[ CHAPTER EIGHT ]

# FIRST WHITE WOMEN TO CROSS THE ROCKIES 1836

The day that Whitman-Satterlee party left Pittsburgh, March 15, 1836, Narcissa wrote her first travel letter which she addressed to her mother: "Dear, Dear Mother: —Your proposal concerning keeping a diary as I journey comes before my mind often. I have not found it practicable while traveling by land, although many events have passed which, if noted as they occurred, might have been interesting. We left Pittsburgh this morning at ten o'clock, and are sailing at the rate of thirteen miles an hour. It is delightful passing so rapidly down the waters of the beautiful river. The motion of the boat is very agreeable to me, except when writing. Our accommodations are good; we occupy a stateroom where we can be as retired as we wish" [Letter 20].

Four of these travel letters are extant, dated March 15 and 31, and June 3 and 27. Two are missing: May 15 and July 7.[1] Sometimes Narcissa made daily entries in these letters, thus making them more of a diary than just letters; at other times, she would summarize the events of a week or more. Narcissa was a gifted writer. Her letters and diary are filled with interesting anecdotes, vivid descriptions, with now and then a touch of humor. She was fully aware of the uniqueness of the experience which lay before her as twice in these letters, she referred to their travels as "an unheard of journey for females," as indeed it was.

The *Siam* took two days to go from Pittsburgh to Cincinnati, as the missionaries arrived there on Tuesday noon, the 17th. The Spaldings were eagerly awaiting their coming and for the first time Narcissa and Eliza met. Writing to her sister Jane on April 7, Narcissa commented: "Mrs. Spalding does not look nor feel quite healthy enough for our enterprise. Riding affects her differently from what it does me. Everyone who sees me compliments me as being the best able to endure the journey over the mountains from my looks. Sister S. is very resolute, no shrinking with her. She possesses good fortitude. I like her very much. She wears well on acquaintance. She is a very suitable person for Mr. Spalding, has the right temperament to match him. I think we shall get along very well together; we have so far."

Undoubtedly, a main subject for conversation when the two couples first met was the possible difficulties involved in taking white women over the Rockies. While passing through Pittsburgh, Spalding had opportunity to meet the famous painter of Indians who had been on an expedition to the far west in 1832 and who could, therefore, speak out of first-hand knowledge. We have Catlin's advice in Spalding's letter to the American Board dated March 2, 1836: "He says he would not attempt to take a white female into that country for the whole of Am; for two reasons. The first, the enthusiastic desire to see a white woman every where prevailing among the distant tribes, may terminate in unrestrained passion, consequently in her ruin... 2nd, the fatigues of the journey, he thinks, will destroy them. 1400 miles from the mouth of the Platte, on pack horses, rivers to swim, and every night to spend in the open air, hot suns and storms. The buffalo meat we can live on doubtless. But this like the other objections you see is supposed. No female has yet made the trip."

Henry and Eliza Spalding were as ready to undertake the venturesome journey as were Marcus and Narcissa Whitman.

To avoid traveling on Sunday, the Whitman-Spalding party stayed over in Cincinnati until the following Tuesday, March 22, when they resumed their voyage down the river to St. Louis on the *Junius*. Here is another example of the Puritanical emphasis on Sunday observance and the reluctance to travel on that day which was characteristic of American Protestantism of that generation.

Whitman and Spalding took advantage of the days spent in Cincin-

nati to buy some supplies for their overland journey, drawing upon the American Board for $200.00 for that purpose. On Sunday the mission party, now enlarged to nine, attended the Presbyterian Church where they heard Dr. Lyman Beecher preach. Narcissa, in her diary-letter begun on March 15, said that after their short sojourn in the city, they "felt strengthened and comforted as we left… to pursue our journey into the wilderness."

The missionaries had expected to reach St. Louis before the following Sunday, but Saturday night found them still eighty-nine miles from their destination. The steamer, as was sometimes the custom of the river boats at that time, tied up for the night. On Sunday morning the party disembarked at Chester, Illinois, again to avoid traveling on that day. After spending the day with a small group of Christians found in that village, the mission party was fortunate in being able to secure passage on another steamer, the *Majestic*, which was passing up the river Monday morning on its way to St. Louis. Delayed by fog, the vessel did not tie up at a wharf in the city until Tuesday afternoon, March 29.

As soon as he was able, Whitman went to the post office to see if any mail had arrived for him or for others in the party. He found letters from Greene and the War Department, but nothing from loved ones. Narcissa expressed her deep disappointment by writing in her diary: "Husband has been to the Office expecting to find letters from dear, dear friends at home but finds none. Why have they not written, seeing it is the very last, last time they will have to cheer my heart with intelligence from home, home, sweet home, and the friends I love." Here we see a homesick Narcissa. After thus opening her heart, she added words which she underlined: "<u>But I am not sad</u>."

The day after their arrival in St. Louis, the Whitmans and the Spaldings visited the new Catholic Cathedral. This venerable and historic building stands today on the west central side of the recently established Jefferson National Memorial. Started in 1831 and dedicated in 1834, the Cathedral had been in the course of construction when the Nez Perce delegation visited St. Louis in the winter of 1831–32. The older building, which the Indians had visited, might still have been standing when the Whitmans and Spaldings were there. Had they known about the contacts the Oregon Indians had with the Catholic clergy in St. Louis, they would no doubt have shown keen interest in the first Cathedral.

