

# HAPPY WEDNESDAY 😊

- Open comp books to next open page
- Title Notes “THE OREGON TRAIL”
- **UNDER THE TITLE, ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTION:** What do you already know about the Oregon Trail? (as many bullet points as you can).



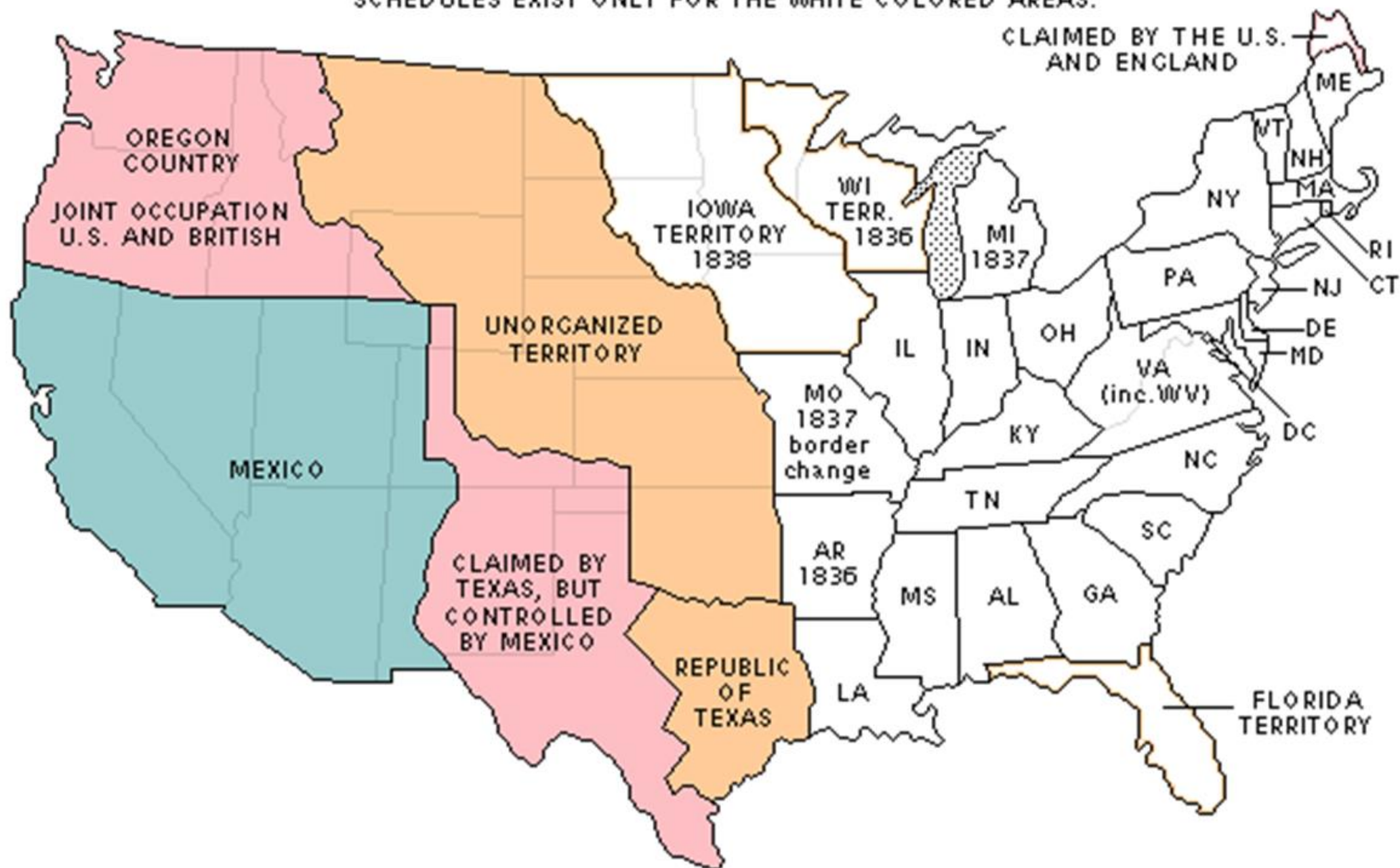
# THE OREGON TRAIL





You have died of dysentery.

1840 - SIXTH CENSUS OF THE UNITED STATES. M704.  
SCHEDULES EXIST ONLY FOR THE WHITE COLORED AREAS.



# REASONS FOR HEADING WEST (AKA WHY WOULD YOU DO THAT?)

## **Push Factors (General reasons why people decided to go west):**

- **Panic of 1837** (economic recession followed by 5 year depression) caused mass unemployment forcing many to search for new opportunities

## **Pull Factors (General reasons why going west was appealing):**

- Start a new life
- Material wealth
- Increase social, political, economic power
- Develop land (most of which was free or very cheap)
- Simply following family and friends




# MAJOR MOTIVATING FORCES

- **1850 – Land Donation Act**
  - Settler had to prove productive for four years
  - **1854** – The land was no longer free but cheap (Sold for \$1.25 an acre)
- Explorers wrote about the Northwest and its abundant resources
- Writers told stories in newspapers about the West
  - Created utopian myth about the Northwest

## INDIAN LAND FOR SALE

GET A HOME  
OF  
YOUR OWN  
\*  
EASY PAYMENTS



PERFECT TITLE  
\*  
POSSESSION  
WITHIN  
THIRTY DAYS

### FINE LANDS IN THE WEST

IRRIGATED      GRAZING      AGRICULTURAL  
IRRIGABLE      DRY FARMING

IN 1910 THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR SOLD UNDER SEALED BIDS ALLOTTED INDIAN LAND AS FOLLOWS:

Location.	Acres.	Average Price per Acre.	Location.	Acres.	Average Price per Acre.
Colorado .....	5,211.21	\$7.27	Oklahoma .....	34,664.00	\$19.14
Idaho .....	17,013.00	24.85	Oregon .....	1,020.00	15.43
Kansas .....	1,684.50	33.45	South Dakota .....	120,445.00	16.53
Montana .....	11,034.00	9.86	Washington .....	4,879.00	41.37
Nebraska .....	5,641.00	36.65	Wisconsin .....	1,069.00	17.00
North Dakota .....	22,610.70	9.93	Wyoming .....	865.00	20.64

FOR THE YEAR 1911 IT IS ESTIMATED THAT **350,000 ACRES** WILL BE OFFERED FOR SALE

For information as to the character of the land write for booklet, "INDIAN LANDS FOR SALE," to the Superintendent U. S. Indian School at any one of the following places:

