any further and night was about to descend on us. The Captain wanted us to carry on further. We had three waggons with us, all the rest had lagged behind. An unusual strategm for preventing the Captain from pushing on was conceived by the people in the waggons behind us. All of a sudden one of their guides came galloping up and reported to the Captain that one of their waggons had overturned as it was going down the hill. Two men had been crushed under the weight of the vehicle.

Can you imagine such agonizing news! At once I spurred my horse and we all went to the help of these unfortunate men. Soon however we learned that it was only a ruse to make us go back. It was a false alarm! At last we came to a halt. An Indian pointed out to us a little stream in the distance. I went down an extremely steep hill and at the bottom I found a few water-holes that still had some water in them. My poor horse emptied out one or two of them all by himself.

When I got back I learned that an elderly man of our company had just died.

10th September We had a very bad camp site and as a result of this we almost lost half our animals. Nearly all of them strayed during the night, in search of a little water. We had let them graze at random, consequently when morning came we found ourselves without any oxen. We had a great deal of difficulty getting them back. The poor old man who had died the previous evening was buried.

Thirteen of our oxen were still missing at 11 o'clock. Finally we left around noon so that we could make a little headway. On our way out of this area we came on grassy clearings in the forest. The grass was parched and yellowed by the heat of the sun. These patches of prairie looked like fields of fully ripened corn. Then we came upon huge trees from which hung long clumps of blackish moss. The Indians call this Spanish beard. When they have nothing else to eat they pound up this moss and make a kind of bread with it. It must taste awful! We also found another of moss, just as long, but greenish-yellow in colour.

11 September Today we have had some nice light rain that was most beneficial. The trail was extremely rough. We emerged from the lovely fir forests at about 2 o'clock and at last left behind us the long range of mountains. Ahead of us the country was quite flat. Now we had a new horizon. It seemed as though we saw a vast expanse of sea in the distance, for the scorched prairies give the landscape a bluish hue. We camped on the banks of the Umatilla River and there we found the remains of gardens that the poor Indians had cultivated before the Walla Walla revolt [of 1847]. The country here is extremely fertile (Lempfrit 1984:137-140).

1849:

° William J. Watson wrote on August 18, 1849:

18th. Starting early this morning, we had in the very outset to double teams at a very long, steep hill. Traveling eight miles over the mountain, the road being very rocky and there being a very hard frost, killing the grass and leaves; six miles farther over a very bad road, having to double teams twice in four miles, in the afternoon we reached Rond river, where we encamped for the night, our Indian chief, his wife, and servants, with a large drove of horses, and twenty head of cattle traveling with us; he gave us some milk, and was very friendly.

19th. For a start this morning, we had to double our teams at a very bad hill; five miles. We had to double teams twice more at very bad hills; eleven miles farther brought us to the river, where we encamped for the night, our Indians being still with us: wood, water, and grass plenty.

20th. To day we were early in motion, and crossing a small stream thickly timbered with small pine trees about a foot in diameter, and from fifty to two hundred feet high, which we often saw in the mountains which were everywhere covered with them, making the most beautiful groves that I ever beheld, some of them two hundred feet high, and thickly set with gum grass, which gave them a most enticing appearance, after traveling several hundred miles, seeing not a tree along the parched up valley of Snake River, where the wild sage assumed the place of the tall, beautiful pines, and the hot sands instead of a rich soil covered with a variety of rich grass. After fifteen miles travel, our animals being much fatigued and dry, seeing no water during the day; road good, we encamped on a small stream about a mile from the hill; grass scarce; wood and water plenty. In this bottom were ponies without number, and some of them the largest and finest that I ever saw. The Indians asked from fifty dollars to a hundred and fifty for them. Our camp was filled with Indians accompanied by two very good looking squaws, who rode very fine horses (Watson 1851:39-40).

° Osborne Cross wrote on September 10-11, 1849:

September 10.--Having made all necessary preparations last evening, I started this morning at half-past six o'clock, in company with Lieutenant Lindsey and two soldiers, as an escort.

The road lay up the valley for three miles, when we commenced to ascend a very long, steep mountain, which after considerable work, we got to the top of the ridge, and in five miles further descended to its base, which was as difficult as the ascent; this brought us to a beautiful mountain stream, called the Grand Ronde river, that passed between the ridge which we had just come over and those on the other side, which we were about to travel over. This stream

runs into the Grand Ronde valley, and, being met by other small brooks, gives an abundance of water to it.

Our route lay along the side of the mountain, which, after riding for about two hours, brought us to the top of what seemed to be a wide ridge; and the whole distance travelled, until we crossed the mountains, was over slight rolling ground, except from ascents which were made by small valleys or ravines in the mountains.

Our horses were soon put into a canter, in the true California style of riding, and kept so until the close of the evening, when we again came to clear ground, on the opposite side of the mountain, and after traveling along on the ridge, and winding for some time down its side, which is entirely destitute of timber, we reached the Eumatilla river, which has its rise in the Blue mountains, and flows into the Columbia river, ninety miles above the Dalles.

The soil on the mountains is of a dark vegetable mould, and thickly covered with timber, consisting of hemlock and fir, hardly surpassed by any in the United States. The timber is not generally as large as that on the banks of the Willamette, but equally as tall and abundant. While on the mountains we came to water several times during the evening's ride, and although the command had to encamp twice before crossing, they found enough to answer their purpose.

The distance travelled to-day was nearly fifty miles; and we were all tired enough to make our encampment for the night, which was easily done, having nothing but our blankets. We all lay down under a wide-spreading cottonwood, by a fine fire, on the banks of the river, for the night, after each man had cooked his own dinner and supper, in the true mountain style. It is merely necessary to remark here that, for better than four months, our dinner and supper were generally served up at the same hour, and it depended generally upon the time of encamping, and the means of cooking it, whether we were fortunate not to go without either.

In entering the Eumatilla valley, I was struck with the fine range for stock which presented itself to my view, as the country, though high and rolling, is not broken, but covered from the base to the top of every hill with fine bunch grass, which is so much sought after by the stock in this valley. (Cross 1850:95-96)

1850:

° Samuel James wrote on August 7-8, 1850:

Aug. 7 Grand Round River over a mighty hill in the Blue Mountains
8 [miles]

Aug. 8 Lees encampment over 2 or 3 bad hills. Scarcely any water usually found on the way. 20[miles] (James 1850)

° David Maynard wrote on September 2-4, 1850:

September 2. . . . In the Ronde found the best grass we have seen since we left home. Here we began climbing the Blue mountains, and if they don't beat the devil. Came on eight miles to Ronde river, and camped.

September 3. On our way at 4. Came over the mountains and through a dense forest of pine, twenty miles, to camp springs. Here we overtook Bichard and Thurman.

September 4. Left camp early and traveled fifteen and a half miles to the foot of the mountains. Encamped among the Kuse and Walla Walla Indians. Poor feed for cattle . . . (Maynard 1906:60).

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Walla Indians. Poor feed for cattle . . . (Maynard 1906:60).

1851:

- ° Amelia Hadley, ill during the journey through northeastern Oregon,
summarized the transit of the Blue Mountains in early August, 1851:

. . . 7½ to a branch north side grand round, here you enter the
blue montains 7½ miles verry rough road to crossing of grand round
river, poor camp, no grass, plenty of water, Next water is a spring
to left of road, 13 miles, poor camp spring hard to find. not
many emigrants find it and suffer for water before they get any.
7½ miles fa[r]ther ther is Lees old encampment good camp, 19½
miles to Umatila spring, good camp, 14 miles to crossing of Umatila
where road strikes bottom (Hadley 1984:92).

- ° Lucia Loraine Williams wrote on August 10-14, 1851:

10. Moved at the foot of Blue Mountains. Paid an Indian three
shirts for passing over a few miles of new road and avoiding a
hill. Plenty of pine timber. Camped at the first creek. No food.
A gentleman from Puget Sound, Oregon stayed with us. Going to meet
his wife from whom he had been absent about three years. An
Indian, also to whom I gave supper. He ate a plate of beans and
one of bread, an apple dumpling, meat &c &c.