The Whitmans were met in St. Louis by an old acquaintance of Narcissa's, the Rev. Milton Kimball, a Presbyterian minister and a field agent of the American Board. In the course of showing them the sights of the city, he took them to the new Cathedral at a time when an Archbishop was conducting High Mass. The strange ritual, the unfamiliar Latin chants, the richly embroidered vestments, the candles, and the incense all left an unfavorable impression on the missionaries. This may have been the first time any of them had ever witnessed a Roman Catholic service.

We must remember that the Whitmans and the Spaldings were heirs to the strong anti-Catholic feeling common to Protestantism in the United States in that generation.[2] Describing her reactions, Narcissa in a letter to her sister Jane, dated March 31, wrote: "While sitting there and beholding this idolatry, I thot of the whited seplucher which indeed appeared beautiful to men but within was full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness" [Matt. 23:27]. And Eliza wrote that same day in her diary: "...the unpleasant sensations we experienced on witnessing their heartless forms and ceremonies, induced us soon to leave, rejoicing that we had never been left to embrace such delusions." [3]

We should remember that Narcissa was writing in the privacy of a family letter and not for publication; Eliza was confiding her thoughts to her diary meant only for herself. The comments of the two women no doubt reflected their husbands' attitudes towards Roman Catholicism.

## Official Government Permit to Reside in Oregon

While at Cincinnati, Spalding had received a letter from Greene dated February 25 giving the Board's official consent for the change of destination for the Spaldings.[4] Greene wrote: "I have written to the Secretary of War for letters of introduction & permits to enter & reside in the Indian country, which I have requested him to forward to St. Louis for yourself & Dr. Whitman." Old Oregon was then a semi-foreign land with both the United States and Great Britain exercising joint occupancy under the Treaty of 1818, so the permits which Greene requested of the War Department were called passports in the official records.

We have no evidence that Greene had requested such a permit for Samuel Parker nor is there evidence that the Methodist Church had requested such for Jason Lee and his associates. Certainly the mountain

men who were trapping beaver on both sides of the Continental Divide never bothered about asking for such a document. The initiative in securing passports for the missionaries of the American Board seems to have been taken by Greene early in January 1836 when it became apparent that a mission party would be going to Oregon that spring. In reply to Greene's request, Lewis Cass, who served as Secretary of War 1831–36, wrote on January 20 that the War Department approved "the design of the Board," and that permission for Whitman and his associates to live among the Indians of Oregon was granted.[5]

When Greene learned that Spalding had consented to accompany Whitman to Oregon, he wrote again to Secretary Cass asking for another permit in which Spalding would be mentioned. According to the custom of the time, no reference was made to their wives. This revised passport, dated "War Department, Office of Indian Affairs, March 2, 1836," was in the Post Office in St. Louis when Whitman called for his mail on March 29. The document reads as follows:

> The American Board of Foreign Missions have apprised the Department that they have appointed Doctor Marcus Whitman and Rev. Henry Spalding, late of the State of New York, to be missionaries and teachers to *reside* in the Indian country among the Flat Head and Nez Perce Indians.
>
> Approving the design of the Board those Gentlemen are *permitted to reside in the Country*, and I recommend them to the officers of the Army of the United States, to the Indian Agents and to the citizens generally and *I request for them such attention and aid as will facilitate the accomplishments of their objects, and protection should circumstances require it.*[6]

Here is the United States Government's official permission for the missionaries to travel through Indian country and to live among the natives in Oregon for the purpose of establishing mission stations. This passport gave the promise of protection by the U.S. Army and Indian Agents "should circumstances require it." Not one of the several memorials sent to Congress by the American residents of the Willamette Valley, beginning in 1838, refers to this promise of the Government to protect its citizens in Oregon. Evidently the writers of these memorials were unaware of the passport and the promises therein contained.

## Final Instructions from Greene

Among the letters Whitman received at St. Louis was one from Greene dated March 4, 1836. In his final instructions, he gave some sound advice. Greene first dealt with the associations that the missionaries would have with "traders, agents, &c," and wrote: "Let your conduct be unblameable, exemplary & free from the appearance of evil. Do not feel it necessary to be the forward reprover of everything wrong among this class of persons, remembering that your business is almost exclusively with the Indians. While you are strict & uncompromising as to yr. own principles & conduct, do not be harsh & dictatorial to others. Do them good & be kind to all as you have opportunity. Let Christian love shine brightly in all that you do."

A second subject was "The Sabbath." "Keep it strictly," Greene urged, "and let the Indians & all others see that you do so. Make the distinction between that and other days as broad and obvious as you can... You must introduce the Sabbath, explain its meaning, design & use. You must fix the standard of its sacredness." [7] Here is a reflection of the Puritan movement which was strong in England and Scotland beginning shortly before the reign of Elizabeth I. All saints days and special holy days were eliminated from the calendar, and emphasis was placed on keeping the Sabbath, as Sunday was then called. To this day the observance of Christmas and Easter in most Presbyterian churches in Scotland is minimized. Christmas is a family day, and every Sunday "a day of resurrection."