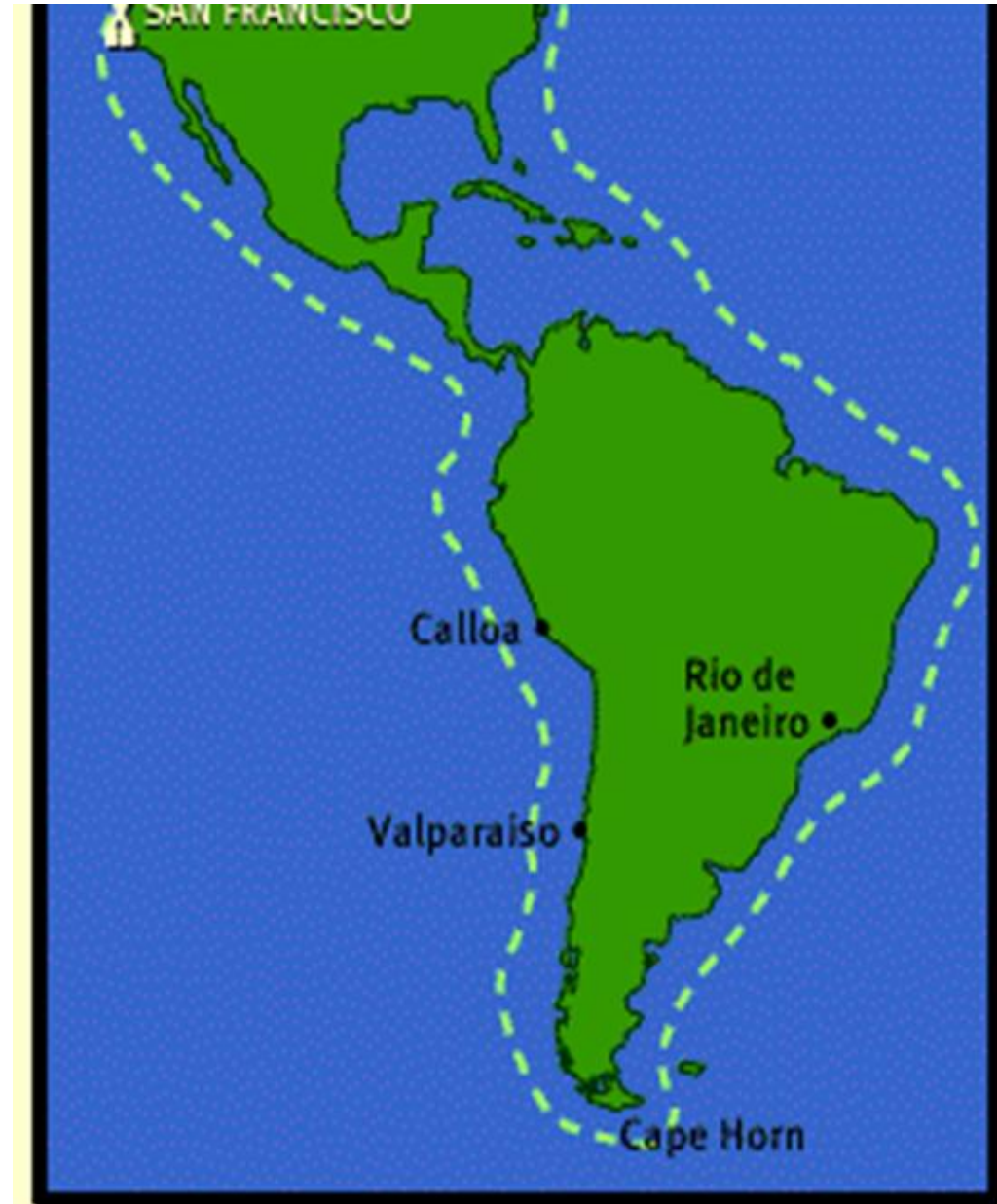
CALIFORNIA: Hoopa. COLORADO: Ignacia. IDAHO: Lapwai. KANSAS: Horton. Nadeau.	MINNESOTA: Oulgan. MONTANA: Crow Agency. NEBRASKA: Macy. Banier. Winnabago.	NORTH DAKOTA: Fort Totten. Fort Yates. OKLAHOMA: Anadarko. Cantonment. Colony. Darlington. Muskogee. Pawnee.	OKLAHOMA—Cos. See and Fox Agency. Shawnee. Wyandotte. OREGON: Klamath Agency. Pendleton. Roseburg. Siletz.	SOUTH DAKOTA: Chayenne Agency. Crow Creek. Greenwood. Lower Brule. Pine Ridge. Rosebud. Siouxton.	WASHINGTON: Fort Simcoe. Fort Spokane. Teha. Tulalip. WISCONSIN: Oneida.
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**WALTER L. FISHER,**  
Secretary of the Interior.

**ROBERT G. VALENTINE,**  
Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

# THE SEA ROUTE

- Very few migrants went west by sea
- Sea route went around Cape Horn (tip of South America)
- Longer, but usually safer and a more comfortable journey
- Much more expensive
  - Costing 4 – 10 X more than traveling by land



# THE LAND ROUTE

- Most could only afford to go by land via wagon train
- Much more difficult and dangerous
- 5 or 6 months to complete
- Missing good weather window meant starvation and death
- Obstacles: disease, weather, Natives & wild animals