11. Powell's daughter [Theresa (Powell) McFadden) was brought into
camp dead. We passed them at noon and inquired for her. They
thought she was a little better. She left a husband and two

children, the youngest a few weeks old. She was confined on the road. [John A.] Powell is a Baptist preacher. In his company are twelve wagons and all connected save two. Bought potatoes and peas of Cayuse Indians (squaws). This tribe dresses like white people

13. Parted into three companies on account of grass being scarce. Are out of danger from Indians now. Two Indians moved with us. One of them showed how he had killed a Snake Indian. His arrow was bloody. Told where he shot him and how he tore off the scalp. I could not help but shudder. We are alone

14. Camped on the Umatilla. Found traders. One old gentleman married to a young squaw. She called at the carriage. I took Helen and visited her wigwam. Also several others. We found a Mr. Johnson from Iowa, Presbyterian preacher. He had been staying by for a few days in order to recruit his cattle and in hopes to hear from his cattle that went of[f] in a stampede with Kinny's. He has a wife and several children Two young women grown appear well (Williams 1984:144).

° Susan Amelia Cranston wrote on August 12-14, 1851:

Tuesday August 12th Cool and pleasant traveled about 16 miles 8 miles was up and down a spurr of the mountains (which is covered with fir and pine and most of the way with very good grass) which brought us to grand round river which at this place is hemmed in by the mountains no grass nearer than one or two miles eight miles over the mountains which is cut by the deep ravines brought us to camp or brought us to a stop for it was dark in the morning we found watter in a deep ravine to our left that was runing a tolerable camp This day we had to climb the hardest hills that we had climbed since we started some had to double teams

Wednesday August 13th Cool and pleasant rained in the night traveled 10 miles and encamped on a small stream called Sus [Lee's] encampment [?] found good grass to the left in the timber The road to day was similar to that of yesterday except but not so hard

Thursday August 14th Cool and pleasant rained in the night traveled 14 miles and encamped on the Eumatilla (Cranston 1984:123-124).

° P. V. Crawford wrote on August 21-24, 1851:

August 21. This day we traveled eleven miles. Where we started the road led us up a very long, very steep, stony hill, hard to climb. It then winds along about one mile to the top of the hill. From here it was hilly with groves of scattering pines for five miles, then down a long, steep, stony hill, to Grande Ronde river. The stream here is about fifty feet wide, with clear water running over a nice pebbly bottom. The valley is very narrow, being only about sufficient for a wagon roadbed. Here we crossed and followed

up the stream four hundred yards to where we begin to climb the Blue mountains. Here we nooned. This afternoon we climbed a very steep hill, to the top of a ridge, distance half mile, then up the ridge one mile and a half, then over a piny ridge, two miles, to where we enter a level branch land heavily timbered with fir and tamarack. Here we camped for the first time in the long-looked-for pine woods of Oregon.

August 22. This day our road has been very rough, first a up a long hill, where we had to double teams, then down a long ridge to a dry branch, then up another long ridge and down a steep hill to another dry branch. Here we had to double teams again, to get onto the next ridge along the side of which we traveled five miles. Here we camped on the ridge and drove down into a deep hollow to water and grass. We had to carry water half a mile up a very steep hill to camp. We are now in the Blue mountains and find it very rough country. Much more so than the Rocky mountains, and our worn-out teams seem to appreciate the difference equal to ourselves.

August 23. This morning our cattle were so badly scattered that we got a late start. Our road was very sidling, rough and stony. The roughest for about five or six miles that we had found on the whole route. At the end of eleven miles we came to a small creek, but there not being sufficient grass here for our teams, we kept on two miles farther, to where we found water and grass plenty. Here we halted for the night. Here we found thick groves of pine and fir timber, interspersed with small prairie. No underbrush, but tall grass under the timber all over the ridges.

August 24. This day we traveled fifteen miles, nine along a dry ridge brought us to where we turn down the mountain toward the Umatilla river. For the last few miles the land is very rich and is covered with groves of scattering pines, to the brow of the hill. The hill is four miles long and tolerably easy to descend. At the foot of the mountain we found a spring, where we halted and nooned. . . (Crawford 1924:162-163).

° Charles A. Brandt wrote on September 3-4, 1851:

September 3d. Traveled 15 miles over very rough road through timber and a very crooked road. Showers all day and night. Camped without water but good grass. Had a distant view of the Mountain Mountains.

September 4. Rained till noon. Passed Indiana train. Roads very muddy and slippery. We came down a hill 4 miles long into Umatilla Valley. From the top of the hill we had a splendid view. Such as Pilgrims to Oregon only are permitted to behold. We could see the snow capped peak of the Blue Mountains far behind us. 29 miles brought us to the foot of the mountains where we camped. It began

to rain. No wood except green cottonwood and we had quite a task of making a fire (Brandt 1851:23-24).

° Elizabeth Wood wrote about September 9, 1851:

As we ascended the high hills upon leaving this delightful valley, we found that the trees which looked like bushes, were of the very largest and tallest growth. Some of them I was told would make 300 rails, and they would, evidently, the best kind of saw logs. A large number Indians followed us here, for the purpose of trading with the emigrants. They will exchange a good pony for a good cow, or give a squaw for a pony! or a pony for \$100. The hills here are all covered with fine timber. Some of them are awful steep, however. We went up one today and it took twenty-two head of cattle to haul up one wagon, and there was not much in the wagon either. Emigrants will therefore see the necessity of kind and careful treatment of their teams at the outset and indeed through the whole of this long journey, to reserve their strength for these difficult places (Wood 1984:177).

° John S. Zieber wrote on September 19-22, 1851:

Friday, September 19--Started late for the Blue Mountains, came in four miles to a creek at the foot of the mountains and then began to ascend. Went ahead pretty fairly and traveled 11-3/4 miles, where we camped near the top of the longest hill we have yet seen. Parts of it are very steep and a smashed wagon lies near the foot of it. A fine stream of water divides us from the next hill; grass has been good and plenty for days. The pine timber brows from 100 to 180 ft. high and our camp fires of dry pine make the cool nights comfortable.

Saturday, September 20--Morning clear and cold. Preparations are going on to go down the hill. I drove a single yoke of oxen to the buggy and made the descent in good style. No accident occurred to any wagon of the train and we passed through the pines and over some of the best farming lands we have seen on the route. We made a dry camp, but the way the light wood fires blazed were very pleasant and cheering. A number of us slept by some large burning knots during the night. Traveled 9½ miles today.

Sunday, September 21--We traveled 13 miles today, 9 miles of which was gone over when we reached Cold Water Creek, where we took supper, and then went the balance of the distance and made a dry camp. The pines grew thicker and taller and the openings presented the most charming views.

Monday, September 22--This day we left the Blue Mountains and really they proved the pleasantest part of our journey. The last descent was a very long one and at the foot we came to a dry creek from which there was a gradual descent to the Umatillah River, about 2 miles distance and on the banks of which we camped, in the

immediate neighborhood of a Nez Perce village and trading post, where there was a little flour at \$18 per 100 lbs. and fresh beef at 10 cts. per lb. The distance traveled was 13½ miles (Zieber 1921:329-330).

° J. A. Powell wrote in his undated diary of 1851:

[Leaving Grande Ronde Valley] up and down a big hill thence into the mountains water on the left half mile three big hills	9 [miles]
from thence to small creek in the mountains	9 [miles]
across the mountains to Utalla river no water	12 [miles]
down the creek forks turn to left	10 [miles]

(Powell 1851)

1852:

° Jared Fox wrote on July 28-30, 1852:

Wednesday 28. Left our train 8 miles behind today and put out for ourselves over the Blue mountains & came up to our friends that travelled Sunday & left us. Camped on Proude river, not good camp. Passed some almost impossible places. Passed one grave. One dead horse, 2 dead oxen. The mountains now at this place are considerably covered with timber as far off as I can see. Saw plenty of Indians today & lots of the best of ponies. Gave an old Indian some dinner & he laid off his hat & returned thanks before he eat to the giver of all good. Sage brush has stepped out now we come to timber & I am right glad. 24 miles in all today.

Thursday 29th. Started & left 27 wagons that past us Sunday. Had a hard road very steep up & down & stony & some stumps today, quite a rarity. Considerable of the trail today has led through thick & tall timber, pine & spruce mostly, very tall & straight. I measured one old one by the side of the road with my rule & it measured 125 feet and was broke off about 6 inches through at top & gone. It was about 2 feet through. We made 17 miles this morning without water or grass, not having taken any expecting to find ½ way but did not. In the afternoon made 3 miles (20) in all today, very hard drive. We found good camp at the left hand 3 miles from creek on a dry creek but we got water in pools. Others found water, some at left hand 2 miles before they come to the creek 90 rods, others at the dry creek 8 miles after they started 160 rods down. We passed 3 graves today, one was marked Mrs. Theresa S. McLaddon died Aug. 11, 1851 aged 22 years. We past one dead ox. The timber today was mostly pine, some spruce & some Fir. Got a few Blue Whortle berries.

