



victim and up to \$5 for an amputation or for setting a broken limb.

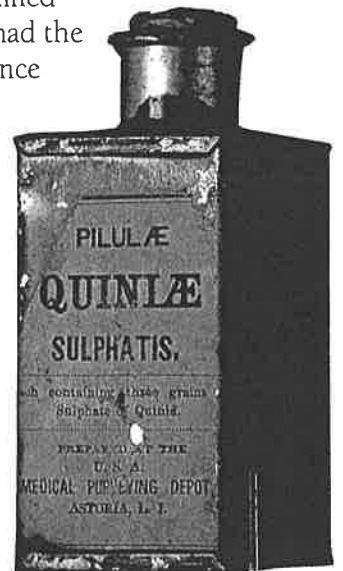
But even doctors knew little about the cause and prevention of cholera. It was not until 1865 that Louis Pasteur demonstrated that germs cause diseases like cholera.

The doctors did know that dirty water was associated with the disease, but they did not realize that boiling the water would kill the deadly germs. It is very lucky for the Larkins that they like to drink strong boiled coffee with every meal. This makes them much less likely to catch cholera.

Even overlanders like the Larkins who remained fairly healthy still had the never-ending nuisance of mosquito bites to put up with. It was common for people to be bitten so many times that their blood stopped being able to clot.

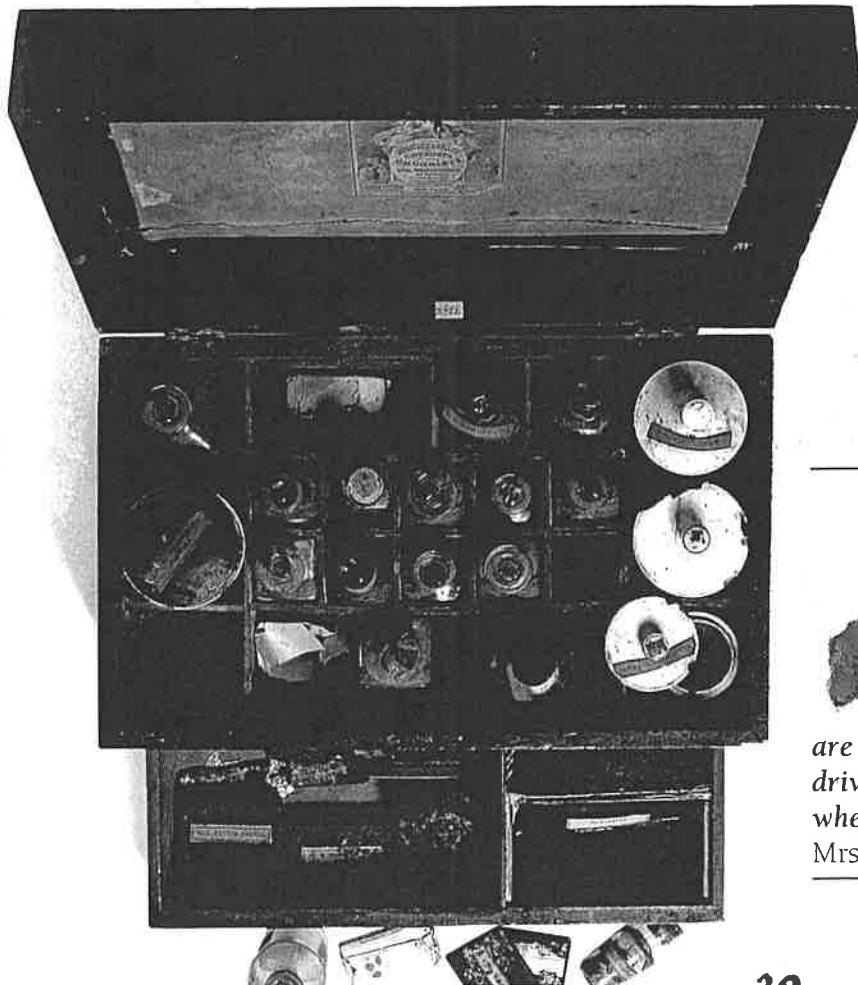
Left: A portable medical case.

Right: Quinine was used to treat the disease malaria, which overlanders caught from mosquito bites.



"So many of our company have died of the cholera that I cannot recount all their names. The burials have been at night on account of Indians robbing the graves for wearing apparel. The graves are concealed by building a fire on them and then driving the entire train of wagons over them when we break camp in the morning."

Mrs. Larkin's Diary



Above:
Advertisement for
cholera remedies.



Right: Setting up camp for the night



Above:
Mrs. Larkin decides
not to light a lantern. Her candles
have to last until she arrives in
Oregon and can make more.