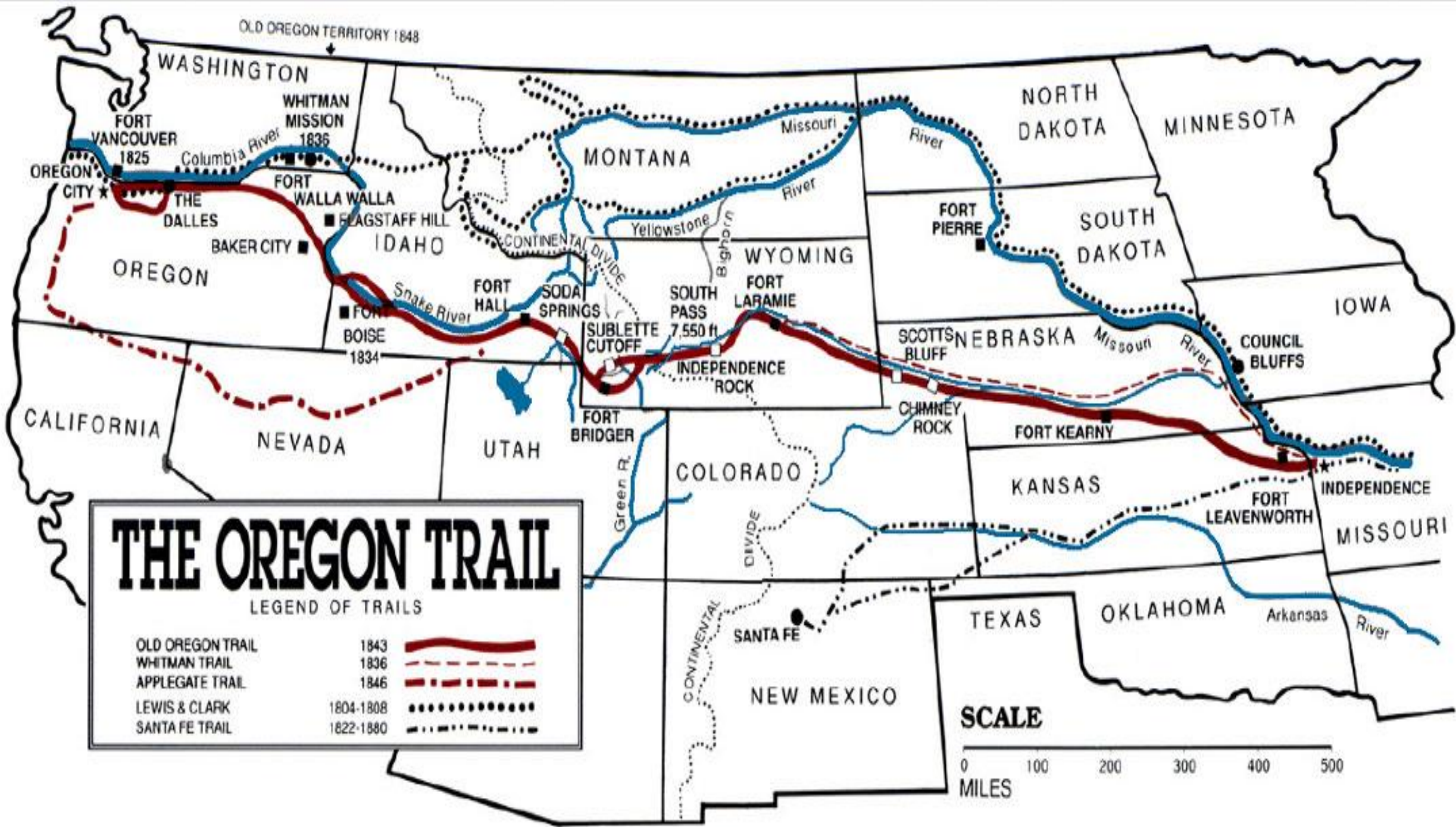




# THE OREGON TRAIL

- It took many explorers, trappers, and missionaries to complete the route west
- Trial and error shaped the trail so that it could eventually be crossed entirely by wagon
- The trail began in Missouri at Independence, Westport Landing, or St. Joseph
- These marked the western extent of the U.S. at the time and became important supply cities





OLD OREGON TERRITORY 1848

WASHINGTON

FORT VANCOUVER 1825

Columbia River

WHITMAN MISSION 1835

FORT WALLA WALLA

THE DALLES

BAKER CITY

OREGON

FLAGSTAFF HILL

IDAHO

CONTINENTAL DIVIDE

MONTANA

Snake River

FORT HALL

SODA SPRINGS

SOUTH PASS 7,550 ft

SUBLETTE CUTOFF

INDEPENDENCE ROCK

FORT BRIDGER

UTAH

COLORADO

Green R.

DIVIDE

SANTA FE

NEW MEXICO

NORTH DAKOTA

MINNESOTA

FORT PIERRE

SOUTH DAKOTA

WYOMING

FORT LARAMIE

SCOTT'S BLUFF

NEBRASKA

Missouri River

IOWA

COUNCIL BLUFFS

FORT KEARNY

KANSAS

FORT LEAVENWORTH

INDEPENDENCE

MISSOURI

TEXAS

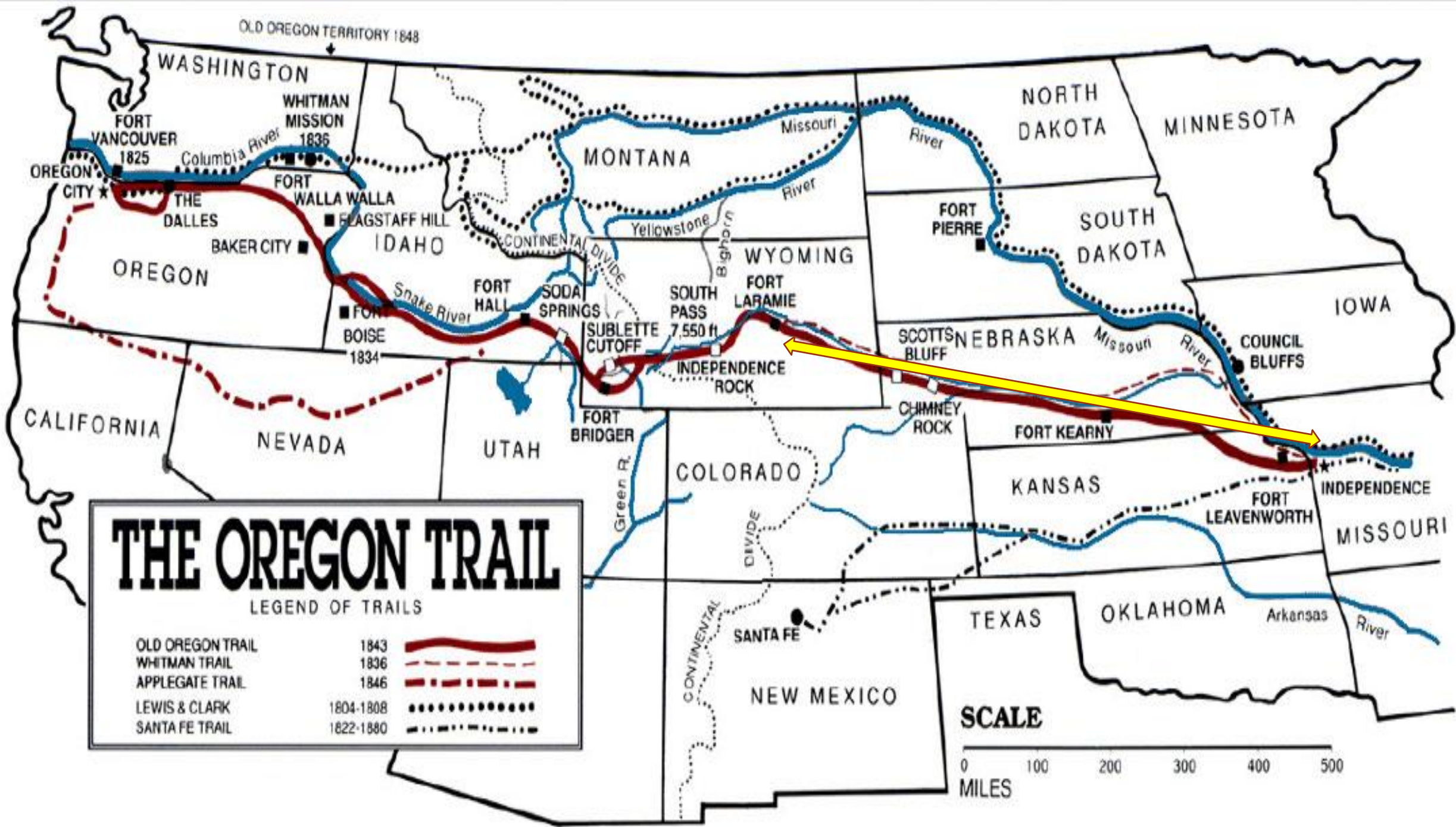
OKLAHOMA

Arkansas River

# FIRST LEG — THE GREAT PLAINS

- Easiest part of the trail
- Flat or gently rolling hills
- Plenty of grass for animals and fresh water
- Most Natives were friendly
- Could cover 20+ miles in one day
- The first landmark - Chimney Rock in Nebraska
- Ended at Fort Laramie, Wyoming