Friday 30th. Got a late start, made 13 miles in forenoon, mostly fair road, timber most of the way, mostly Fir, one long hill to get down on to the Umatilla bottom, feed no good. Made 24 miles today Prairie but sandy in afternoon (Fox 1852:43-44).

° E. W. Conyers wrote on August 30-31 and September 1, 1852:

August 30--Monday.--We started on our way this morning at 7 a.m. and traveled up the Grand Ronde River a short distance and commenced the ascent of the Blue Mountains. We came eight miles over a very rough and hilly country and came to the Grand Ronde River again. Here we stopped for lunch. Plenty of wood, but no grass. Very little grass here at any time. After lunch we traveled nine miles up the mountain and camped. We found good water in a deep ravine on our left, standing in pools. We found some little mountain grass on the hillsides. We have had a drizzling rain all day long.

August 31-Tuesday.--The rain continued throughout the whole night. Soon after going into camp two Indians of the Nez Perce tribe visited our camp and, without any invitation, concluded to remain with us all night. They had traded a pony to some emigrant for a steer, and some one had taken the liberty of confiscating the steer for their own use, and these two Indians, who were well armed, were on the hunt for the thieves. We gave them their supper, which seemed to please them very much, and by the way they caused the food to disappear one would think that this was their first meal for a month past. They both had the appetite of a hungry bear. It had the appearance of trying to fill a barrel which had no head in it. They consumed one pint of sugar each with their meal. After supper was over all had to partake of the pipe of peace. Finally, the pipe was passed to Mrs. Burns, who was rather inclined to rebel, never having smoked tobacco, and then the very thought of putting the stem of that old pipe in her mouth was to her worse than taking a dose of castor oil. She gently took her apron and with it wiped the stem of the pipe, and then merely touched the stem to her lips. This act of hers caused a smile to come over the countenance of both Indians, but it seemed to satisfy them. Suffice it to say, we kept a close watch all that night. The Indians were up and off quite early this morning, before breakfast, on the hunt for the emigrant who had stolen their steer. We started this morning at 8 a. m. and traveled nine miles to a creek, where water was standing in pools. Here we stopped for lunch. After lunch we came eight miles and then camped. We found water standing in pools, also very good mountain grass in a deep ravine to our left. It was very steep, and hard getting our cattle in and out of this ravine. Here we found an ox that had been driven into this ravine for grass, but, being too weak to climb the steep hill, the owner had left him behind. We took the ox along with us, calling his name "Lazarus." He took the place of "Old Bill," the ox that we left by the road several days back. We are now near the summit of the Blue Mountains.

September 1--Wednesday.--We started at 7 a. m. and traveled fifteen miles to the foot of the Blue Mountains. There is a fine spring at this camp, but no grass. The Indians have so many ponies herded in this vicinity that they eat the grass clean as they go. At this camp is the principal village of the Cayuse Indians. We traveled on three miles further to the Umatilla River and camped (Conyers 1906:494-495).

° Cornelia A. Sharp wrote on September 3-6, 1852:

Friday, September 3 This day we made some ten or twelve miles. Our road was over the Blue mountains, which were very steep and rugged. We camped in a pine grove. Spring about half a mile from camp; excellent water; good camp; abundance of Oregon grapes. Our camp this night had the appearance of camp meeting. Powell train back on the hill.

Saturday, September 4 To-day we traveled ten or twelve miles over some steep hills. The road was very rough in places, and much encumbered with timber, both laying and standing. Our cattle were driven down a ravine some half-mile to water at noon. Water was carried up the bluff for noon and night. Our camp was in an opening on the mountain. Plenty of grass and wood, but no water. Powell train passed.

Sunday, September 5 This day we traveled some seven or eight miles. The road was rough and dusty to a considerable extent. We camped in an opening in the timber; grass plenty and an excellent spring. This day our hand left us.

Monday, September 6 This day we traveled about twelve miles, which brought us to the valley of the Umatilla . . . (Sharp 1904:184-185).

° John Tully Kerns wrote on September 3-5, 1852:

Friday, September 3--Leaving the Grand Ronde valley, we ascended a very high mountain and traveled eight miles over a stony road, and then descended another steep, long hill to the Grand Ronde river where we nooned. After dinner we ascended another high hill or mountain and traveled two miles and came to a good spring, where we camped for the night. This day's travel has been in the Blue mountains, and so far they have given us a rough passage. A rather amusing occurrence took place today and which also made some fun. It was as follows: James McCoy went off of the road to get some water and got some distance behind and also came in behind six girls who were walking ahead of their train. One of the girls left her company and ran some distance ahead, so far as to exclude her from the sight of the others, and got behind a tree to scare the others as they came up. In the meantime James passed the girls who were behind and came on up to the one behind the tree, and she, hearing his footsteps, supposed it to be the others, and no sooner

did he get up than she let out upon him, crying "Booh!" but no person ever looked worse beat at their own game than did she. Those she had intended to scare had got in sight to witness the fun by the time it came off. 2225 miles.

Saturday, September 4--We traveled seventeen miles through a mountainous, stony and heavy timbered country. The timber consists in pine, fir, cedar, etc., and from the tops of these high peaks adds much to the grandeur of the scenery, being in such dense forests here and there. The weather is very pleasant along here, which makes traveling more agreeable. Our company divided again this morning, leaving Mr. York's company and ours to travel together. Pitched camp on the west fork of Grand Ronde river, called Lee's encampment. We yet have three of the best girls on the road and am not sorry that we got rid of some that we have had along some time. 2242 miles.

Sunday, September 5--Traveled eighteen miles, twelve in the timber and six in prairie, descending the hills into the Umatilla valley and camped on the Umatilla river, near an Indian village (Kerns 1917:182-183).

° Abigail Jane Scott wrote on September 4-6, 1852:

September 4th We came, I think, fourteen miles this day over the principal range of the Blue mountains, traveling all day through a densely timbered region: Eight miles brought us to an opening in the timber, in a range of mountains heading to the north; off to the left and about one fourth of a mile from the road we found good water in a deep ravine; grass was also good and our cattle fared well: We halted at this place for two hours, and then filled our water casks and started on intending if the cattle held out to reach Lee's Encampment nine miles distant; another train was just ahead of ours and my sister and myself wishing to get out of the dust, went ahead of it and walked all the afternoon, thinking that our teams were coming on; we went within one mile of Lee's Encampment when (we) came to good roads and stopped to ride in the wagons when they should overtake us, when we were told that our wagons had encamped two miles back; it was then sun-down and the road back to our camp was through heavy timber, which appears dark in daylight; we started back and met our little sister coming after us on horseback;; We went back all the way in a hard run and just before we reached the camp met a man, who seeing we were disconcerted thought he would have some fun; he told us it was three miles back to the camp, and through the darkest road he ever saw, or heard of; he went on and as we were then about ready to give up with fatigue, we almost concluded to wait till morning among the trees and then find our way back or wait their coming, when we met Father who was more uneasy if possible than we, and who was quite out of patience at our ludicrous mistake at least we considered it ludicrous when we got time to laugh: In running I wore

the soles off my moccasins against the sharp stones, and blistered my feet before I got near the camp

When we got back supper was over, and we found that the cattle (were) doing much better than if they had kept on, water (was) found in a ravine (off) to the left of the road one fourth of a mile from it; Grass was also procured in plenty

September 5th Sabbath day; We came but five miles; about three to Lee's Encampment, a creek which now contains water standing in pools but which at certain seasons of the year is quite a stream; one fourth of a mile to the right of the road is a good spring, We again watered our cattle and came on some two miles further when we found excellent grass in the timber and three hundred yards to the left another spring, with water for the cattle near it; We encamped near the road in a heavy grove of pine

September 6th We traveled about sixteen miles Ten miles was through the timber and four & half over the last part of the mountains to the Umatilla While on the summit of the last mountain we got the first view of the Cascade mountains west of us, while mount Hood reared its snow crowned summit in awful grandeur high above the other mountains and appearing as a stationary white cloud;; (Scott 1986:122-124).

° Rev. Jesse Moreland wrote on September 5-7, 1852:

Sept 5 to[day] worse Road than yesterday O the condition this road places men in this the Sabath & I have never though[t] of it till the children told me after the Sun was down

Sept 6th we traveled on a few miles and camped on a creek in the Blue M at the end of the 14 ms Drive these Ms are covered with timber

Sept 7 we traveled 15 ms come to the Umatilla River camped (Moreland 1852:45-46)

° Samuel Dexter Francis wrote on September 10-13, 1852:

Friday, September 10th We left the Rond and commenced ascending the Blue Mountains, quite a long, steep, and ruff hill, to commence with, and so continued for ten miles up and down untill we arived at Grand Rond River, where we campt.