It was a matter of great concern to the missionaries that Sunday was never observed by the caravan of the American Fur Company, with which they were to travel while crossing the plains. Their diaries and letters are sprinkled with comments which reflect their distress. If they traveled with the caravan on Sunday, they would be breaking one of the ten commandments: "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy." If they remained in camp, they might be robbed or even killed by hostile Indians. The dilemma was real and most distressing. When the American Board's 1838 reenforcement to the Oregon Mission paused for a few days in Cincinnati, a member of the party asked Dr. Lyman Beecher what he would do when conscience clashed with caution. "Well," replied the practical theologian, "if I were to cross the Atlantic, I certainly would not jump overboard when Saturday night came." [8]

A third word of advice from Greene urged the missionaries to concentrate on benefiting the Indians. "Avoid all secular and political interference with any class of men. Engage in no trading not absolutely necessary for obtaining the necessaries of life for yr-selves and families… Let all yr worldly and secular concerns be as limited and compact as yr circumstances will permit." Wise advice! The Methodist Mission in the Willamette Valley came under the severe censure of the Hudson's Bay Company because of its business activities, but such criticism was never directed to the Oregon Mission of the American Board. Writing to the Governors of the Hudson's Bay Company in London on October 18, 1838, James Douglas, later to become a Chief Factor of Fort Vancouver, expressed his fears regarding the intentions of the Methodist missionaries to engage in trade. "My remarks apply solely to the Methodists," he wrote, "and have no reference to the Calvinist missionaries who voluntarily came forward and pledged themselves not to trade furs." [9]

"Live near to God," urged Greene in his concluding remarks. "May yr mission be as life from the dead to the benighted tribes of the remote west." On the whole, this was a good letter, filled with wise and kindly counsel.

## From Narcissa's Letters

To Narcissa Whitman, the journey from her home in New York State to far-away Old Oregon was a thrilling and a wonderful experience. Her letters, more than those of any other member of the mission parties of 1836 or 1838, reveal the excitement of the West and the first impressions of an alert observer of the wonders along the route.

After telling of her impressions of the Roman Catholic Mass, Narcissa mentioned the fact that Elijah Lovejoy, the well-known editor of an abolitionist paper then being published in St. Louis, had called at the boat and had invited the Whitmans to dine with him. Marcus talked with him but Narcissa happened to be absent at the time. The Whitmans were unable to accept Lovejoy's invitation. "He wished to know when we were married," Narcissa wrote, "because he designed to publish it in the Observer." The April 7 issue of Lovejoy's paper reported the marriage of Marcus and Narcissa and noted that they had passed through St. Louis en route "to the Bored Nose [i.e., Nez Percé or Pierced Nose] Indians." [10]

Under date of March 30, Narcissa wrote in her journal-letter: "I think I should like to whisper in Mother's ear many things which I cannot write. If I could only see her in her room for one half hour. This much, Dear Mother, I have one of the kindest Husbands and the very best every way." Then Narcissa added a special message for her father: "Tell Father by the side of his calomel, he has a quarter of a pound of lobelia and a large quantity of Cayenne which will answer my purpose better than some of the apothecary medicines."

The average reader of today will miss the significance of the reference that Narcissa here made to lobelia and cayenne pepper, but to those acquainted with America's medical history, those words stand out like words on a telegram. They are the code words for Thomsonianism, a medical cult founded by Samuel Thomson, an illiterate New Hampshire farmer, in 1808. Thomson strongly opposed the use of epsom salts and calomel, and the practice of bleeding. These were the favorite remedies of the regular physicians whom Thomson called "mineral murderers." He maintained that all medicines except those of vegetable origin were poisonous. His treatment called for the patient to take a drink made from the herb *lobelia inflata*, which acted as a powerful emetic. Hence the regular doctors called the Thomsonian practitioners "puke-doctors." After inducing vomiting, Thomson would make the patient perspire by having him take "hot-drops" prepared by a patented formula, the principal ingredient being cayenne pepper.[11]

Since Judge Prentiss was a Thomsonian, it appears that Narcissa, out of respect for his views, was inclined to follow the same remedies when needed. Yet she had married one of the "mineral murderers." The fact that Marcus was willing to take with them to Oregon a small quantity of lobelia and cayenne pepper, "by side of his calomel," reveals his tolerant spirit. Since no further reference to these items appear in later letters of the Whitmans, we may assume that Narcissa gave up her father's medical theories and accepted those of her husband.

## St. Louis to Liberty

The mission party secured accommodations on the *Chariton* which left St. Louis "immediately after dinner" on Thursday, March 31, for Liberty, Missouri. At twilight the steamer moved out of the wide sweep of the Mississippi and entered the narrower channel of the Missouri

River. The moon shone in all its brightness making night navigation possible. The newly-wedded couple of six weeks found the scene exhilerating. "It was a beautiful evening," wrote Narcissa to Jane. "My husband and myself went upon the top of the boat to take a commanding view of the scenery. How majestic, how grand was the scene. The meeting of two such great waters. 'Surely how admirable are thy works, O Lord of Hosts!' I could have dwelt upon the scene still longer with pleasure but Brother Spalding called us to prayers and we left beholding the works of God for his immediate worship." The Spaldings had been married nearly three years and by that time Henry evidently had more religion than romance in his soul.

On April 1, the wide-eyed and excited Narcissa wrote: "My eyes are satiated with the same beautiful scenery all along the coasts of this mighty river so peculiar to this western country. One year ago today since my husband first arrived in St. Louis on his exploring route to the mountains. We are one week earlier passing up the river this spring than he was last year." Whenever the boat stopped to take on fuel for the wood-burning engine, Marcus and Narcissa would go ashore where they "rambled considerably in pursuit of new objects."

The vessel stopped at Jefferson City, the half-way point to Liberty, on Saturday evening and continued on its way on Sunday. With troubled consciences the missionaries stayed aboard. There was no other choice. The three hundred mile journey from St. Louis ended on Thursday, April 7, when the party disembarked at Liberty on a raw spring morning with the thermometer registering 24° at nine o'clock. Liberty was about half-way between their homes in New York State and Fort Walla Walla on the Columbia River. So far they had traveled most of the way in comparative ease on river steamers. Nineteen hundred miles of prairie, mountain, and desert stretched before them. The most trying part of their journey lay ahead.