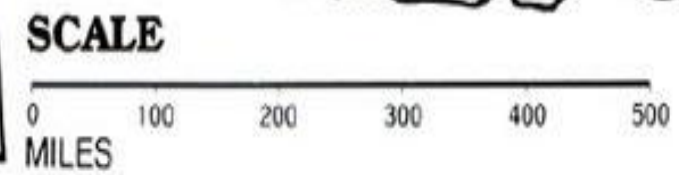




# THE OREGON TRAIL

LEGEND OF TRAILS

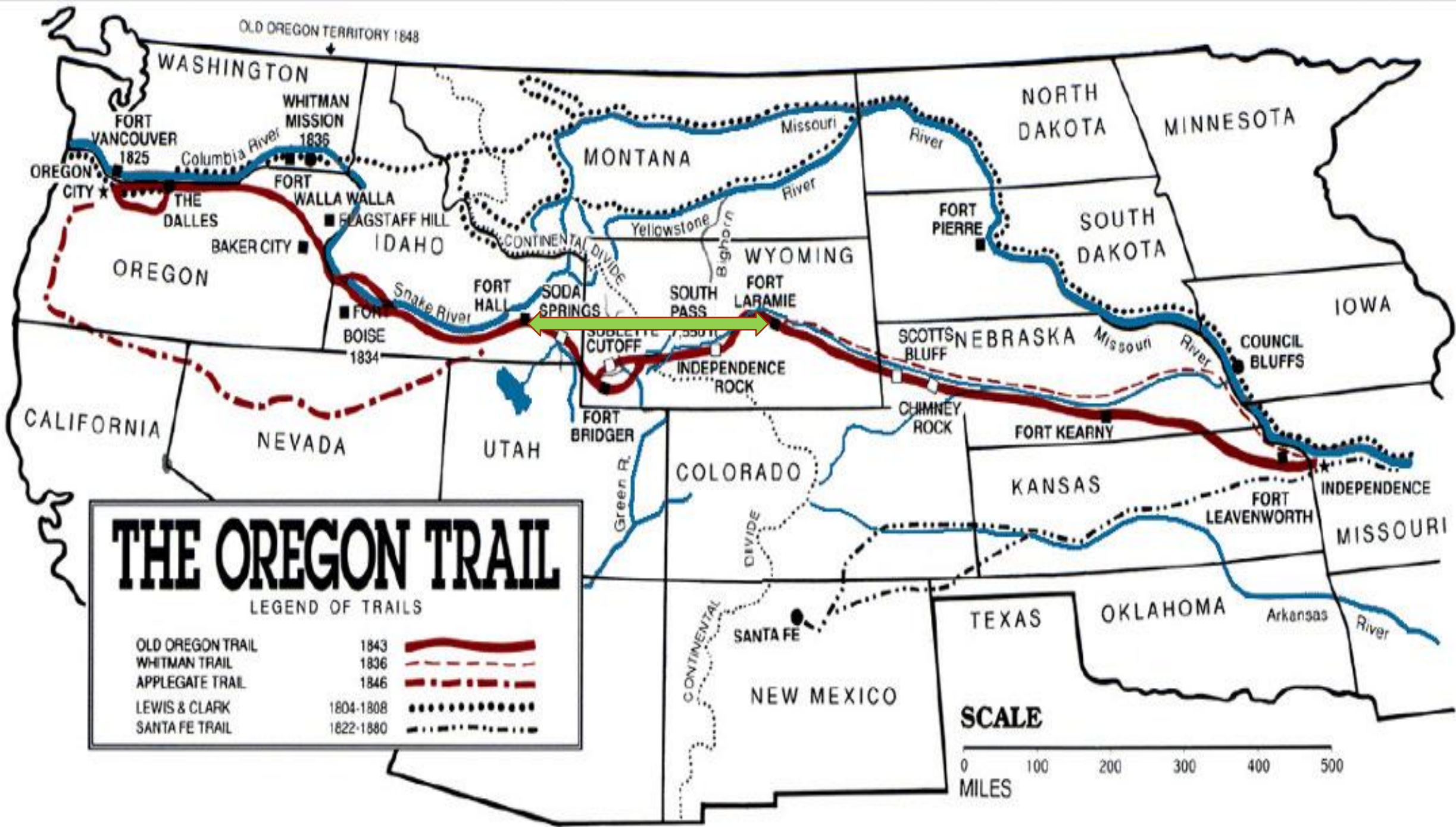
OLD OREGON TRAIL	1843	
WHITMAN TRAIL	1836	
APPLEGATE TRAIL	1846	
LEWIS & CLARK	1804-1808	
SANTA FE TRAIL	1822-1880	



# SECOND LEG – THE ROCKIES

- Crossed at South Pass
- Headed for Fort Hall, Idaho
  - Fort Bridger to the Sublette Cutoff was another option
- At Fort Hall, they rested, re-supplied, and repaired their wagons
  - Also decided to go to California or Oregon

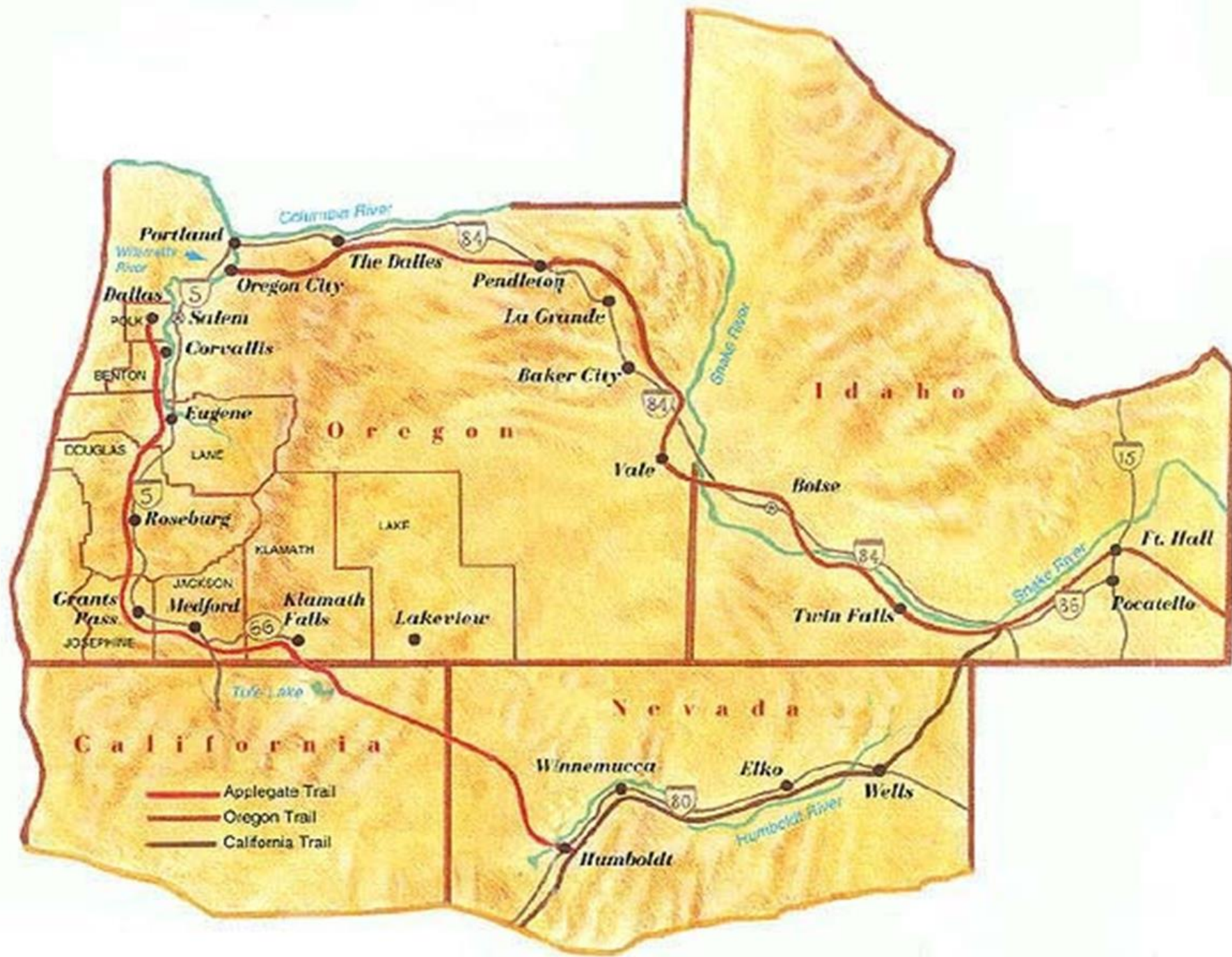




# THE OREGON TRAIL

LEGEND OF TRAILS

OLD OREGON TRAIL	1843	
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# THE CALIFORNIA TRAIL