Saturday, September 11th Again we clime the hills, up and down, sollid roads, but some ruff; rather smo[o]ther today then yesterday. The soil looks good and the handsomest timber I ever saw, most of it pitch pine or a specie of the yellow, some fur, verry strait, tall and some pretty large, but I suppose not a begining to what it is ahead. In the P. M. we continue on up & down the hills as in the A. M. Timber grows larger, roads rather

smo[o]ther. Arive at Lees Encampment ten o'clock at night, making eighteen miles, large at that, I think.

Sunday, September 12th Lay here today.

Monday, September 13th Again we move on, better roads, sm[o]ther, leveler, &c., untill we decend a long hill and come to a spring, fifteen miles. We then drove on to the Umatilla River, five miles further. Stopt and prepared some supper (Francis 1852:105-107).

° Lydia Rudd wrote on September 11-13, 1852:

Sept 11 Traveled fourteen miles to day on the blue mountains climb up and down the highest hills that ever I saw in passing over very steep and rocky nooned on grand ronde river encamped on the top of the mountains to night no water for our stock these mountains are covered with the largest and beautiful timber the yellow pine mixed with the fir

Sept 12 Traveled twenty miles to day over the mountains over rough road encamped on a branch of grand ronde river tolerable camp the mountains to day have been very thickly timbered

Sept 13 Traveled twenty miles to day got through the blue mountains encamped on the Umatilla river near a Indian village bought some peas and corn not much grass (Rudd 1852)

° James Aikin, Jr., wrote on September 17-20, 1852:

Friday, September 17.--Travel 15 miles; cross the Blue Mountains and Grande Ronde River; roughest roads we have ever had; travel through pine timber all day; camp.

Saturday, September 18.--Travel 13 miles through thick timber and rough roads without water; camp on a creek; plenty water and wood; some grass; tie the cattle at night.

Sunday, September 19.--Start at 10 o'clock; travel five miles through the timber; roads better; camp in the timber; some grass, not much water.

Monday, September 20.--Travel 10 miles; good roads to Umatilla River; pass a Kioose (Cayuse) village; camp on the river; grass scarce (Aikin 1909:271-272).

° John McAllister wrote on September 22-24, 1852:

(Sept.) 22 Here the road forks the left taking over the mountain while the right (which is probably most preferable) keeps on the side of mons among the pine & joins the other on top of mons Grant Ronde river after a steep rocky decent this river is about 60 feet wide 8 to 12 inches deep clear water rocky bottom plenty pines

some grass soon after crossing take the mountain the Ascend in a quartering direction A spring right $\frac{1}{2}$ mile in a hollow after crossing 1st mons a very heavy forest of pine, balsam fir & Tamerack no ravine on a flat hollow some grass to left this is a weak vein & does not afford water sufficient for stock drove 4 miles & camped right of road in opening having hauled water from river. plenty good grass & wood.

(Sept.) 23 Cross a hollow & dry rocky ravine North W. ascent steep After going about 2 miles water to the left in a large hollow which is only in pools the hill is somewhat steep pass a redish mound to right & keep mostly on the south west side of a ridge road rocky & sidling in many places to A pool creek which you reach after a long but gradual decent plenty water in holes but little grass drove 2 miles & camped water to left $\frac{3}{4}$ mile plenty grass the forest is composed principally of small pine.

(Sept.) 24 Tolerable road to Umatilla river Mostly down hill a little rocky in places A spring to right in a hollow hard by tolerable grass may be found before reaching foot of mons the timber will get less & less untill it will gradually disappear Foot of Blue Mountains & springs after a very long but gradual decent plenty water but we found no grass mostly decending to the Umatillo river here are many indian wigwarms Road turns to left down river A dry Ravine some bushes on it this is after a little decent. about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile further is a spring to right down under the bluff near the branch of which we camped carried wood & water up bluff a large country for grass but we found none either on account of the many indian ponies grazing on it or a failure. near this place is an indian grave yard. the manner of intering is similar to that of the whites, the head & foot boards are mostly crossed. Also a farm on the river to the right which is fenced with rails or poles

(Sept.) 25 Go down into the river bot. soon which follow for some distance then turn south up a hollow & leave bottom for about 3 miles come to it again after 2 decents strike timber soon & cross apart of Umatillo river 20 feet wide nearly north for a short distance to Crossing of Umatillo river 6 or 8 inches deep 20 feet wide no grass to be found an abundance of balm of Giliad. here we water stock & supplied our water vessels & took in a little wood. keep near the river till The road leaves the river & ascends the bluff plenty dry grass partly up bluff camped here

(Sept.) 26 Sunday Top of bluff it is about 3 miles more to the highest part of it but the ascent is very gradual. tolerable road to joining of Umatillo river plenty bunch grass on bluff about $1\frac{1}{2}$ from river plenty fuel. Camped here

(Sept.) 27 Laid by $\frac{1}{2}$ day Road turns to right down the river crosses a ridge before reaching second crossing of Umatillo river & the Agency the road crosses the bed of river which is dry. the

water having sunk just above a few paces wood plenty & grass down the river & also on the bluff North of river A framed house after crossing or the Agency--where are generally keep flour Beef Sugar, Coffee Tea & such things as are needed by emigrants to sell. Also tradrs in cattle horses &c. to obtain the weak lamed exhausted or well stock of emigrants at the above house is a good well &c watered & took in water traveled 2 miles over heavy sand & camped left of road. plenty grass & dry wormwood (McAllister 1925:502-503)

° Martha S. Read wrote on September 21-23, 1852:

Tues Sept 21 Here we commence climbing the Blue Mountains. After traveling ten miles farther we came to Grand Round River. We traveled 6 miles farther. Had to camp without water. Found hard hills to day and very stony. Saw 5 graves and 5 dead cattle. The weather cold and rainy.

Wedns Sept 22 Traveled 12 miles. Started in the morning without our breakfast, went about 3 miles to water, stopt and got breakfast and then went on about 7 miles to a creek. Found no feed. Watered our teams and took on some water to cook with and went on about two miles to find feed. Found a rough hilly road again to day. Saw 3 graves and 9 dead cattle. Weather cold so that we suffer with the cold a riding. Lydia and I have got pretty [unreadable] but not able to walk.

Thurs Sept 23 Traveled 20 miles. After traveling 18 miles we left the mountains came into the valley. The mountains are 40 miles and they are blue ones indeed. They are covered with large pine timber, the first timber we have seen since we left the Platte River of any account. This valley we came into is on the Umitilla River (Read 1986:245).

° John Newton Lewis wrote on September 25-October 1, 1852:

sep 25th . . . we left the valey and sloley assended the Mountain for 3 M. then we decended for 1 m. to the Grand Round River here we encamped about dark this is a beautiful stream about 50 feet wide and 2 feete deepe of clear cold water good grass 2 m. from camp and (hi you) wood

sep 26th this morning there was some of the train sick but we made a late start and traveld 10 m. and encamped on the North side of a the rode water ½ m. south of the rode in one of the d. m. canions out of Iole, the grass is like hen teeth the timber is very thick and tall pine and fur som little hemlock and cedar thare was an ox killed last night by a bere

sep 27th Mrs. Nordyke died about daylight an she was buried about 10 oc and we remaind in camp until the 28th

sep 28th this day we advanced about 1 m. and encamped good grass
½ m. from the rode. rough rode and thick timber

sep 29th This day we advanced about 8 m. and encamped on a little
branch the rode is some better today we daly passed one or less
fragments of wagons this day we past 2 good wagons this was not a
pleasant day by no means it rained haild snowed and blowed and upon
the hol it was rather disagreeable but all for Oregon this day we
found some red and white clover and some timothy we also found
some squirrels but they are of the pine squirrels about half as big as
the gray squirrel in the states and of a brownish color we daily
hear the complints of the sufring emigrants

sep 30th this day we traveld 8 m. and encamped at the pine springs
the timber is more scattern this is a cold wet disagreeable day
the hail fell until the ground was white we past severl good
wagons

October 1st this day we traveld 10 m 6 m. brot us to the sumit of
the last range of the blew Mountains this is a very high point and
gives us a view of the surounding country the Umatila River and
its beautiful valey is in our view the wind blowed here very hard
and it was not very pleasant but we decended to the valey here it
was warm and plesant here is a beautiful valey watered by the
Umatila River . . . (Lewis 1852:29-30).