Again turning to Narcissa's letter to her sister, we read: "I have such a good place to shelter, under my husband's wings. He is so excellent. I love to confide in his judgment and act under him. He is just like Mother in telling me my failings. He does it in such a way that I like to have him, for it gives me a chance to improve. Jane, if you want to be happy, get a good husband and be a missionary… The way looks pleasant notwithstanding we are now near encountering the difficulties of *an unheard of journey for females*." [12]

Before leaving St. Louis, Whitman had learned that the American Fur Company was planning to ship some of its personnel and supplies to Bellevue on the steamer *Diana*. This boat was scheduled to sail from St. Louis a couple of weeks after the *Chariton*, on which the missionaries had booked passage to Liberty. Whitman requested permission for his party to board the *Diana* at Liberty and thus be taken to Bellevue. The request was granted, thus giving Whitman and Spalding about two weeks at Liberty in which to complete arrangements for their overland journey, including the buying of horses, mules, cows, and supplies.

Members of the mission party were delighted to receive some mail at Liberty. Narcissa got a letter from her brother-in-law, the Rev. Lyman Judson, who had married her sister Mary Ann. This was the only letter she received from any member of her family for nearly two and a half years.

## William Henry Gray

Whitman received a letter from Greene at St. Louis dated March 9, when the mission party was already one week on its way to Pittsburg. It brought the good news that a single man had been appointed to go with them, William Henry Gray. Greene wrote: "Since I wrote you last, our Com. have appointed a Mr. Gray, a good teacher, cabinet maker and house-joiner, from Utica, to yr mission, and instructed him, if when he receives our letter he shall think he can overtake you before you leave the frontier, he may start after you. He is highly recommended, and we hope that he will make a valuable assistant. He said that he would be ready to start in two days after receiving his appointment. We hope that he may overtake you." [13]

Gray caught up with the mission party at Liberty on April 19, and announced that he had been appointed by the American Board to go with them to Oregon as a mechanic. The Whitmans and the Spaldings welcomed him with enthusiasm. Since Gray became such a controversial figure in the Oregon Mission, it is well to review briefly the circumstances leading up to his appointment and something of his qualifications.

Gray was born at Fairfield, New York, on September 8, 1810, and was possibly living there when Whitman was a student at the Fairfield Medical College, 1825–6. It is altogether possible that the two attended the same church during that winter and had other social contacts, never dreaming of their future associations in Old Oregon.

Following the death of his father in 1826, Gray became an apprentice to a cabinetmaker at Springfield, Otsego County, New York, where he remained until he was twenty-one, when he moved to Utica. Judging by the letters of recommendation received by the American Board and some extant letters that he wrote, Gray's education was limited. He was described, in one of the letters of recommendation, as being "an extremely dull scholar." Gray joined the Presbyterian Church in Utica in November 1831. His brother John was a Presbyterian minister who hoped that William would also enter the ministry.

Gray was ambitious, always striving for a status in life higher than that for which he was qualified. In the fall of 1835, he aspired to be a doctor and "commenced riding with a practising physician" in Utica, who likewise found Gray to be very "dull."[14] It so happened that Gray boarded at the same place in Utica where the Rev. Chauncey Eddy, a field agent of the American Board, was also taking his meals. As has been stated, as early as December 8, 1835, Greene had suggested to Whitman that he get in touch with Eddy about possible associates for the Oregon Mission. Evidently Whitman had delayed in doing so until in desperation, for fear that he would not find someone, he wrote to Eddy sometime during the early part of February. Eddy, who had a favorable impression of Gray, asked him on February 15 if he would be interested in joining Whitman and going to Oregon as a missionary. This happened to be the very day that Whitman wrote to Greene to report his success in finding the Spaldings.

Gray's response to Eddy's question was immediate. He declared himself ready to go on two days' notice, "or less if necessary." The Rev. Ira Pettibone, pastor of the church of which Gray was a member, sent a testimonial to the Board which carried the endorsement of two of his elders. The following extracts from Pettibone's letter are most revealing:

> We think him possessed of ardent piety... He has a tolerable share of what may be called common sense... He evinces an unusual share of perseverance; and a confidence in his own abilities *to a fault*... His literary acquisitions are slender owing to the fact that he is a *slow scholar*... He is a skillful mechanic... He has good health and a firm constitution. [And then Pettibone added the following: ] Brother Gray has by no means the qualifications that we think

desirable for such a station but perhaps as many are combined in him as in any young man of our acquaintance who is willing to go.

The Prudential Committee of the Board acted in haste on Gray's application sometime after February 25 and before March 9.[15] Gray must have received word of his appointment sometime during the first week of March and left at once for Liberty. He is reported to have been engaged to a young lady in Utica at the time, but there seems to have been no problem in postponing the marriage.

The suddenness with which Gray decided to go as a missionary to Oregon reflects his impulsive nature, while at the same time the haste in which the Board acted reveals the urgency it felt to recruit additional workers for the Oregon Mission. Secretary Greene, whose letters show him to have been a man of sound judgment, must have had some qualms of conscience when he approved the appointment of one who had such doubtful recommendations as Gray. Yet was it not better to send one with mediocre qualifications than none at all?