SETTING UP CAMP

Rain and heavy trail traffic have made it hard to find good campsites this year, and sometimes the Larkins' wagon train has traveled late into the night before reaching a suitable place. Today, however, Captain Bonner's advance scouts have had no trouble. At 6pm the bugle sounds. Captain Bonner lays out some stakes to help him guide the train into a neat circle. He is so accurate that the last wagon closes the circle perfectly. The operation has taken only ten minutes.

Mr. Larkin and Matt Belknap unyoke the oxen and drive them to pasture near a waterhole. Then they water the horses. Finally, just inside the wagon circle, they set up the little wall tent in which Rachel, Abe, and Rebecca will sleep. Mr. and Mrs. Larkin and Margaret will sleep on featherbeds inside the wagon. Matt will sleep in the open, though if it rains he will roll under the wagon.



"O dear, I do so want to get there! It is now two months since we have slept in a house. If only I could be set down at home with all the folks..."

Mrs. Larkin's Diary



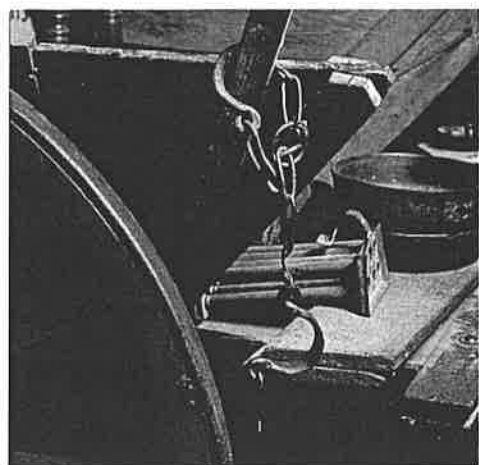
Above: The children have been gathering up buffalo chips for the fire. They have to get enough to cook supper and breakfast.

ENTERTAINMENT

On the high plains the overlanders went to bed early, there being little fuel for fires. But elsewhere, they gathered together to chat about the day's travel. Some men played dice or cards, but others thought that gambling was sinful. Some people even thought that playing chess was wicked.

Whiskey is also frowned upon, although many overlanders, especially gold miners, did drink. On the Larkins' wagon train, it is used "for medicinal purposes only." Dancing and singing, however, are enjoyed by everyone. Songs about home, love, and death are popular, as are funny songs like "Oh Susanna."

It is midnight when the fiddler stops playing, but the Larkins are already in bed and asleep. Matt Belknap, on the watch, is still awake. He gazes up at the stars and thinks about Oregon.



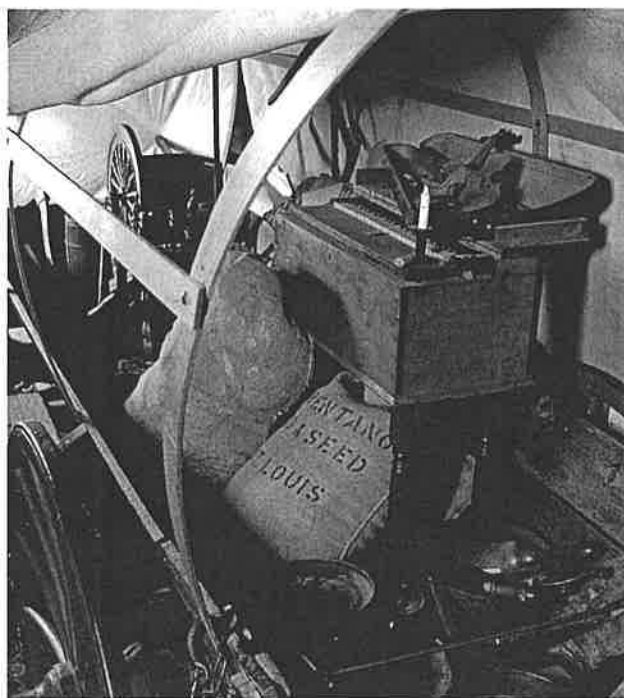
Above: Hobbles like the one shown are used to tie the horses to the wagon at night.

Right: A folding camp chair makes dining much more comfortable.