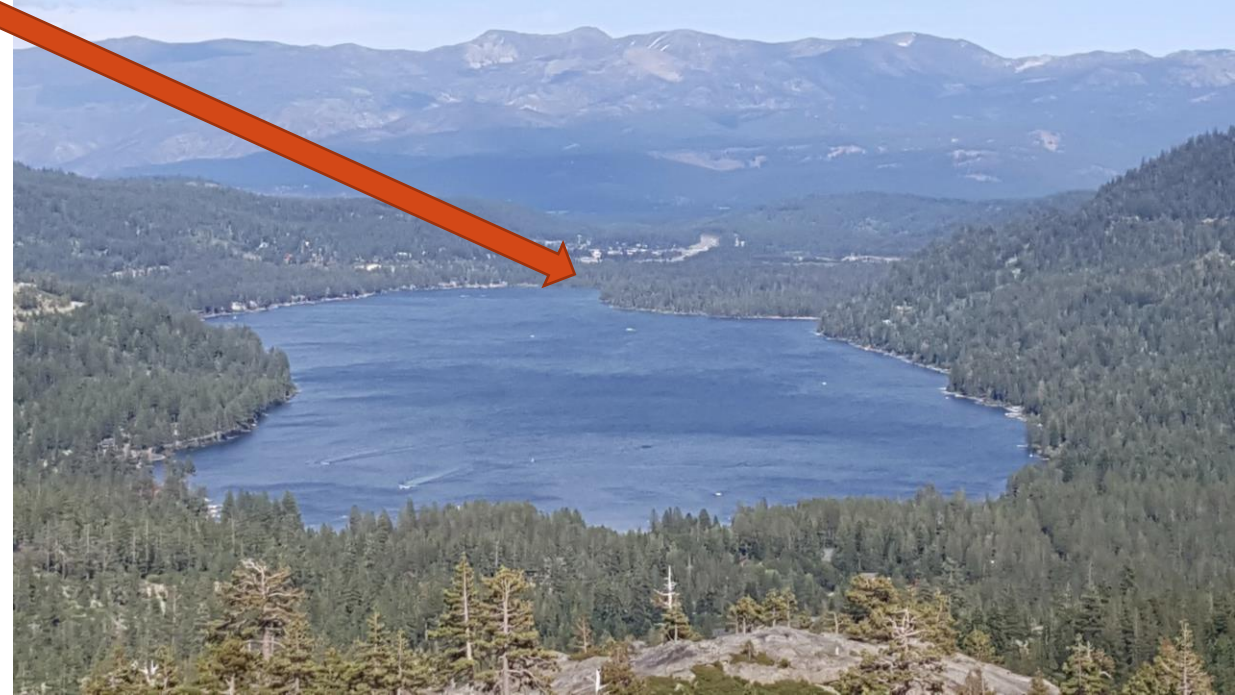
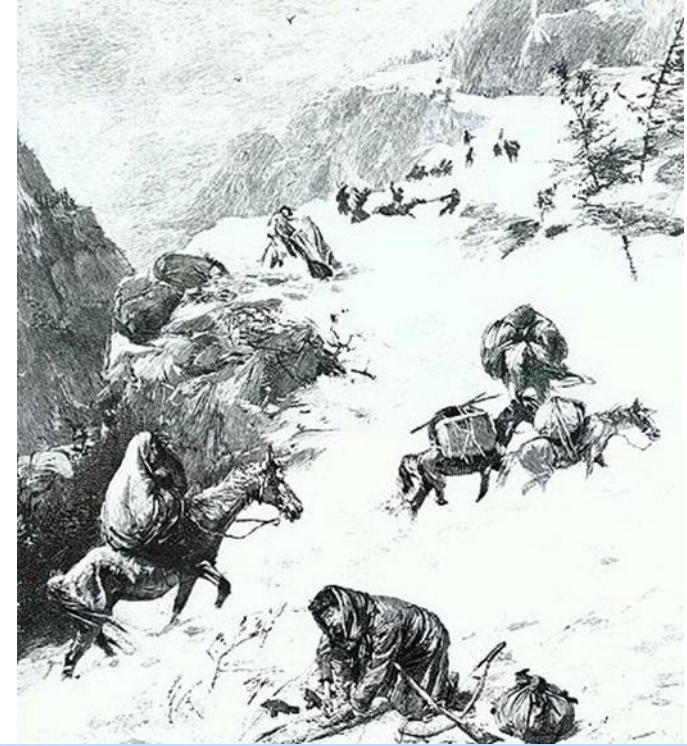
- Had to cross the Great American Desert in present day Nevada
- Dehydration was the number one killer on this trail
- After the desert, they had to cross the Sierra Nevada Mountains.
- Pioneers had to cross before heavy snowfalls came in late November – early December





# THE DONNER PARTY

- Set out for California in a wagon train in May 1846.
- Delayed by mishaps and mistakes, they spent the winter of 1846–47 here.
- Buried in almost 30 feet of snow.
- Some of the pioneers resorted to cannibalism to survive.



## STEPHENS – TOWNSEND – MURPHY PARTY OF 1844 FIRST PIONEER WAGONS OVER THE SIERRA NEVADA

ON MAY 22, 1844, THIS SMALL WAGON PARTY OF 50 MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN "JUMPED OFF" FROM COUNCIL BLUFFS, IOWA, BOUND FOR CALIFORNIA. THESE COURAGEOUS PIONEERS WERE THE FIRST EMIGRANTS TO TAKE WAGONS OVER THE SIERRA NEVADA, OPENING THE TRUCKEE ROUTE OF THE CALIFORNIA TRAIL.

THE MURPHY, TOWNSEND, MILLER, AND HITCHCOCK FAMILIES FORMED THE MAIN GROUPS OF THE PARTY. CALEB GREENWOOD WAS THE HIRED GUIDE, AND ELISHA STEPHENS WAS ELECTED CAPTAIN OF THE WAGON TRAIN.

AFTER FOLLOWING THE OREGON TRAIL TO FORT HALL, IDAHO, THEY TURNED AWAY FROM THE WELL-WORN PATH AND HEADED WEST INTO THE UNFAMILIAR NEVADA DESERT. A PAIUTE INDIAN CHIEF SHOWED THEM HOW TO REACH A RIVER FLOWING FROM THE SIERRA NEVADA, WHICH THEY NAMED "TRUCKEE" IN HIS HONOR.

OVERCOMING SEVERE CONDITIONS, THEY FOLLOWED THE TRUCKEE RIVER TO THE BASE OF THE SIERRA. SIX MEMBERS, ON HORSEBACK, CONTINUED TO FOLLOW THE TRUCKEE RIVER AND EVENTUALLY ARRIVED SAFELY AT SUTTER'S NEW HELVETIA ON DECEMBER 10, 1844. SIX OF THE WAGONS WERE LEFT IN THE CHARGE OF TWO MEN, AND YOUNG MOSES SCHALLENBERGER, NEAR TRUCKEE LAKE (PRESENT DONNER LAKE). NEAR THIS SPOT, WITH TWO FEET OF SNOW ON THE GROUND, THEY WORKED THE REMAINING FIVE WAGONS ACROSS THE SUMMIT OF THE MIGHTY SIERRA NEVADA ON NOVEMBER 25, 1844.