° Cecelia Adams and Parthenia Blank wrote on October 4-8, 1852:

[October] 4th Mon. This morning got a late start and commenced
climbing again -- very steep hill to start with about a mile long.
then had hills to ascend and descend all day, many of them steep.
About night found a place where we could find some standing water
about ½ mile from the road, down a very steep hill all the way --
poor stuff but it was the best we could do. Camped and turned our
cattle out to grass but did not drive them down to water as it was
almost dark. Plenty of pine Today saw two very small black
squirrels 15 m

5th Tues Staid till near noon and let our cattle feed The grass
is very good and quite fresh in many places among the pines. We
find Pine, Spruce, Tamarack and Fir here -- Mr Millers co. from
Iowa are here entirely out of flour. Have some loose cattle which
they kill now and then for food. Traded them some flour for beef,
sold them some and lent them some to be repaid at the Dalles. Hard
times. many cattle are failing and all are very poor and a good
many get lost among the thick timber. A good many wagons are left,
some broken and some good and sound because the cattle are not able
to take them along. So much good pine here they do not burn them.
The general appearance of the country is altogether changed. The
soil even on the mountains is quite good and in the valleys it is
excellent. In many places the road has to twist round a good deal
among the trees. Traveled on about 7 miles on a mountain ridge

sometimes on one side sometimes on the other. pretty sideling in places -- Do not have to rise and fall as many notes as common to day begin to hope we are getting out of the mounts. Camped on mount. A good spring about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile off down at the foot of mount. Timber very thick to day. Good grass - 7 m

[October] 6th Wed. Concluded to rest to day and recruit our cattle as we have good feed and they have a hard pull of it for the last 4 days -- Spent the day in cooking and hunting for cattle lost in the brush as a great many have been lost here.

7th Thurs. To day staid till about noon and then started on about 6 miles to another spring still in the thick timber very thick. Find plenty of good grass all the way 6

[October] 8th Friday -- Started for the Umatilla river. Road slightly descending nearly all the way and in some places steep. At last came in sight of the valley covered entirely with dry grass except a small skirt of timber along the river -- and literally dotted with indian ponies -- and cattle. Commenced the descent into the valley very gradual. said to be five miles down hill. Dont think is was much overrated (Adams and Blank 1986:303-304).

° Dr. Thomas White, an emigrant of 1852, wrote on April 19, 1853:

. . . soon after descend the Blue mountains (which took us 3 days to cross and in this mountain I was again called on to perform the duties of obstetritian & the Lady done well as did the one on Lost river) we come to the Umatilla River. this is a pritty vally & wil some day be occupied by a good settlement of white men, altho at present, there are lots of Indians there (White 1964:18-19).

1853:

° Orange Gaylord wrote on August 2-4, 1853:

August 2. Left Grand Ronde and commenced the ascent of the Blue Mountains.

August 4. Nooned in the Umatilla Valley at the big spring (Gaylord 1920:433).

° Henry Allyn wrote on August 14-16, 1853:

August 14, Sunday--Most of the ox teams lay by at the west side of the valley to cross the Blue Mountains, a 10-mile drive to the Grand Ronde River in the mountains, and as we had a 20-mile drive to make without water the next day, we drove till after sundown to reach the river. Found the best of grass and encamped in a pine grove, it being the first time that we have camped in the timber for 1,500 miles. Though some ox teams started ahead of us at noon, we passed them and encamped about 3 miles beyond. Traveled 23 miles.

August 15, Monday--Elizabeth and father still quite unwell. We climb a mountain about 3 miles to the summit and the balance of the day we have it rough and tumble. We noon on the mountain and take our mules down into a doleful cavern and found a little grass and water, the pines growing as though they intend to tower above those on the mountains. So by locking and unlocking each wagon about fifty times and tumbling and sideling on till dark we found water, but no grass, except very scattering among the thick pine. We let loose our horses and mules and let them drive as there was no spots of grass big enough. Traveled 20 miles.

August 16, Tuesday--John and I go out to hunt the mules and kill four mountain squirrels. Find the mules in good time. Father is better and Elizabeth weaker. We jog on 15 miles over comparatively smooth road, though we descend the Blue Mountains about 3 miles in one stretch. We encamp on a little branch by a balm Gilead grove and about 2 o'clock strike camp for the balance of the day (Allyn 1024:428).

° Amelia Stewart Knight wrote on August 18-23, 1853:

18th Thursday Morn Commenced the ascent of the Blue Mountains it is a lovely morning, and all hands seem to be delighted with the prospect, of being so near the timber again, after weary months of travel, on the dry dusty sage plains, with nothing to relieve the eye; just now the men are holloing, to hear their echo ring through the woods. -- Evening travel 10 miles to day up and down steep hills, and have just camped on the bank of Grand round river, in a dense forest of pine Timber, a most beautiful country;

19th Friday quite cold morning, water froze over in the buckets; travel 13 miles, over very bad roads, without water after looking in vain for water, we were about to give up as it was near night, when husband came across a company of friendly Kayuse Indians about to camp who showed him where to find water, half a mile down a steep mountain, and we have all camped together, with plenty of pine timber all around us. the men and boys have driven the cattle down to water and I am waiting for water to get supper, this forenoon we bought a few potatoes of an Indian, which will be a treat for our supper.

20th Saturday, Cold all day, came 11 miles, and camp about two o'clock, in a pine and fir forest close to a small stream of poor water, grass very scarce, 15 miles more and we will leave the blue mountains.

21st Sunday morn Cold, after a great deal of trouble to find all our cattle, we got started about 11 o'clock and travel 4 miles then stopped to noon, not far from a spring, then travel 3 or 4 miles and turned out to let the cattle feed an hour feed very scarce, Evening we are descending a long mountain it is nearly dark came 12 miles, and still traveling

22nd Monday morning, I began to think last night we would never get to the foot of the mountain it was 4 miles long, however we came into camp after nine o'clock at night and find ourselves in the Umahtilah Valley, a warmer climate, more like summer, no feed for the poor stock, we are now traveling on the Nez perces plains, warm weather and very dusty, came 12 miles and camp at a spring $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from the Umahtilah river, grass all dead but the stock eat it greedy for fuel willows and some little sage brush.

23rd Tuesday very warm, grass all dead, the dust is worse than ever to day. I can hardly see the tongue [tongue] cattle (Knight 1986:66-67)

° Charlotte Stearns Pengra wrote on August 24-26, 1853:

Wednesday [August] 24th Traveled 5 miles farther in the Valley then struck the Mountains and traveled ten miles before we reached water, we then struck Grand Rounde River a small stream of good water where we encamped for the rest of the day. The road has been very mountainous and rocky hard riding or walking Stella is still sick I have packed her and she seems better, the rest of the afternoon I spent in cooking and washing - am very tired.

Thursday [August] 25th Have traveled 18 miles over the mountains and stones, have had the pleasure of excellent shade most of the way as we have had much of the time since striking the mountains, they are finely timbered with Fir Pine and Hemlock many of the trees would measure from 150 to 160 feet in height, are encamped at Lees encampment have but little grass and little water. Sis is

still sick had much fever and though I kept cold bandages on her I cannot subdue it

Friday [August] 26th Have had pretty good roads for the last fifteen miles on the mountains though we descended a long one to the valley, it was not very bad, are encamped at the foot of the Mountain at a Spring have but little grass. Stella is quite sick and so is Bynon. I have packed her and he has been bathed and bandaged for the night. things look rather discouraging (Pengra 1966:54-55).

° Catherine Amanda Stansbury Washburn wrote on August 26-30, 1853:

Fryday [August] 25 [26] traveled 8 miles to a spring and camped lost one of our oxen

Saturday [August] 26 [27] started down the Blue Mountains we struck some steep hills about noon we found a murdered man in a pine grove his pockets were rifeled and he was shot through the head we buried him as well as circumstances would admit of we found his poney tyed to a tree camped on grand river

Sunday [August] 28 it is misty to day we pased some very thick timber went up a dreadful hill camped on a hill found a litle water half a mile of[f]

Monday [August] 29 pased through some thick timber went ten miles and came to Lees encampment watered our cattle and went 4 miles to a spring of good cold water but not enough for the stock the boys that stayed behind with some sick horses came up with us to night

Tuesday [August] 30 traveled 7 miles without water discended a steep hill came in sight of the Umatila River camped on a spring branch by a Indian garden they had some good corn and potatoes we bought some for supper it rained last night left the Blue Mountains (Washburn 1967:27-28).