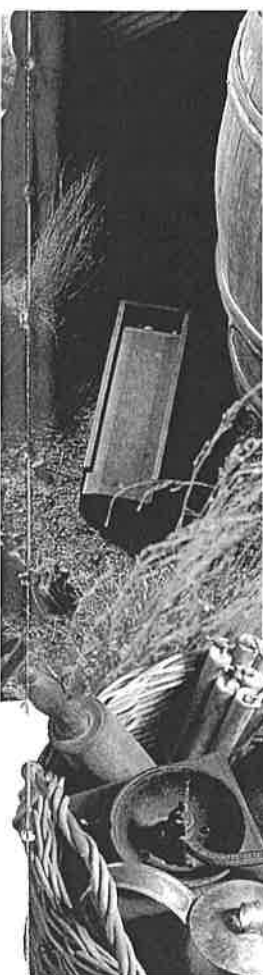


The family will be eating cornbread and beans, fried meat and gravy – the basic diet of the overlander. But there will be warm milk, fresh from the cow, to drink, and Mrs. Larkin and Rebecca have found enough berries to make a pie, which will be baked in the old dutch oven.

The able-bodied men of the party have been divided into three companies, each split into four watches. One company has to guard the wagon train each night, its first watch waking members of the second watch, and so on through the night. It is just 8pm when the first watch takes up its duties.



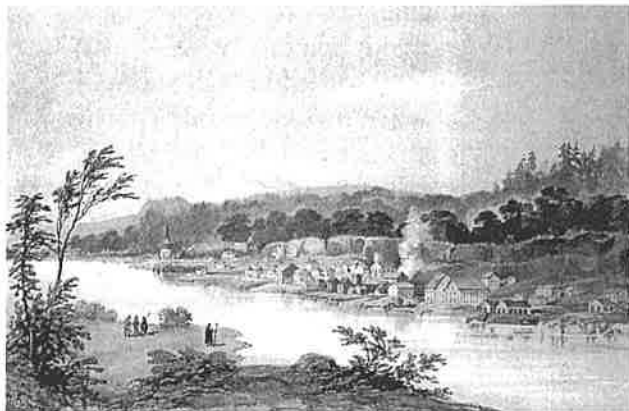
Above: The Larkins' party is lucky to have a melodeon or "American organ," as well as fiddles and harmonicas. They plan to have a "cotillion" or square dance, with visitors from a nearby wagon train.





OREGON AT LAST

The Larkins arrive in Oregon City on September 10, 1853, four months after leaving Independence and nearly five months after leaving Indiana. On the last stages of their journey two of their oxen died and had to be replaced by milk cows, but they themselves have all survived to see "civilization" once more. They spend a few days shopping for food and catching up on the latest news of Oregon and the world. While prices are higher than in St. Louis, they are at least lower than on the trail.



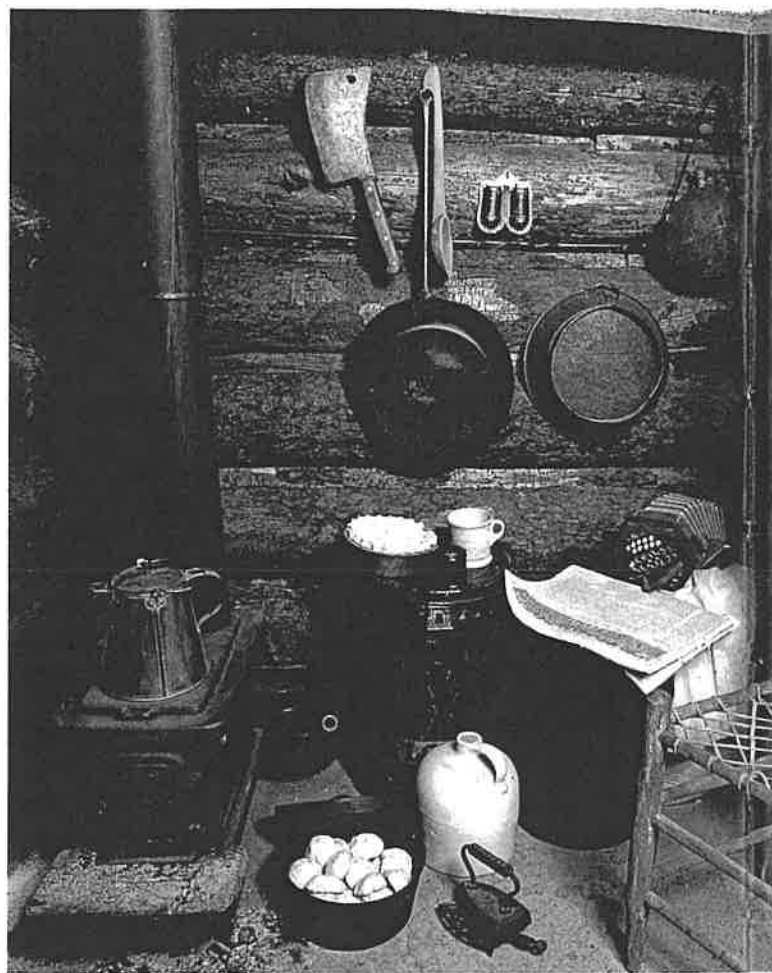
Above: Oregon City as it looked in 1848.
Painting by Henry J. Warre.