## Travel Outfit Assembled

The Whitmans and the Spaldings were greatly encouraged with Gray's arrival. Providence, they thought, had smiled on them again. During the twelve days at Liberty, before Gray arrived, Whitman and Spalding had been busy buying animals and assembling their equipment. On September 5, 1836, the three men submitted a financial report to the Board; from this we are able to obtain a good idea of the outfit they assembled for their overland journey.

The report, made out in Whitman's handwriting, lists total expenditures at $3,063.96. A large farm wagon was purchased to carry the heavier baggage over the first part of their journey. Spalding's light wagon was reserved for the women's use if needed and for some lighter items of supplies. Twelve horses, six mules, and seventeen head of cattle, including four fresh milk cows, were purchased. Whitman's judgment as to what was needed prevailed and this time he was not hampered by the negative vote of a Parker.

Whitman's itemized account follows: "Traveling & Provisions—$590.98; Labor—$275.75; Saddlery & Harness—$267.73; Cattle—$118.00; Indian goods to trade for horses & provisions—$225.25; Horses &

Mules—$926.00; Tools & Furniture—$219.03; Guns & Ammunition—$91.44; Clothing—$208.05; Books & Stationery—$74.57; Seeds—$7.17; Medicines & Instruments—$28.39; Incidentals—$35.20." The supplies included a tin plate, knife, fork, and cup for each person. Narcissa wrote of the women having rubber life preservers, "so that, if we fall into the water we shall not drown" [Letter 21]. Possibly these were purchased in Cincinnati before the party embarked on their voyage down the river. There is no reference to the women keeping these items after they left Liberty, Missouri.

More than one-third of the total cost of their outfit went for horses, mules, and cattle, including four milk cows. Writing to Greene on May 5, Whitman explained: "Our expenses have been much worse than I expected, horses and cattle cost over $1,000.00." Marcus gave Narcissa the choice of a horse or a mule to ride. She chose the horse. Richard, who was inclined to judge the value of a riding animal by its speed, took one look at the mule and exclaimed: "That very bad mule, can't catch buffalo" [Letter 21]. Side-saddles were purchased for the women. This permitted the left foot to remain in the stirrup while the right leg rested over a hook on the saddle.

While the men were busy assembling their livestock and equipment, Narcissa and Eliza were making a tent. Of this Narcissa wrote: "It is made of bed ticking in conical form, large enough for us all to sleep under, viz Mr. Spalding and wife, Dr. Whitman and wife, Mr. Gray, Richard Takahtoo-ah-tis, and John Ais—quite a little family, raised with a center pole and fastened down with pegs, covering a large circle. There we shall live, eat and sleep for the summer to come at least, perhaps longer." Whitman and Parker had used a small conical tent the previous year. Perhaps this shape was selected in imitation of an Indian tepee.

Narcissa's account continues: "We five spread our India Rubber cloth on the ground, then our blankets and encamp for the night. We take plenty of Mackinaw blankets which answers for our bed and bedding. When we journey, we place them over our saddles and ride on them" [Letter 21].

Both Whitman and Spalding, and likewise the four ministers of the 1838 reenforcement, were loath to carry guns, feeling that to do so was inconsistent with their role as missionaries. No indication has been found in the diaries or letters that any of these six men joined in

a buffalo hunt. As has been stated, Parker mentioned doing so on only one occasion. However, Whitman purchased guns and ammunition for his party, either because the American Fur Company insisted that all men traveling with its caravan be armed in case of an Indian attack, or for the use of men hired to hunt buffalo for food.

Whitman hired a young man by the name of Dulin to assist with the packing and the care of the animals and also welcomed to their party a young Nez Perce by the name of Samuel Temoni, who for some reason had visited the white man's country and was then returning to his people. Shortly after the mission party had left Liberty, a redhaired, nineteen-year-old youth from New Haven, Connecticut, Miles Goodyear, attached himself to the party.[16] Thus their number grew to ten five missionaries, three Nez Perces, and two hired men. Dulin left the party at the Rendezvous but Goodyear continued to Fort Hall.

On Thursday, April 21, Samuel Allis arrived at Liberty, having descended the Missouri River by boat from Bellevue. On the following Saturday, he was married to Miss Emeline Palmer, the Rev. H. H. Spalding officiating.[17]

## The Mission Party Almost Left Behind

Whitman had arranged with the American Fur Company in St. Louis for himself and the two women to be taken from Liberty to Bellevue on the Company's boat, *Diana*. Plans were made at Liberty for Spalding, Gray, the two hired men, and the Nez Perces to go overland with two wagons (including Spalding's) loaded with supplies and with the livestock. They were to proceed up the east bank of the Missouri River to a point opposite Fort Leavenworth, where there was a ferry, cross to the west bank and strike out in a northwesterly direction across the prairie to the Oto Agency on the north bank of the Platte River.

Whitman planned for the Spalding party to join the caravan of the Fur Company when it passed the Agency, which was located a few miles to the west of Bellevue. Only enough food was taken to carry them through to the buffalo range, with some additional items for the journey from the Rendezvous to Fort Walla Walla. Like the fur traders and trappers, the mission party expected to live on buffalo meat, either fresh or dried, for most of their journey. The Spalding-Gray party left Liberty on Wednesday, April 27.