DEEPENING SNOW FORCED THEM TO CAMP NEAR BIG BEND, ON THE SOUTH YUBA RIVER. LEAVING THE WAGONS WITH TWO MEN AND THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN, THE REMAINING 17 MEN CONTINUED ON TO NEW HELVETIA TO SEEK HELP. SOMEHOW, JOHN SUTTER PERSUADED THE MEN TO ENLIST IN HIS FORCES TAKING PART IN A MEXICAN CIVIL WAR. EVENTUALLY THE FAMILIES WERE REUNITED, AND ALL MEMBERS (INCLUDING TWO BABIES BORN ON THE WAY) ARRIVED SAFELY AT SUTTER'S FORT IN EARLY MARCH 1845.

DEDICATED BY THE  
NEVADA COUNTY HISTORICAL LANDMARKS COMMISSION  
SEPTEMBER 24, 1994

# THIRD LEG — OREGON TERRITORY

- Followed Snake River to Fort Boise
- After crossing the Blue Mountains, the road led to Waiilatpu (Whitman) Mission
  - This was the last major re-supply and rest stop and marked the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> leg
  - After the massacre, pioneers bypassed the mission and headed straight for the Columbia River

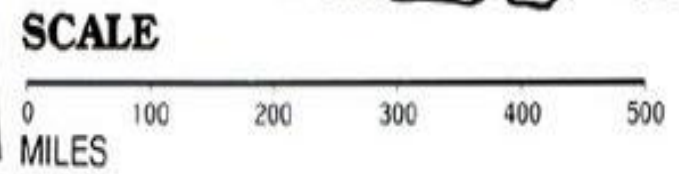


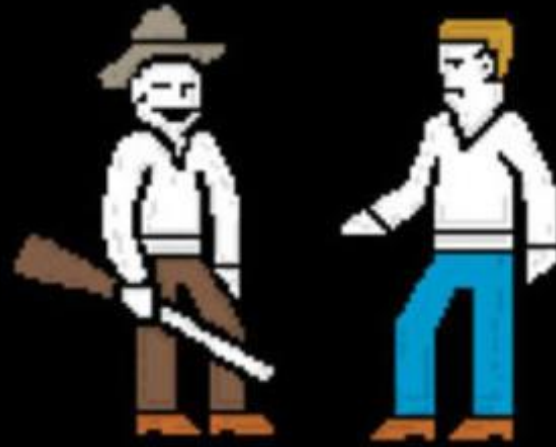


# THE OREGON TRAIL

LEGEND OF TRAILS

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"Terry? That's a GIRLS name!"