Coffee, for example, is selling for 18 cents a pound and fresh beef for 4 to 6 cents.

Soon the Larkins are on the move again, this time for the short journey to the less developed regions of the upper Willamette valley to claim their new land. No one is surprised when Matt Belknap asks Rachel to marry him.

They will also be given land under the terms of the 1850 Donation Land Act (see page 6).

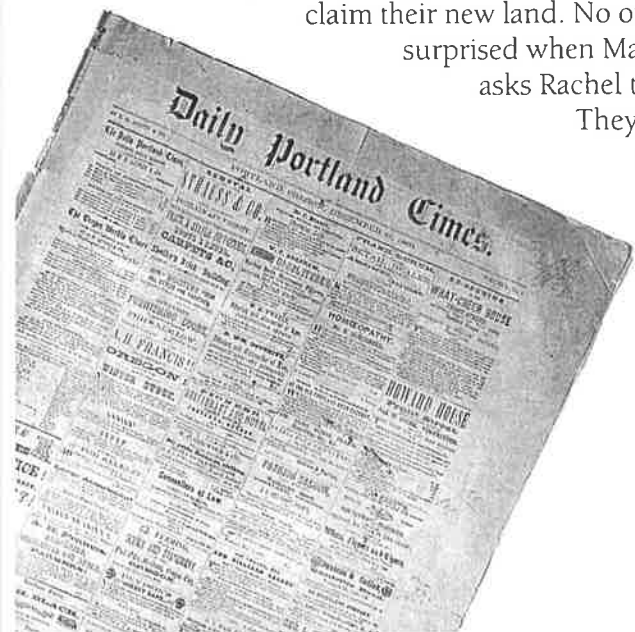
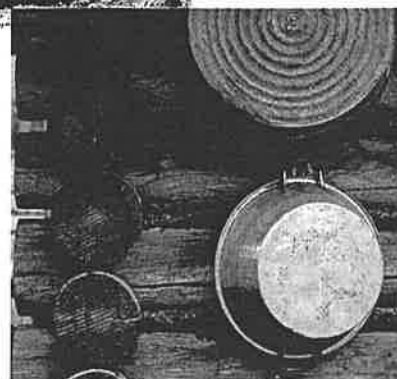
Left: The Daily Portland Times advertises livestock sales, saloons, and job opportunities.

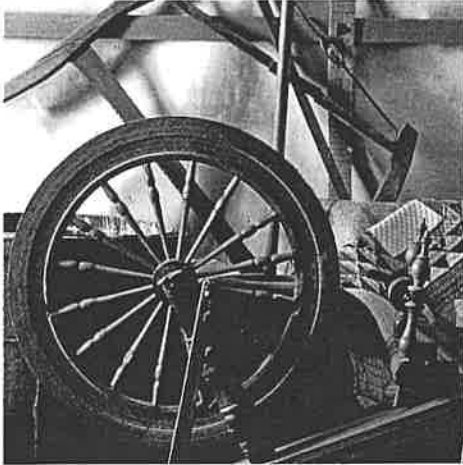


Left: Building a log cabin.



Below: Tin washtubs hang on the outside of the Larkins' new cabin.





Above: Mrs. Larkin will have little chance to spin in Oregon, as there are very few sheep. A few women tried spinning hair from wolves but as these animals cannot be fleeced while alive, it was not very practical. Most people relied either on "store-bought" cloth or wore buckskin like the mountain men.

Left: Supplies carried in the wagon are at last stored in the Larkins' new log cabin.

Included are an iron wood-burning stove, canteens, irons,

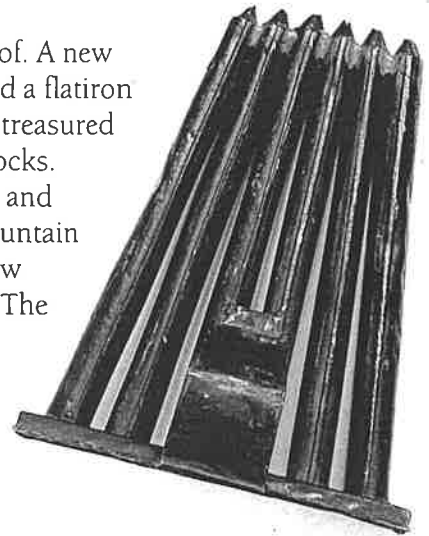
and pots and pans. There is also an accordion and the latest edition of a local newspaper.