° John or David Dinwiddie wrote on August 29-30, 1853:

Monday [August] 29th Ascended the mountain which was long and steep, some places rocky, passed through fine pine timber. Near the top of the first mountain passed a grave of a man that was found murdered on the 27th August, he had been shot near the right eye the ball coming out of the back of the head--by the description given on a paper put upon a tree, it is supposed that he was coming from Oregon to meet some of his friends. His horse was found about three hundred yards from where he was lying. After passing the summit descended into a valley had a steep descent, passed over a ravine and then ascended a very steep hard mountain, it is covered with large lofty pines . . .

Tuesday [August] 30th This morning after crossing the stream ascended a long and tedious ascent, we now traveled alternately through pine groves and over rocky ridges. After coming about eight or nine miles ascended a very steep ascent, we are now upon the main ridge of the blue mountains, Altitude 5400 feet, I presume these mountains take their name from their dark blue appearance being densely timbered with pine timber, which being ever green gives the forest a sombre appearance, besides the limbs of the trees are all draped with long festoons of dark coloured moss or mistletoe. Fire on some of the mountains. We have a rough road today, about eleven miles from the river. There is water to the left of the road, the water is reached by following down a ravine to the left one fourth of a mile, at the place, is a low rocky ridge on the right of the road, on the left is a small opening. About nine miles brought us what is called Lees encampment, the Rev. Jason Lee after spending some time as a missionary in Oregon, started for the states but was detained some time by some accident which I cannot relate [No diary entry for August 31.] (Dinwiddie 1928:12)

° George Belshaw wrote on September 2-4, 1853:

Friday Sep 2 Drove 11 miles from here [Grande Ronde Valley] we ascended a very hard long steep stoney hill and passed over rough road 8 miles and came to another steep but short hill and in 2 miles more we reached a Branch of the grand round river 2 rods wide 2 feet deep good water good Camping I crossed over and Campd on the other side and drove my stock away up the hill on the bunch grass very good - over on the north side near a bunch of pines and good grass 1 mile south and some up the river I see the grave of a man that was shot a few days ago not known by -

Saturday [September] 3 Drove 19 miles from grand round river to a branch of the same is 18 miles the hardest drive that my team has had on the whole Journey I will describe it In 3 miles we passed down some very steep hills and crooked road and 3 miles more brought us up the steepest hill yet on the whole route and 12 more hilly rough road we came to a small branch of grand round river some grass but it is amongst the pines that make it bad with a large drove of stock, I watered my stock and drove 1 mile and Campd on the right hand side road 7 rods tollerable grass as in the timber. The last days journey some guides say there is water 8 miles from the branch a mile from the road in pools. But I recommend starting very early in the morning from grand round river and you will get through before night. This is the roughest road in the blue mountains.

Sunday [September] 4 Drove 15 miles very good road. From the small branch of grand round river it is 3 miles to a spring about 20 rods from the road to your right hand in a revien the first that has most all furs in it not much grass. 9 miles more over good roads we came to the top of the last blue mountain and in site of

Umatilla Valey and river and 3 miles decending down brought us to the foot of it the longest hill I ever saw but not bad to go down I campt at the spring below . . . (Belshaw 1960:45-46).

° Maria Parsons Belshaw wrote on September 2-4, 1853:

September 2nd. Commenced climbing the Blue Mountains this morning. It has been go up and go down. Such hills as never were viewed by us poor mortals before, or such beautiful tall straight pine trees from one hundred to one hundred and fifty feet high, from 1 to 3 feet thick. Saw 8 graves, on one it was said "found dead his horse near him the man was shot through the head" saw 19 dead cattle. Crossed Grande Ronde River, camped on bank the sick better. Traveled 12 miles.

September 3rd. Still we are climbing the mountain, but met yesterday one very long and steep [road] coming out of Grande River bottom. I never saw as crooked a road in my life. It was Gee and Haw both at once to keep off of trees. Some of the trees are rubbed one third of the thickness through by the wagon hubs, heavy tall pine and fir. No water through our travels to-day until night. Saw 5 graves, 8 dead cattle. Camped in opening on Rain Water Creek, 6 feet wide 1 deep. Still raining. Commenced on Tuesday. Traveled 20 miles.

September 4th Sabbath Day.

Road much better today, timber not so thick, it looks like the thick woods in Michigan, Road more level, not so crooked. Struck Umatilla Hill, it is 3 miles from the top to the bottom then we reached Umatilla Valley. It looks very pleasant . . . (Belshaw 1932:242).

° Sarah (Sally) Perkins wrote on September 3-4, 1853:

September 3. 20 miles rough and hilly rained all day and nite very cold

September 4. cool day 18 miles better roads got over the blue mountains camped on umatily river Bunch grass & water (Perkins 1986:147)

° Basil Longworth wrote on September 4-7, 1853:

Sunday [September] the 4th. This morning we yoked our cattle (many of us not remembering the Lord's Day) and commenced the ascent of the mountain which was two miles to its summit and perhaps at an elevation of eight or ten hundred feet above the valley we had just left. We then had a good road for three miles and then passed down a long steep hill to a dry creek. We then ascended a very steep hill for half a mile, then descended a hill to a ravine and in a little distance camped near Grande Ronde River. We drove our

cattle half a mile up the hill to the left of a prairie covered with good bunch grass.

[September] 5th. We crossed the river and ascended a long but not difficult hill. We traveled through a heavy forest of pine timber and many beautiful sites for splendid rural dwellings and rich farms. This day we traveled ten miles, much of the road being very rough with many short turns in order to avoid timber, and camped by the road side with a little water far down to our left in a deep hollow. This evening seven young men from the Mason Company came to our camp. They had purchased three ponies and were packing through. They left their employers in friendship, as many of their cattle had died and they left a number of their wagons.

[September] 6th. We drove ten miles to Lee's encampment. This day the road was very stony and rough but not mountainous and in many places the ground was poor. For the last seven days' travel most of the land has a rich soil and in one day will be a densely populated community. I have not seen as much good timber since I left Ohio as I saw last week. While on Powder River Mr. Conoyer left a wagon. Mr. Edwards left one at Grande Ronde and Mr. Crow left one thirty miles in the Blue Mountains on account of the loss of many of their cattle.

[September] 7th. After considerable difficulty in herding and finding cattle which had wandered among the timber all were secured and we started for the Umatilla Valley. The road for some miles was rough and then good until we came to a hill which leads down to the valley and which is three miles long and perhaps descends two thousand feet in perpendicular height. We made fifteen miles and camped in good time in the Valley with good grass on the left of the road (Longworth 1959:54-55).

° Elizabeth Julia Goltra wrote on September 5-8, 1853:

Monday [September] 5th. Started this morning up a long hill and down hill and over hills and a rough road to Grand Round River 12 miles, camped here in a beautiful grove of pine and fir timber.

Tuesday [September] 6th. Left camp early this morning for a hard days drive to Lees Encampment 21 miles over a rough road through heavy timber, this is the first drive through timber all day since left the states, reached Lees Encampment at dark, turned the cattle out in thickets again.

Wednesday [September] 7th. This morning could not find all our cattle, concluded to lay by today, found them about 10 o'clock, after dinner drove about half a mile to better water and camped for the night.

Thursday [September] 8th. Another hard drive over mountains and through timber again, found a good spring & miles from camp, late

in the afternoon brought us to some springs at the foot of the mountains here, we camped, drove 15 miles today (Goltra 1970:25-26).