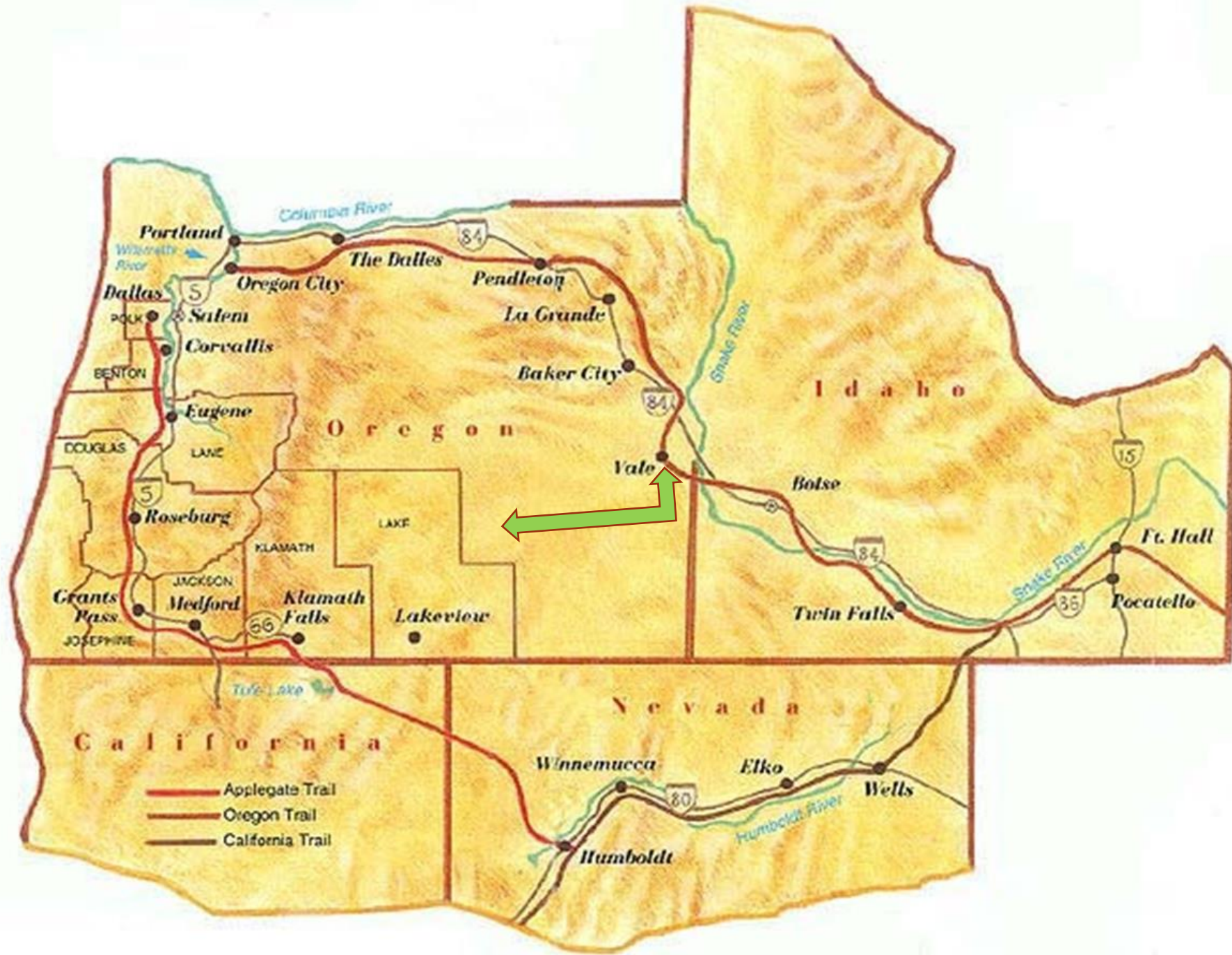
You have died of dissing Terry

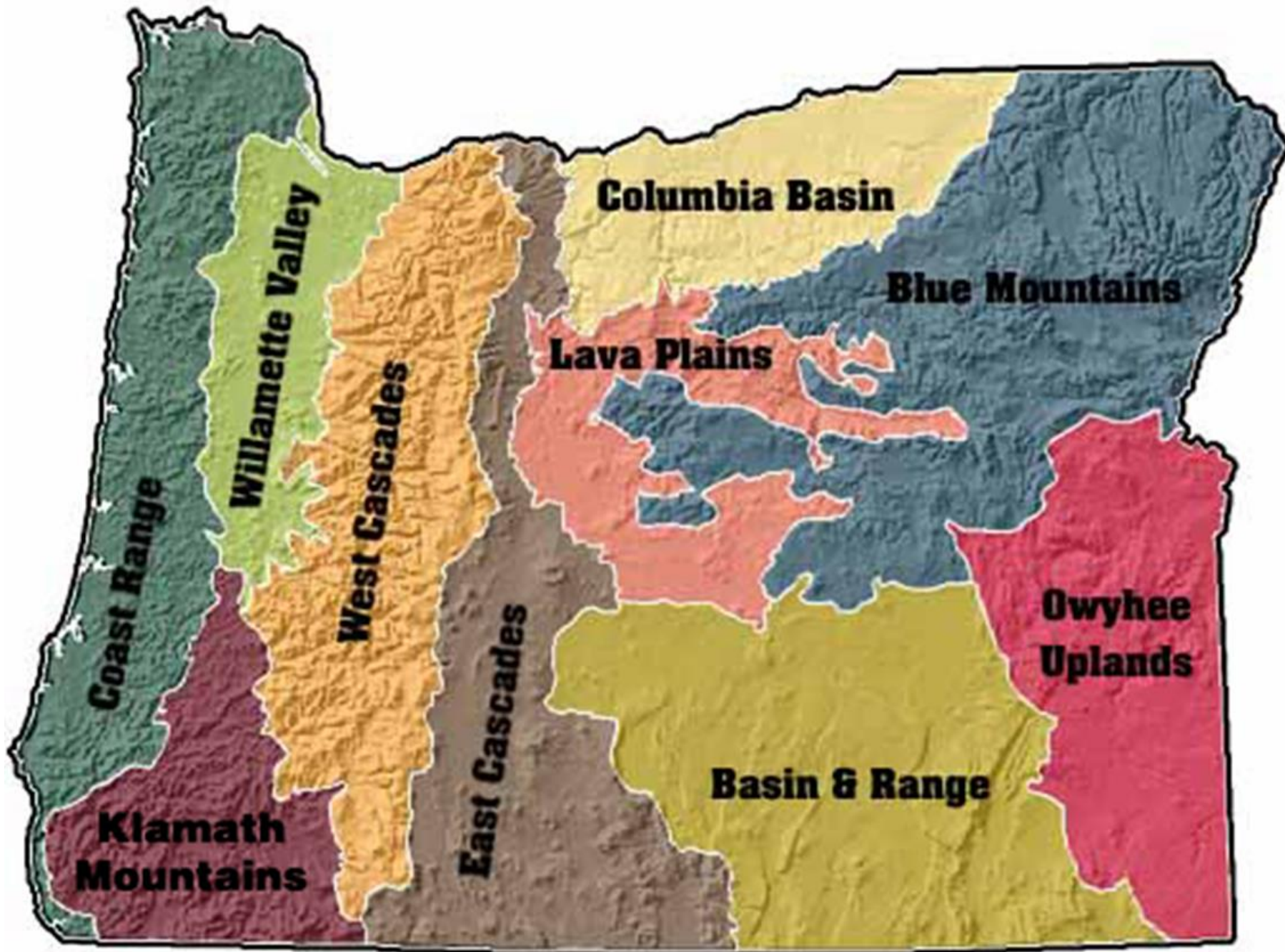


# MEEKS CUTOFF

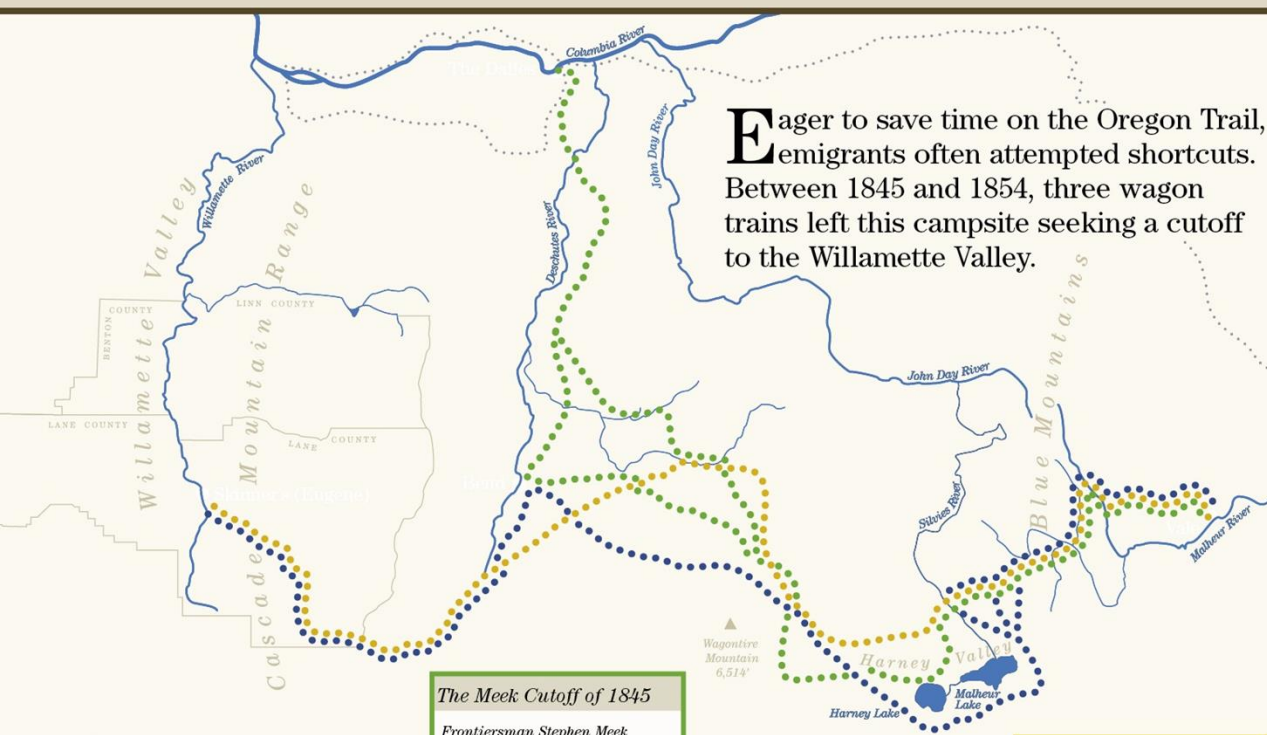
- 1845 - rumors circulating that Walla Walla and Cayuse Natives might possibly attack the settlers in Blue Mountains
- Stephen Meek: an experienced fur trapper and explorer who made his living as a wagon train guide.
- Offered emigrants alternate route to avoid the Blue Mountains
- Some 200 wagons and 1,000 people turned off the primary Oregon Trail at Vale and followed Meek into the Oregon desert where no wagons had traveled before.











**E**ager to save time on the Oregon Trail, emigrants often attempted shortcuts. Between 1845 and 1854, three wagon trains left this campsite seeking a cutoff to the Willamette Valley.



**The Meek Cutoff of 1845**

Frontiersman Stephen Meek persuaded over 1,000 people with 200 wagons to avoid the notorious Blue Mountains, Cayuse Indians, and Columbia River by turning west up the Malheur River into central Oregon. Unable to find water west of Wagontire Mountain, the train turned north and rejoined the Oregon Trail at The Dalles. Hunger and illness led to 23 deaths on the trek.