Settling In

With no summer crops to live on and little money left, the Larkins have a hard first winter in Oregon, but with their neighbors' help, they survive. Mr. Larkin raises a log cabin. Even the chimney is wooden, but fortunately it is well plastered with mud on the inside to reduce the risk of fire. Mr. Larkin cannot afford to install window glass yet: That costs \$6 for a small box. Neither can he construct a proper shingle roof: That would take too much time. Instead, he puts up a rough frame and covers it with canvas from the wagon top. A buffalo hide serves as the door. The wagon box is broken up for furniture. The Larkins' "Hoosier Home" has become part of their new home in Oregon. Within a few years, it will be transformed into something that even

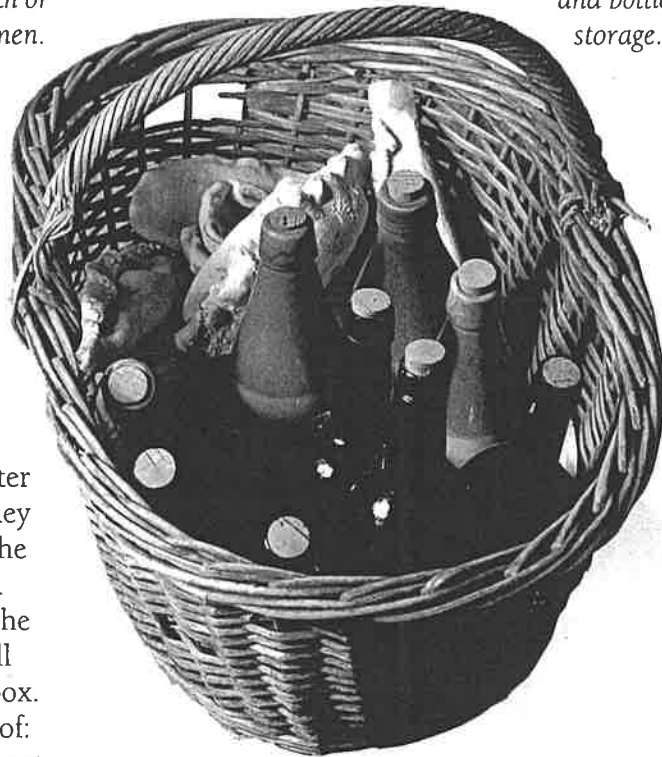
Mrs. Larkin can be proud of. A new stove will provide heat, and a flatiron will allow her to press her treasured fancy aprons and calico frocks.

Bountiful crops of grain and hops – as well as clean mountain water – will provide the raw material for brewing beer. The Larkins will do well in Oregon, a land not exactly flowing with milk and honey but prosperous nonetheless.



Above right: A candle mold. Although there is not much beeswax, there is plenty of tallow, so Mrs. Larkin can make candles.

Below: Mrs. Larkin uses a basket and bottles for storage.



"I am thankful that we have at last reached Oregon. The land is better than we had hoped, and our prospects are bright." Mr. Larkin's Diary

THE WAGON IN TIME

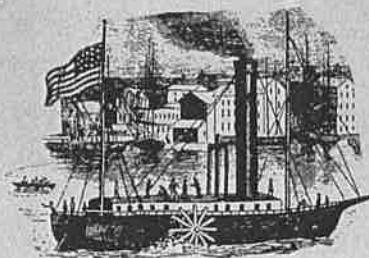
The Larkin family traveled from Indiana to Oregon in 1853. Here are some of the things that took place in the United States and around the world before, during, and after the Larkins made their journey.

1800 Population of the United States recorded as 5,308,483.

1803 The United States buys the lands between the Mississippi and the Rocky Mountains from France for \$15,000,000, doubling the size of the nation.

1804-1806 The Lewis and Clark Expedition explores the upper Missouri and Oregon territory.

1805-1807 Zebulon Pike searches for the source of the Mississippi and explores the Rocky mountains.



1807 Engineer Robert Fulton develops the first practical steamboat.

1811 John Jacob Astor establishes a trading post in Oregon.

1812-1814 War between the United States and Great Britain.

1816 The state of Indiana is admitted to the union.

1818 The United States and Great Britain agree to joint occupancy of Oregon country.

1819 The United States buys Florida from Spain.

1820 Death of frontiersman Daniel Boone at age 85.

1821-1824 Wars of independence end Spanish colonial rule in Mexico and South America.

1828 The first American railroad, the Baltimore and Ohio, begins operation. Andrew Jackson, advocate of western expansion, is elected president of the United States.



1830 Joseph Smith founds the Mormon Church (Latter Day Saints). Congress passes the Indian Removal Act, giving President Jackson the power to remove Native Americans from the east to lands west of the Mississippi.

1832 *Godey's Lady's Book* begins publication. A popular magazine, it introduced women to the latest fashions and literature.