° Celinda Hines wrote on September 6-9, 1853:

[September] 6th Tuesday Pleasant. Remained in camp till noon The men [unreadable] wagon boxes [unreadable] wagon & ours & lightened loads as much as possible Uncles bought each of them a horse with their saddles One woman wished me to swap a gold ring for an old brass thimble We went on after noon The road was very hilly. The hills covered with timber First Pines & a little spruce. The trees are some distance apart The ground covered with a little grass & rose bushes &c. Went 8 miles & camped in a ravine. Very lonesome Mr Miner left on foot

[September 7] Wednesday [unreadable] Cool breeze every after noon [unreadable] very delightful with the exception of being hilly The road was smooth & nice The forest beautiful. The ground is covered with grass. The trees are far apart Often large places entirely devoid of them. Frequently small patch of little trees nearly of a size looking very beautiful. Our night camp was on an open space covered with little stones & some grass. There was no water but we had come prepared for our noon camp which [unreadable] [in margin:] we being alone sounded very lonesome

8 Sept. Thursday Pleasant Went twelve miles without water. Road bad. Very hilly & in some places stony. Forest more interesting Sometimes the road was very bad winding around trees &c. Camped at night at Lee's Encampment. Ritchie's train near. Mr. Bailey one of the men who was with Mr. Leonard came on says Mr. L is going through on foot as are many others We have lost 4 oxen in all up to this time

[September] 9th Friday Pleasant. Some part of the way the road was good but hilly but much better than yesterday. Went 17 miles without water Had no dinner. Before night we came out of timber & were on hills covered with bunch grass Came on to the Umatilla valley & camped on a branch of that river Several trains were near also a trading post (Hines 1986:120-121)

° George N. Taylor wrote on September 11-14, 1853:

Sept 11 Went ten miles over Mountains and rocky roads and Camped on grand ronde River here grass was Scarce wood and dead Cattle In Large quantities

Sept 12th Went twelve miles and made A dry Camp nine miles from Grand rond River you Come up A very Steep hill where there is Logs to keep the wagons from upsetting after you get up this hill you Come Into An Open Glade of timber to the Left of this Opening in the ravine you will find water Standing in Pools In A dry run the

Same you Cross at the Steep hill Very Little grass In this Part of the Mountain

Sept 13th Went ten miles and Camped on A Branch of rond River Plenty of Grass to the right of the Road in The Timber Water In A Branch to the Left of the road In A run nights rather Cool for Comfort Weather rather Cool A greater Portion of the time

Sept 14th Went twenty miles and Camped at the foot of the Blue Mts roads very the descent of the mountain is Steep but not Sideling In the Evening there was Plenty of Indians About the Camp In the Evening It rained Considerable grass very good Mountain Scenery since the Brow of the Blue MOUNTAIN is Beautiful giveing A View of A vast range of Country (Taylor 1853:24-25)

° Samuel Handsaker wrote on September 14-16, 1853:

[September] 14th After leaving this valley [of the Grande Ronde] which is eight miles wide, we ascend the Blue mountains which are covered with pine. The roads thus far in the mountains have been very hilly. We have driven 11 miles today, and find poor camping, no water, and but little grass.

[September] 15th It commenced to rain this morning at two o'clock, and has continued with short intervals all day, occasionally giving us a small shower of hail. We completed our day's drive by one p. m.

[September] 16th The weather still continues wet and cold. Roads good, with the exception of being slippery. We are now out of the Blue mountains The descent from these mountains is four miles long, and steep that it is necessary to lock both the hind wheels of our wagons, most of the way down. At the foot lies Umatillah valley, and a fine stream bearing the same name. The soil in this valley is rich, but it is used for no other purpose than pasturage (Handsaker 1965:30).

° George Miller West, an emigrant of 1853, later recalled:

We leave the valley and would be bride [a Cayuse girl]. We climb the mountain over a very rough and steep road and camp for the night in the timber. I am on guard duty here. The stock get stampeded and I don't get to camp until away after sunrise but have all the stock. I forget who was on guard with me but shall never forget the trouble and horror of that long night.

We are crossing the Umatilla and Blue Mountains and as we come out of the timber on the western slope, a beautiful vision is before us. Nearly as far as the eye can see is spread before us a Valley clothed in green with innumerable bands of Indian or Ciyuse horses of all colors but white predominates. At the foot of the mountain lies the Umatilla River like a thread of silver and in the distance

to the north can be seen a portion of Snake River, like a ribbon of silver winding its way to the Pacific Ocean (West n.d.:11-12).

1854:

- ° Sylvanus Condit wrote on August 23-24, 1854:

August 23 Traveled 19 miles over the mountains without water, camp without water except the rain, good feed.

August 24 Traveled 16 [miles], camp by a spring at foot of hill in the Umatilla valley wood and feed not very good (Condit, S. 1854)

- ° Philip Condit wrote on August 23-25, 1854:

Wednesday Aug. 23 We went over mts hills through rivers and prairie 20 miles to Pine creek a small stream in the Blue mts. Rained here in the evening Eat cold chuck and went to bed. The old Bounce dog did not get to camp tonight. We saw him follow a man.

Thursday Aug. 25 Traveled 8 miles to water on Umatilla and dine and went 7 miles to McCoy's camp on the river where the road leaves the river for 16 miles. Road tolerably good today (Condit, P. 1854).

- ° Elizabeth Austin wrote on September 5-7, 1854:

Tuesday, Sept. 5th Today we traveled 12 miles over the mountains and through the rain; stopped at Grand Ronde River -- a beautiful place surrounded by pine trees. It rained all night last night.

Wednesday, Sept. 6th We traveled today 20 miles over very bad roads. We met the soldiers who were going back to fight the Indians. I was very lame at night when we stopped walking.

Thursday, Sept. 7th Today we traveled 15 miles, which brought us to the Umatilla Valley. We camped at the foot of the mountains . . . (Goodell and Austin 1988:124).

1861:

- ° John Crawford wrote on September 20-22, 1861:

Sept. 20 Friday Grand Ronde With our stock of Provisions replenished we started this morning at 12 up along steep hill staking a new road to the left of the old trail passed over a succession of assents & decents & over a very stony road 9 miles to Grand Rond river, beautiful camp in timber plenty of grass

Sept. 21 Saturday Grand Rond River Started at 7 up a steep hill & over very rough & hilly road through heavy timber several bad

hills to go up 18 miles to Lees Encampment, passing a spring top of hill 8 miles Camped at 6 18 miles grass scarce & in timber

Sept. 22 Sunday Lees Encampment Started at 7 road very fine & gently decending at times through heavy timber passed the first house seen in many weeks -- camped on the Umatilla River at 3 distance 16 m . . . (Crawford 1861).

1862:

° E. S. McComas wrote on October 1-4, 1862:

Oct. 1st. 1862. Last night it snowed on the mountain. Drove 11 m.

[October] 2d. Drove 5 m. beforenoon. Here we took the new road to Ft. Dalles. Crossed Grand Ronde River 16 times.

[October] 3[d]. Come to where we crossed and followed up Boulder Creek. Crossed this 27 times. Camped at the last crossing. Here we heard our cattle going off in the night. We thought they were being drove off, armed ourselves and went after them but found it a false alarm.

[October] 4th. Snowed on us last night. Drove 20 miles through a cold rain. Got to the foot of the mountains.

[October] 5th. Drove to Birch Creek, 5 m. Still snowing and raining. Today I seen the first corn I have seen growing since I left home. Drove 8 m., made a dry camp (McComas 1954:26).

1863:

°James L. Bailey wrote on September 25-October 1, 1863:

September 25 We made but a short stay in grand Round, but had our teams jogging along the valley over a very good road in the direction of Lay Grand, a small town on the south west side of the valley Here we made but a short stay and then took to the mountains & in ten miles camped

September 26 As it rained last night the hill sides were slippery and hard on our teams in going down hills over the rocky roads in 4 miles we arived at the Grand Round River following it up 9 or 10 miles camped in a dismal place crossing it 10 times

September 27 Today we followed up the river about 5 miles farther & crossed it 7 times, and then left the river, baring to the rite, crossed a little in 2 miles also pased Dailys ranch a little further up & 7 miles farther camped in a deep kenion Broke a wagon tung

September 28 It has rained all day to day and as we had to make a waggon tong this morning did not go far But was ancious to get out of this dismal kenion as feed was poor and carce. and in a fiew miles broke one of the irons of off the tong. made 7 miles and a good fire in a fiew moments to dry ourselves

September 29 To day we made about 20 miles In 5 or 6 miles we arrived at the sumit of the Blue Mountains, here we had a beautiful view of the surrounding country for many miles in every direction, a long teagious decent to berch creek after ariveing at the sumit

September 30 As our horses gave us the slip last night we were obliged to lay over today and hunt them & found them about noon

October 1 To day we had a long drive of 25 miles to make without water over a very hilly country but the roads were hard & good traveling otherwise. As we had a very late start we did not arrive at Butter Creek untill late at night (Bailey 1863).

1864:

° E. S. McComas, a resident of La Grande, wrote on January 1, 1864:

Another New Year has been ushered in and a year full of important events to the American people. This new year finds me in the flourishing little village of La Grande in Grand Ronde Valley, Oregon within fifty miles of where I was in the beginning of 1863. I have been fortunate in having good health yet. I have not made much money yet. Try try again shall be my motto. New Years Day I went about ten miles to watch some hay stacks to keep the cattle from destroying them. Took some grub and blankets and stayed all night. Rained nearly all night and I got wet and toward morning it turned cold and commenced to snow. I got get during the night & in the morning my clothes froze stiff and I had barely enough wood to boil my coffee. So to sum it all up the commencement of 1864 set in with indications of being rather ruff (McComas 1954:35).