Mrs. Satterlee, who had been ill ever since she left her home in Ithaca, died late Saturday night, April 30, at the age of twenty-three. Whitman performed an autopsy and discovered that she had succumbed to a lung disease of "long standing," undoubtedly tuberculosis. Just as the funeral service was about to be held on Sunday, May 1, the Fur Company's boat suddenly appeared on its voyage up the river. To the consternation and dismay of Whitman and the two women, the captain refused to stop. In response to Whitman's frantic appeals, the captain shouted back that he was loaded and could take no more passengers. Later Whitman learned that the captain had not been told of the arrangements made in St. Louis for the boat to pick up the three at Liberty and take them to Bellevue.

After the steamer had disappeared around a bend in the river, the missionaries returned to their sad duty of burying the earthly remains of Mrs. Satterlee. A new burden had suddenly been thrust upon Whitman's shoulders. He, more than any of the others, realized the absolute necessity for the protection of their small party while traveling through hostile Indian country. Unless he and the two women could get to the Oto Agency, about 300 miles distant, in time to join the Spalding party before the caravan passed, no Oregon Mission could be established that year.

Immediate plans had to be made to meet this emergency. Since Allis and Satterlee had planned to leave for Bellevue soon after Mrs. Satterlee's funeral, with their heavily loaded wagon, drawn by three yoke of oxen, Whitman decided that he and the women should travel with them. He hired a man with a wagon to take them to Fort Leavenworth. The mission party left Liberty on Tuesday, May 3. For a time Whitman was content to stay with Allis and Satterlee, but the progress being made by the oxen was too slow. Becoming impatient, Whitman sent Allis on ahead to overtake Spalding and request that the light wagon be returned for the convenience of the women. Allis caught up with Spalding near what is now the Kansas-Nebraska border and got the light wagon. Spalding, knowing that Whitman and the women would be following, continued on his way.

Since all of the heavy baggage had been placed in the wagons, including the tent, Whitman and the women had only their hand luggage and their bedding which they had expected to carry aboard the steamer. Until the light wagon returned with more camping equipment, the

three were obliged to sleep in the open. This was a rough initiation into the rigors of prairie travel for the two women.

After the death of Mrs. Satterlee, Whitman became concerned about Eliza Spalding's health. "I have some fears," he confided in his letter of May 5 to Greene written at Leavenworth, "with respect to Mrs. Spalding's ability to stand the journey." He knew that once on the trail away from civilization, there could be no turning back. The exigencies of prairie travel of that day meant that the Fur Company's caravan could not tarry for any one who became too sick to be moved. The sick and infirm either kept up with the caravan by riding in a wagon or were left behind. No favours could be expected, even for missionary women; they ventured forth at their own risk.

At Fort Leavenworth, the man whom Whitman had hired to take them to that place, turned back. Fortunately Whitman was able to find another team and driver to carry them until they met Allis. In spite of the great need for haste, the three missionaries spent Sunday, May 8, at the Methodist Mission for the Kickapoo Indians near the fort. On Monday, they resumed their pursuit of Spalding, and on the 11th or 12th met Allis with the light wagon. The Whitman party caught up with Spalding some time before Saturday, the 14th, when they were within eighteen miles of the Oto Agency. Again the missionaries obeyed their consciences and remained in camp over Sunday. On that day the Fur Company's caravan left Bellevue, under the command of Captain Fitzpatrick, with whom Whitman had traveled the previous year.

While the missionaries were encamped on Sunday, the 15th, a messenger arrived from Major John Dougherty, the Indian Agent assigned to the Otoes. Dougherty's brother was seriously ill and the Major begged Whitman to attend the sick man as soon as possible. Whitman left early Monday morning with the assurance that the messenger would return and guide the mission party to a crossing of the Platte River near the Oto Agency where Whitman would meet them on Tuesday. After ministering to the sick man, Whitman rode several miles west of the Agency and caught up with Fitzpatrick and the caravan. He urged Fitzpatrick to wait a few days until the mission party could catch up. Fitzpatrick was friendly and indicated his willingness to have the missionaries travel with the caravan, but insisted on the necessity of pressing on. He felt that the mission party could overtake the caravan before it reached

hostile Indian country. Whitman retrieved from Fitzpatrick the horses which had been left at Bellevue the previous fall.

When Whitman returned to the Platte River crossing on Tuesday, he found to his dismay that the Spalding party was not there. It did not arrive until the next day; the guide had got lost on the uninhabited prairie. This precipitated a new crisis; the caravan was moving further and further away with each passing day.

The spring rains had swollen the Platte River, and fording was impossible. Driving the livestock across was a simple matter. The real problem lay in getting the wagons and heavy baggage across. Fortunately, an Indian canoe was found large enough to carry about six hundred pounds. Narcissa wrote: "We stretched a rope across the river and pulled the goods over in the canoe without much difficulty" [Letter 26]. In this same letter to Whitman's brother, Augustus, Narcissa said: "Husband became so completely exhausted with swimming the river on Thursday, the 19th, that it was with difficulty that he made the shore the last time. Mr. Spalding was sick, our two hired men good for nothing." The crossing was not completed until Friday night.

Precious time was lost Saturday morning when one of the wagons had to be repaired. The missionaries were not able to resume their march until early afternoon. By that time they realized that they had too much baggage. Regretfully they gave many items to Dunbar and Allis. Spalding found it necessary to part with some of his treasured theological books. With the Fur Company's caravan four days in advance and knowing that unless they caught up with it before coming to the Pawnee Indian villages, it would not be safe to travel without escort, the mission party pressed on in haste. The outlook was bleak, and they faced the fact that they might have to turn back.