1833 John Deere patents the steel plow, which, unlike the older cast-iron plow, can turn over the heavy turf of the Western prairies.

1834 Cyrus McCormick patents the reaper.

1835 Samuel Colt patents his six-shooter revolver.

1836 The Lone Star Republic (now Texas) becomes independent from Mexico. Marcus and Narcissa Whitman establish a Methodist mission in Oregon Country.

1837 Accession of Queen Victoria in Great Britain.

1838 French inventor Louis Daguerre develops the first practical photographic process, producing "daguerreotypes."

1842-1845 John Frémont maps the west.

1843 First wagon train crosses to Oregon. Samuel Morse's electromagnetic telegraph operates between Washington and Baltimore.

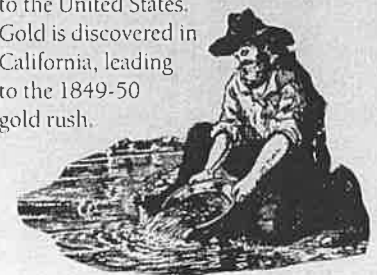
1844 James K. Polk elected president of the United States on a slogan of "50°40' or Fight" ("All of Oregon or War.")

1845 The Lone Star Republic enters the union as the state of Texas. In his *Democratic Review* John L. O'Sullivan writes of the United States' "Manifest Destiny" to expand across the Continent.

1846 California becomes independent from Mexico as the Bear Flag Republic. The Donner Party disaster.

1847 Oregon Boundary Treaty divides the territory between the United States and Great Britain at 49° north latitude. Marcus and Narcissa Whitman and 12 other settlers are massacred by a group of Cayuse Indians at their mission in Oregon. Brigham Young leads the Mormons from Nauvoo, Illinois, to Utah.

1848 War with Mexico results in the Mexican cession of California and the Southwest to the United States. Gold is discovered in California, leading to the 1849-50 gold rush.



1850 The Donation Land Act is passed in the United States. Irish immigration after the Potato Famine passes 160,000 per year. *Harper's Monthly* begins publication in the United States, offering English novels in serial form and illustrated articles about the west.

1852 Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* attacks slavery.

1853 The United States acquires southern New Mexico and Arizona from Mexico by the Gadsden Purchase.



The Larkin family emigrate to Oregon.

1854 The Kansas-Nebraska Act formally opens these territories to white settlement and sparks new national debate on slavery.

1859 First oil well, in Pennsylvania, leads to the development of the petroleum industry. Comstock Lode (silver) discovered in Nevada.

1860 First Pony Express delivers letters from St. Louis, Missouri, to Sacramento,

California, in 10 days. Population of the United States reaches 31,500,000. Abraham Lincoln is elected president of the United States.



1861-1865 American Civil War.

1861 Telegraph line completed between San Francisco and St. Louis. Emperor Alexander II of Russia emancipates the serfs.

1862 Homestead Act encourages settlement of unoccupied western lands.

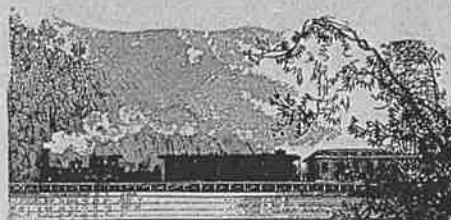
1863 Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation frees the slaves.

1864 Death of Stephen Foster, composer of "Old Kentucky Home" and "The Camptown Races," at age 38.

1865 Lincoln assassinated. French scientist Louis Pasteur publishes his "germ theory" of disease.

1866 First successful transatlantic telegraph cable.

1867 The United States buys Alaska from Russia for \$7,200,000. Swedish inventor Alfred Nobel develops dynamite. George Henry Hammond produces the first railway refrigerator car.



1869 The first American trans-continental railroad is completed. The first professional baseball team is organized, in Cincinnati.

1872 First national park is established as the Yellowstone National Park.

1874 Barbed wire is patented. Economical fencing and the introduction of "winter wheat" encourages development of farming on the Great Plains. Alexander Graham Bell demonstrates the telephone.

1875 Gold rush onto Sioux lands leads to the Battle of Little Big Horn ("Custer's Last Stand") in 1876.



1877 Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce surrenders to the U.S. Cavalry. Thomas A. Edison invents the phonograph.

1879 Thomas A. Edison demonstrates the electric light.

1882 The first commercial system of electrification is put in operation in New York City.

1883 The first ten-story "skyscraper" is built in Chicago.

1884 Inventor Hiram Maxim perfects the machine gun.

1886 First manufacture of Coca-Cola.

1888 Scotsman John Dunlop invents the pneumatic tire. American George Eastman perfects the hand camera.

1889 Two million acres of Indian Territory (Oklahoma) are opened to white homesteaders.

1890 Battle of Wounded Knee, ending the western "Indian Wars." Population of the United States reaches 63,000,000 as 450,000 immigrants arrive annually.