° Harriet A. Loughary wrote on August 12-15, 1864:

[August 11] . . . We leave this place [LaGrande] after dinner, climbing a steep hill a mile in length, take the old emmigrant road to Grand Ronde river and camp for the night.

Aug 13 We are now climbing the Blue Mountains, winding around, and climbing up craggy peaks and narrow passes to deep ravines made dark and sunless by the heavy growth of tall cedar, fir and laurels. But beautiful as it seems, we hasten through it for no grass grows in these mountains, and grass is the chief commodity in demand every day.

Aug 14 This is too nice a place to leave on a Sabbath morning, but we leave it and travel over the same kind of roads and scenery as

yesterday, until we come to a long divide which is covered with huckleberries. All halt and fill our wagons full of the bushes loaded with the best of blue huckleberries. Go on to Lees encampment, a catchpenny ranch out in these mountains, where emigrants wont have feed for themselves and bests, no matter at what the price may be. Panthers and wolves made the night hideous with their screaming. To ward them off we kept fires burning all night.

Aug 15 Start at sunrise going down grade all day reaching the Umatilla valley at night. This is a place where is an Indian Agency, and a large reserve set off by the Government for the Umatilla tribe of Indians (Loughary 1989:156-157).

° Mary Louisa Black wrote on September 10-15, 1864:

[September] 10th We passed by Ringo yesterday evening came 8 mile to this camp. got supper after night. it is raining this morning. we are in the valey skirted by snow crested pine covered mountains. we are noonin on the summit of the Blue moun[tains] we have been coming up all the forenoon. the horses are very tired. drizzling all the time too we travailed till late through a cold rain. stoped close to a deserted store house I cooked supper in it. Tilla is very sick (Black 1990:78).

[September] 11th Late in the evening. Encamped again in the Blue Mt. rained all day. The road has been hills all the time. They say we will have better roads from here to the Landing. we have good grass for the cattle.

[September] 12 They are stopping to trade for some beef. The roads have been fine since we left the Daily ranch at the foot of the Mt. some men at the quartz mill gave John a fine hound that some emigrants had left at the house just before we came to this a fox hunter had a mate for him, and offered John a sack of flour 50 lbs for him worth here \$6.50. John sold it to Mr Durham for \$5. intends taking it in horse feed. it looks almost like a miracle.

[September] 13th 14th 15th Morning we laid bye here yesterday, at the junction of Daily and Grand Rond road on account of Liza Durhams being to sick to travail. Jackson, Ringo, & some of our friends of Kirks Train we had not seen since we left are camped with us. Thompson passed bye yesterday morning. The name of the creek is Birch creek. Tilla has been very sick for several days, which has gave me such a press of work I have not had time to write (Black 1990:78).

° Elizabeth Lee Porter wrote on September 25-27, 1864:

Sunday, September 25. Rained last night. Camped by the Blue Mountians last night at a little place called Oradell [Orodell].

Crossed one range of mountains. Road wet and slippery. Only came seven miles today.

Monday, 26. Raining and some snow today. Considerable snow on top of mountains. Come about 16 miles across the summit. 15 miles yet to valley.

Tuesday--27. Big frost and lots of ice. Rose sick all night but better this morning. Came in sight of valley and camped for night. Beautiful road today (Porter 1990:31).

° Philura Vandenburgh Clinkinbeard, an emigrant of 1864, later recalled:

When we were leaving the Grande Ronde, Florence and I as we so often did were running ahead of the wagons as they climbed the bluff. Lying in the road, we found a pistol. We were looking at the queer little one-shot weapon to see if it was loaded when suddenly we heard rifle shots, and bullets began singing over our heads. Sure that someone was shooting at us, we scurried behind some big boulders and remained hidden, thoroughly frightened, until the wagons reached us. Father told us some men were having rifle practice and had been careless enough to shoot toward the road. "It wasn't very decent of them," I said. "They'd kill us just as dead as if they shot at us."

Here we passed Indian camps and rank-smelling places they were. The tanning deerskins, the drying meat, the piles of dried fish, the careless disposal of refuse, all in all their camps were not pleasant places. Even long-deserted camps where the floors of the lodges were grass-grown retained the odor. We children insisted that we could smell an Indian camp a mile (Clinkinbeard 1952:88).

1866:

° S. B. Eakin, Jr., wrote on August 7-9, 1866:

August 7 . . . After about an hour's stop we proceeded about two or three miles west of the village [of La Grande] and camped for noon on Grand Round River, at the crossing. Here three boys of our train took their leave of us. Jackson was one of them. We gave him leave to go if he wished. After about an hour's nooning we crossed the river on a bridge and took to our left.

There are three roads across the Blue Mountains. We chose the middle, or what is known as the "Mecham" road. Roads miserable. In a very deep canyon all the afternoon. Quite a little stream of water in the canyon. Camped in the canyon for the night, very near the top of the mountain, close by an old house, but not occupied. Found good grass about a mile north of camp, on the top of a high mountain. No timber on it. The grass is more than we expected; and it is a sight for our eyes to behold the timber, it is so long

since we have seen any. These mountains are covered with a dense forest of timber, - pine and fir.

August 8 Marching as usual. Roads very rough. Traveled all day on the top of the mountains. Road hilly. Camped at about 4 o'clock on the top of the mountains on the extreme west. A spring close up to camp. We are now through the timber and can see around us. Umatilla River is in sight. It lays north of us running west. Mount Hood directly west; also the Three Sisters; all in the Cascades. We are now very high up on the mountains.

August 9 On the move as usual, arriving at Crawford's Station in an hour's drive. Descended the Blue Mountains and found them awful steep. From the time we left camp until we reached Crawford's Station we kept our brakes on so that the hind wheels slide all the way and sometimes the mules holding back their best. After leaving Crawford's Station we took the left hand road, taking a southeasterly direction. Camped early on McKay Creek (Eakin 1970:25-26).

1880:

° Frank Stevens crossed from Somerville to Walla Walla and wrote on July 13-14, 1880:

Tuesday, July 13th: Crossing the Blue Mts. Started in good season and commenced to ascend the mts. Soon came to a place where we had to double up and pull up a steep hill, which was about 3 miles to the top, then down a little and up a great deal more. (Camped for dinner in a canyon). In this way we have made 20 miles today and are not to the summit yet, but camped tonight in a little glade on the mt. side. Have been traveling all day through the heaviest and nicest timber I ever saw in my life, and as far as the eye can reach there is one continued forest of evergreen timber. John Goldsby and myself were traveling on foot ahead of the wagons, and were a little over a quarter of a mile from them, when we heard the brush crack and we looked in that direction and saw a large cinnamon bear only about 20 or 30 yds. away from us. It was at the foot of a large fir tree, and seemed to be so busy a rooting around the tree that he did not see us, and we could not see his head. We were unarmed and thought we did not wish to encounter him in such a way, so we retreated in good order back to the wagons and all hands took their rifles and went to the place where we saw him, but Bruin had taken the hint and peeled out. There is a great many of them in these mts. and they say the cinnamon is next to the grizzly in being savage. (Quite an accident occurred, which was very laughable. When we went back and told them at the wagons what we had seen, all hands took a rifle or anything they could get hold of, and set out in search of Bruin. Hungry Bill got out his rifle and set out near the place where he expected to see the bear, but there was no load in it and he knew it. When we got near the spot he called out, "Some of you take my gun and fire it!" The boys

scoured all through the woods and Hungry Bill with them, without any load in his gun.) Have seen several kinds of wild fruit today - huckleberries, blackberries and strawberries, raspberries, gooseberries, etc. The road was very wet in places - caused by the melting snow, which lay in some places 4 to 6 ft. deep. A train of (Erney?) Camp from California camped with us last night. They are going to Lewiston, Oregon [Idaho]. We are now making slow time, but will get to Walla Walla in less than the 3 months we calculated it would take to make the journey.

Wed., July 14th: Left camp late this morning and passed over some wet and hilly roads, and in some places drifts of snow in the road 2 or 3 ft. deep. From Summerville to the Walla Walla Valley is 45 miles over the mts. and all heavy timber. Came on and passed the toll gate - toll \$1.00 per wagon. There is 3 different toll roads over the Blue Mts. to Walla Walla. At the toll house I was talking with the tollman and he told me that the snow fell in the mts. from 8 to 10 ft. deep in the winter and he had seen it 15 ft. on the level. . . (Stevens 1880:26-27).