## On the March

With Dunbar as their guide, they pushed westward along the north bank of the Platte River. They traveled all day Sunday, May 22, necessity making excuse for their troubled conscience, and they reached the Elkhorn River on Monday in time to cross it before dark. Mrs. Spalding in her diary tells of their using an Indian "skin canoe."[18] Here Dunbar left them, as another guide became available who was to stay with the party until they caught up with the caravan. On Tuesday, the 24th, the

missionaries made a grueling march of sixty miles. The Whitmans and the Spaldings rode most of the day in the light wagon. Although the wooden springs had little resiliency, the couples found that sitting upon bundles of bedding made riding fairly comfortable. Gray was in the larger wagon. The Indian boys drove the cattle, while Dulin and Goodyear looked after the horses.

The missionaries tried to reach the Loup River by Tuesday night, but the cattle gave out about nine o'clock in the evening, when they were still at least five miles from their objective. In view of these circumstances, the Whitmans decided to remain with the Indian boys and the cattle in the open prairie, while Gray and the Spaldings would continue on to the river. Narcissa wrote: "Husb[and] had a cup tied to his saddle in which he milked what we wished to drink. This was our supper" [Letter 26]. Early in the morning they were on the march again and rode to the river before breakfast. To their great joy, they saw the caravan on the opposite bank.

It took the missionaries half a day to cross the Loup River, and on Wednesday afternoon they made another forced march in order to catch up with the caravan. They drove until one o'clock Thursday morning, when with thankful hearts they joined the sleeping caravan. The race had been won! Later the missionaries learned that the failure of the Company to take axle grease for their seven heavily loaded wagons had caused a delay of several days shortly after the caravan had started. Two fat oxen had to be slain in order to make the grease. It was this delay which permitted the mission party to catch up. Had it not been for this lack of axle grease, a great many aspects of the subsequent history of the Pacific Northwest would have been much different.

Whitman, in a letter dated June 4 to Narcissa's parents, wrote: "We then felt that we had been signally blessed, thanked God and took courage." The last five words of this quotation are taken from Acts 28:15 and refer to an experience of the Apostle Paul who, when being taken as a prisoner to Rome, met some friends who comforted him. Paul wrote that "he thanked God and took courage." Since Whitman referred to this text on subsequent occasions, we can believe that it was especially meaningful to him. The failure of the Company to take axle grease, which in turn caused a delay for the caravan, was accepted by the missionaries as evidence of God's protective care over them.

On Thursday the caravan, with the mission party in the rear, passed the first of the Pawnee villages where Narcissa and Eliza experienced for the first time the sensation of being objects of great curiosity by the Indians. They were no doubt the first white women that most if not all the Indians had ever seen. Narcissa wrote: "We especially were visited by them both at noon and night. We ladies were such a curiosity to them, they would come and stand around our tent —peep in and grin in astonishment to see such looking objects" [Letter 26].

In Narcissa's chatty letter of June 3 to members of her family, we find many fascinating wordpictures of her experiences such as the following: "I told you how many bipeds there was in our company, now for the quadrupeds, —14 horses and six mules and fifteen head of cattle. We milk four cows[19]... if you wish to see the camp in motion, look away ahead and see first the pilot and the Captain Fitzpatrick, just before him —next the pack animals, all mules loaded with great packs —soon after you will see the wagons and in the rear our company. We all cover quite a space. The pack mules always string along one after the other just like Indians."

This letter reflects an exuberant spirit. Narcissa, the bride, was thoroughly enjoying her unusual experiences and took pleasure in telling her family back in Angelica about them. "I wish I could describe to you how we live so that you can realize it," she wrote. "Our manner of living is far preferable to any in the States. I never was so contented and happy before. Neither have I enjoyed such health for years. In the morn as soon as the day breaks, the first that we hear is the word arise, arise. Then the mules set up such noise as you never heard which puts the whole camp in motion. We encamp in a large ring—baggage and men, tents and wagons on the outside and all the animals, except the cows [which] are fastened to pickets, within the circle. This arrangement is to accommodate the guard who stands regularly every night and day, also when we are in motion, to protect our animals from the approach of Indians who would steal them... We are ready to start, usually at six—travel till eleven, encamp, rest and feed, start again about two—travel until six or before if we come to a good tavern—then encamp for the night."

Narcissa made light of the discomforts of prairie travel. Reading between the lines of her letter, we find her joking, laughing, and singing. "Our table is the ground," she wrote, "our table-cloth is an India

rubber cloth, used when it rains as a cloak; our dishes are made of tin basins for tea cups, iron spoons and plates, each of us, and several pans for milk and to put our meat in when we wish to set it upon the table each one carries his own knife in a scabbard and it is always ready for use. When the table things [are] spread, after making our forks of sticks and helping ourselves to chairs, we gather around the table. Husband always provides my seat and in a way that you would laugh to see us. It is the fashion of all this country to imitate the Turks."

The missionaries took with them bread and some other perishable supplies which lasted for a few days, and then the women were obliged to bake bread over an open fire. Regarding their food, Narcissa wrote: "Let me assure you of this, we relish our food none the less for sitting on the ground while eating. We have tea and a plenty of milk which is a luxury in this country. Our milk has assisted us very much in making our bread since we have been journeying. While the fur company has felt the want of food, our milk has been of great service to us, but was considerable work to supply ten persons with bread three times a day… What little flour we have left we shall preserve for thickening our broth, which is excellent. I never saw anything like buffalo meat to satisfy hunger."