GLOSSARY

Bloomers Full, loose trousers, gathered round the ankle, which were introduced by the social reformer Amelia Jenks Bloomer in 1850 because they were more practical for women to wear than long, trailing skirts.

Brave An Indian (Native American) warrior. Among the Native Americans of the Plains, boys had to prove their bravery and strength at hunting and warfare in order to be called braves, and they often competed with each other for the top position. The highest ranking braves of the tribe were the chiefs, who were highly honored, as were the shamans or "medicine men," who had spiritual power. While young boys were taught to become braves, girls were taught home-making skills such as sewing by their mothers and the other women of the tribe, who were called "squaws."

Buckskin Soft leather made from the hide of deer or elk, so named because a male deer is called a "buck."

Buffalo Robe A blanket made from the full hide of a buffalo, tanned with the hair still on it in order to give extra warmth.

Calico A kind of cotton cloth, printed with a figured pattern.

Cholera A short-lasting, often fatal infection caused by drinking or eating water, milk, or food contaminated with bacteria. The symptoms are diarrhea, vomiting, and stomach pains, followed by collapse from loss of water and salt.

Dutch Oven A heavy cast-iron pot with a tight-fitting cover. When heaped with coals, it can be used for baking as well as for stewing.

Dysentery A common trail disease whose symptoms include fatigue, nausea, and diarrhea followed by loss of water and salt.

Emigrant A person who leaves their native country or region to live elsewhere. The early overlanders were called emigrants because they left the settled parts of the United States to go and live in lands in the

west which were only just being acquired by the U.S. government.

Forty-Niner A person who went to California looking for gold during the 1849 gold rush.

Gingham A cotton fabric, often with a striped or checked pattern.

Indian Agent A representative of the United States government who served as ambassador to Indian tribes.

Johnnycake A type of bread made of cornmeal mixed with salt and water or milk, which could be either baked in a pan or fried on a griddle.

Manifest Destiny The idea that a nation (such as the United States) must expand until it fills up certain natural geographic limits (e.g., the American continent from the Atlantic ocean to the Pacific ocean).

Mormon A member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, which was a religious group founded by Joseph Smith in 1830. After being driven out of settlements in the East because of religious intolerance, many Mormons, under the leadership of Brigham Young, emigrated to the place that would, in 1846, become the state of Utah.

Mountain Fever A general name given to several diseases which emigrants sometimes caught on the western parts of the Oregon Trail. The symptoms included chills, fever, and extreme fatigue. Mountain fever was weakening, but rarely fatal.

Mountain Men Professional trappers of animals for fur who hunted in the mountain ranges. As more and more emigrants came west, these men were often paid to serve as wagon train guides or "pilots."

Penny Press Publishing companies that sold cheap mini-novels and short stories, which were often very sensational.

Pilot Bread Also known as "hardtack," this was a hard biscuit made from flour and water. As it would keep for a long time, it was commonly used for long journeys by both land and sea.

Prairie The wide, rolling land of the

Missouri-Mississippi valley. It had almost no trees, but very deep, rich soil and enough rain for good crops of grain. On its west side, the prairie merges with the high plains, where a lack of rainfall makes the land more suitable for grazing animals than for growing crops.

Rawhide Untanned leather, usually without hair, that has been cured by being stretched and dried.

Scurvy People get this disease when they do not have enough ascorbic acid, which is found in foods such as lemons and limes. The symptoms include loose teeth, and bleeding, painful gums.

Spelling Bee A spelling contest. Contestants are given words to spell out loud. The contest ends when all but one of the participants has failed to spell a word correctly.

Tallow Animal fat which has been purified by melting. It was usually made into candles or mixed up with grease and used to keep the wagon wheels running smoothly.

Typhoid A highly infectious and often fatal disease caused by bacteria. The symptoms are fever, diarrhea, headaches, and, in the later stages, confusion and hemorrhaging of blood.

INDEX

Please note: References to the Larkin family are to be found under the headings 'father,' 'mother,' and 'children.'