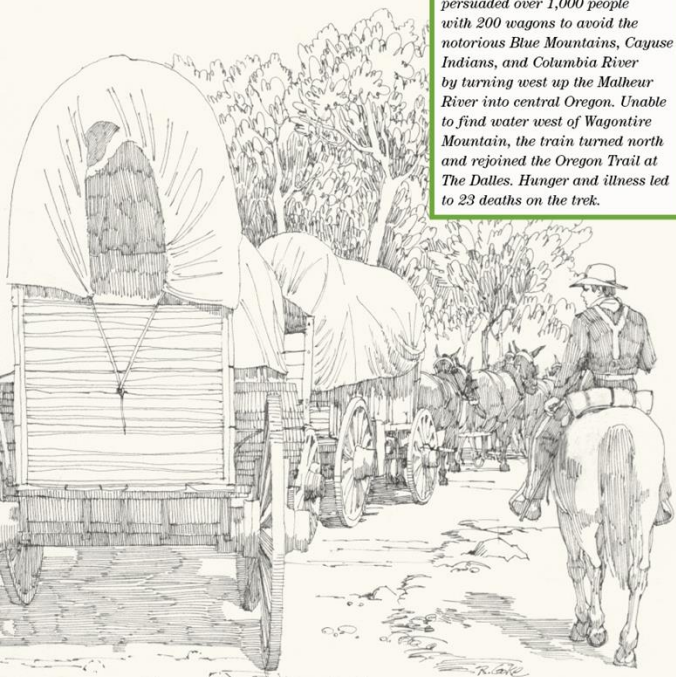
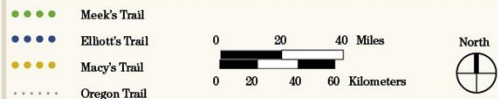
**The Elliott Cutoff of 1853**

Elijah Elliott convinced over 1,000 people with 215 wagons to attempt a shortcut over the partially completed Free Emigrant Road, which had been explored in 1852. Elliott's party followed Meek's route as far as the Harney Valley before striking a different course around Malheur and Harney Lakes. Continuing westward, they became disoriented and desperate. Scouts eventually found the Free Emigrant Road in the Cascade Mountains and reached the Willamette Valley settlements. The settlers soon organized a rescue party to help the stranded emigrants.

**The Macy Cutoff of 1854**

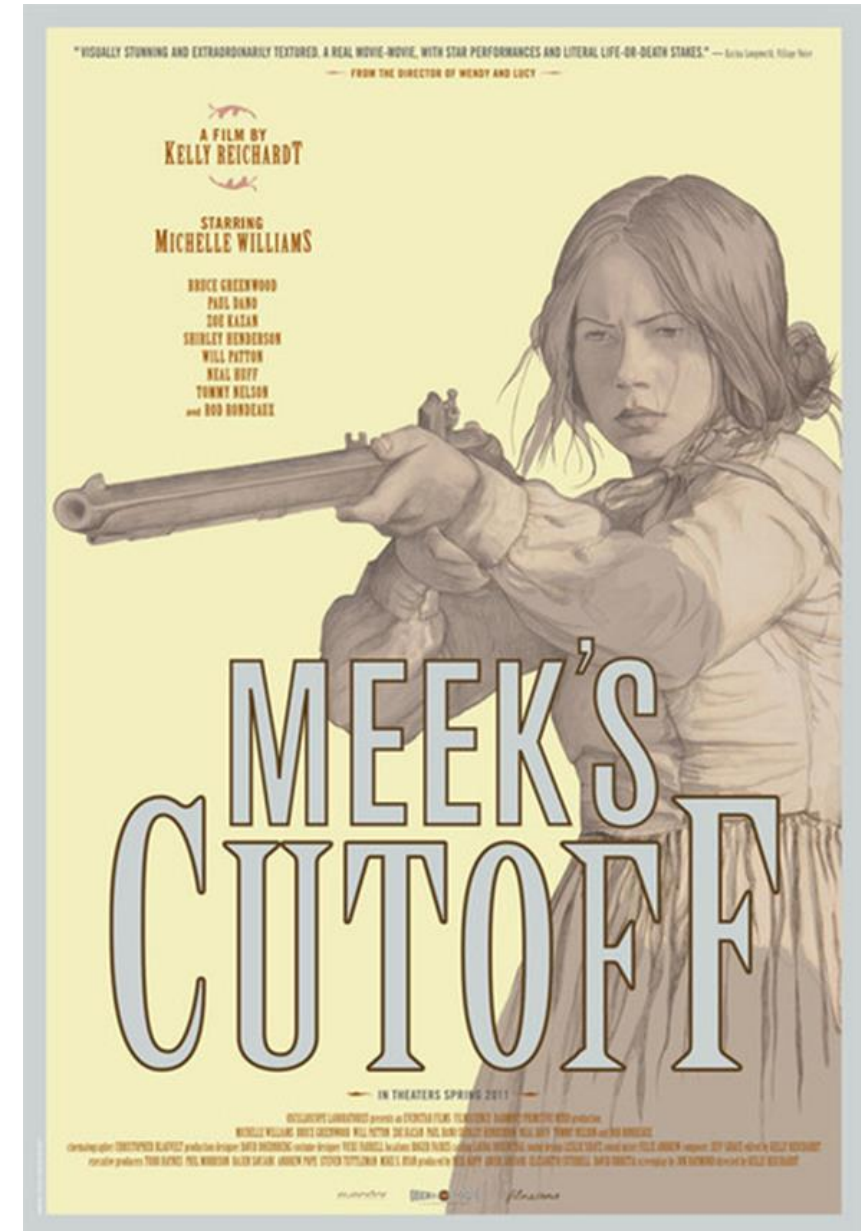
In 1852, the road districts of Benton, Lane, and Linn Counties had jointly hired William Macy to find a route between Skinner's (now Eugene) and the distant Malheur River. Macy crossed the Cascade Mountains and followed the Deschutes River north until he turned east on the Meek Cutoff. A skirmish with Snake Indians in the Harney Valley forced the party to abandon the search. The venture led to the eventual construction of the Free Emigrant Road. In 1854, Macy led 121 wagons over much the same route as Elliott's without recorded difficulty.

**Map Legend**



# MEEK'S CUTOFF — THE FILM

- Released 2011, Rated PG
- Directed by Kelly Reichardt (Wendy & Lucy, Old Joy)
- Starring Michelle Williams



# WARNING! WARNING!

- Los Angeles Times: “a lyrical poem for some, like watching paint dry for others. I’d argue for embracing the poetic.”
- If you feel like this film is as boring as watching paint dry, think about WHY the film moves at the pace it does (there IS a reason).
- Also, no bathroom breaks today.
- Points for watching today (meaning NO sleeping or phones)
- You will be quizzed on the details of the film



# FOURTH LEG — SETTLING IN OREGON

- Followed Columbia to Willamette Valley, OR
- Willamette Valley was the ultimate goal for those on the Oregon Trail.
- Once there, they claimed their land and began to farm





OLD OREGON TERRITORY 1848

WASHINGTON

FORT VANCOUVER 1825

Columbia River

WHITMAN MISSION 1836

FORT WALLA WALLA

THE WALLEES

BAKER CITY

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SCOTT'S BLUFF

NEBRASKA

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COUNCIL BLUFFS

IOWA

FORT KEARNY

KANSAS

FORT LEAVENWORTH

INDEPENDENCE

MISSOURI

TEXAS

OKLAHOMA

Arkansas River