A

accidents 38, 39
alcohol 41, 43
alkali water (dangers of) 30
army 34-5

B

baking 13
Barlow, Sam 20
bears 21
bedding 11, 22, 40
beer 43
Belknap, Matthew (hired-hand), 7, 18, 26-7, 28, 32, 40, 41, 42
Bibles 10, 36
bloomers 19
bone express 11
Bonner, James J. 17, 29, 40
bonnets 19, 29
books, 28-9
 guidebooks 6, 15, 33, 34
boosters 4, 5
breakfast 12, 13
buffalo 23, 26-7
 chips 12, 13, 40
bugles 16, 17
bull-whips 18
burials 38, 39
butter 15

C

California 4, 5, 14
candles 40, 43
captain, election of 16-17
cattle 14, 15, 32, 42
children
 Indian love of 25
 Larkin family 7, 15, 18, 19, 28-9, 32, 36-7, 40-1, 42
Chimney Rock 21
chivarees 36
cholera 7, 38-9
clothing 10, 11, 12, 18-19
 hunting 26
 Native American 23, 25
 in Oregon 43
coffee 12, 13, 39, 42
Columbia river 20, 23
communications 11
compasses, magnetic 16
cooking *see* food

Courthouse Rock 21
cows 15, 42
crafts, Native American 23, 24

D

death 7, 38-9
denim 19
Devil's Gate (mountain) 21
diary keeping 11, 29, 37
Digger Indians 23
disasters 33
diseases *see* health
doctors 38-9
Donation Land Act 6, 42
Donner Party disaster 33
dress *see* clothing
drink 41, 43

E

education 28
emigration, reasons for 5, 6
entertainments 41

F

father (Hiram Larkin) 6, 15, 18, 29, 32, 37
 clothes 19
 in Oregon 43
ferries 32
fires, lighting 12
fishing 23, 29
flowers 28
food 11, 12, 13, 29, 40-1, 42
 buffalo meat 27
 Fourth of July 36
 suppliers 22, 34
Fort Laramie 34-5
Forty-Niners 5
Fourth of July feast 36-7
fur trade 34, 35
furniture 43

G

game hunting 26, 27
go-backers 30
gold rush 5, 14
Greeley, Horace 5
guard duties 17, 41
guidebooks *see* books
gulches 20
guns, 11, 16, 25, 26-7, 35

H

hardtrack 11
hats 19
health
 epidemics 7, 38-9
 illnesses 7, 18
 medicines 10, 38
hired hands *see* Belknap, Matthew
horses 14, 15, 19, 40, 41
 horse-stealing 24
hunting 7, 25, 26-7

I

illnesses *see* health
Independence, Missouri 6, 15
Independence Rock 21
Indiana 6, 8, 28
Indians 21, 22-5, 26, 27
 and U.S. Army 34-5

J

Jail Rock 21
jerking (meat preservation) 27

K

Klickitat tribe 22
knives 17, 26

L

language difficulties 23
lanterns 11, 40
Laramie Peak 21
lizards 28
log cabins 42-3

M

malaria 39
marriage 36, 42
meals *see* food
meat 13, 27, 42
medicines 38-9
Meek, Stephen 33
military garrisons 34-5
milk 15, 41
moccasins 23, 24
money matters 6, 8, 15, 34, 42
Mormons 5, 15
mosquito bites 39
mother (Hetty Larkin) 6, 11, 29, 37
 clothes 19, 32
 cooking 12-13, 15
 in Oregon 43
mules 14, 15
music 41

N

Nez Perce tribe 22, 23
nooning 29

O

Old Glory 37
Oregon 4-5, 42-3
owls, burrowing 20
oxen 14, 15, 18, 29, 30, 40, 42

P

packing wagon 10-11
pancakes 13
panniers 14
parfleches 23
Pawnee tribe 22
pens 37

pheasants 27
pilot bread 11
pistols *see* guns
Platte valley 26
Polk, James K. 5
popcorn 13
porcupines 21
postal services 11
prairie dogs 20

R

rattlesnakes 20
Reed, Virginia 33
religion 36
reservations, Indian 25
rifles *see* guns
river crossings 32, 38
roadside telegraph 11, 38
Rocky mountains 20-1

S

saddles 19, 23, 25, 35
school 28
Scotts Bluff 21
shaving gear 18
Shoshone tribe 22, 23
sickness *see* health
Sioux tribe 24, 25
snakes 19, 20
soap 32
Soda Springs 21
spyglasses 17
stampedes 26, 27
Steamboat Springs 21
sunbonnets 19
sundials, folding 16
sutlers 34

T

tepees 22
Texas 4
toll bridges, Indian 22
tombs, Native American 24
tombstones 38
tools 10, 31
trails 20-1

U

utensils, cooking 13

W

wagons 8-11, 14-15, 17, 18
 breakdowns 30-1
 river crossings 32, 38
 setting up camp 40-1
 on steep hills 31
wars 25
water supplies 11, 13, 38, 39
weather 17, 18, 36, 40
weaving, Native American 24
weddings 36
West, lure of the 4-5
wild flowers 28
Willamette valley 22, 42