The caravan reached the eastern edge of the buffalo range on June 2 when the first buffalo was killed. The mission party had been obliged to live for twelve days, after leaving the Platte River crossing, on the food they had taken with them and the milk from their cows. After being supplied with buffalo meat, Whitman took over the job of cook. Writing on June 27, Narcissa praised her husband for the talent he had in cooking the meat in different ways. "We have had no bread since [reaching the buffalo range]" she wrote. "We have meat and tea in the morn and tea and meat at noon. All our variety consists in the different ways of cooking. I relish it well and it agrees with me. My health is excellent, so long as I have buffalo meat I do not wish anything else. Sister S. is affected by it considerably, has been quite sick." Whitman, writing to Greene from the Rendezvous on July 16, reported: "Mrs. Spalding has suffered considerably from change of diet but in the end, I am confident her health will be greatly improved by the journey."

When a buffalo was killed for meat, the hunter would take the tongue, which was considered a great delicacy, and the hump ribs. The rest of the carcas would be left to rot. Cornelius Rogers, one of the

members of the 1838 reenforcement sent out to the Oregon Mission by the American Board, gave the following account of buffalo meat: "The meat is very sweet and easily cooked. Ten minutes boiling is enough, more will make it tough. The meat is sometimes 'jerked' by being dried in the sun or over a slow fire. In this state it can be kept for three or four days in the most sultry weather." [20] Since but few buffalo were to be found west of the Continental Divide, the missionaries were obliged to take some of the 'jerked' or dried meat with them on their westward journey across what is now southern Idaho.[21]

In her letter of June 3, Narcissa wrote: "Our fuel for cooking since we left timber (no timber except on the rivers) has been dried buffalo dung. We now find plenty of it and it answers a very good purpose, similar to the kind of coal used in Pennsylvania. (I suppose Harriet will make up a face at this, but if she was here she would be glad to have her supper cooked at any rate, in this scarce timber country)." On the treeless prairies, travelers used buffalo chips for fuel, often called them "prairie coal." A member of the Oregon emigration of 1852 noted in his diary that at first the women were most fastidious about picking up the chips and would wear gloves, but that passed and they "began gathering the buffalo chips with their bare hands." [22]

While on the march, the caravan averaged about twenty miles a day. Narcissa wrote: "It is astonishing how [well we] get along with our wagons where there are no roads. I think I may say [it is] easier traveling here than on any turnpike in the [States]" [Letter 26]. On the back page of this letter, Narcissa added a note for her sister-in-law, the wife of her husband's older brother, Augustus: "Now Sister Julia, between you and me, I just want to tell you how much trouble I have had with Marcus[23] two or three weeks past. He was under the impression that we had too much baggage and could not think of anything so easy to be dispensed with as his own wearing apparel, those shirts the Ladies made him just before we left home, his black suit and overcoat, these were the condemned articles, sell them he must as soon as he got to the fort [i.e., Laramie]. At first I could not believe him in earnest. All the reasons I could bring were of no avail, he still said he would get rid of them. I told him to sell all of mine too, I could do without them better than he could—indeed I did not wish to dress unless he could. I had already mended and repaired the coat he wears until it would not stay

on him…" Narcissa succeeded in persuading her husband to keep the shirts and other items of clothing.

After joining the Fur Company's caravan on May 26th, the missionaries found it necessary to travel on Sunday to the great distress of their consciences. The following quotation from Eliza Spalding's diary for May 29 is typical of expressions found in the writings of her compardons: "This is the second Sabbath that has dawned upon us since we left Otoe… Oh, the blessed privilege of those who can every sabbath go to the house of God with the multitude who keep holy day, and do not feel themselves under the necessity of journeying on the Lord's holy Sabbath." [24]

The caravan reached Fort Laramie on Monday, June 13, which meant that it was about five weeks earlier than was the caravan of the preceding year. There it remained for eight days before leaving on Tuesday, June 14, for the Rendezvous on Green River. During this interval the women had an opportunity to wash their clothes. Narcissa noted that only three such opportunities came to them en route; once at Fort Laramie, again at the Rendezvous, and the third time at Fort Boise [Letter 29]. The mission party was not given rooms within the Fort but remained encamped outside. Eliza mentioned in her diary what a welcome sight it was just to see the walls of buildings again. A worship service was held at the Fort on Sunday, June 19, at which Spalding preached and some of the men of the caravan attended.

## Through South Pass – July 4, 1836

Fitzpatrick left all of his wagons at the Fort and repacked the baggage on animals. Each mule was given a load weighing about 250 pounds and the horses a somewhat heavier pack. Whitman and Spalding left their big wagon and likewise arranged packs for the few animals they had, besides loading as much as possible on the light Dearborn wagon. This meant that the women, who had been alternating between riding horseback and riding in the wagon, would have to continue the trip on their side-saddles unless an emergency arose.

After leaving Fort Laramie on June 21, the caravan followed the south bank of the North Platte for about five days until it reached a crossing place near what is now Casper, Wyoming. Upon arriving there, Fitzpatrick found the river too high to be forded so boats had to be made

by stretching buffalo hides over a frame of willow branches. These were called "bull-boats" because only the skins taken from tough old buffalo bulls were used. The delay at the crossing included a Sunday, which permitted the missionaries to enjoy a day of rest and worship to their great satisfaction.

After crossing the river, the trail led along the north bank to the Sweetwater River which was then followed to the summit of the Rockies. The caravan paused for a short time at Independence Rock, that great landmark and register of the Oregon Trail. This isolated and monumental piece of granite is about 175 feet high, 2,100 feet long, and about a mile in circumference. This became a favorite camping spot for westward bound travelers, many of whom carved their names on the rock. According to Gray, "all the prominent persons" of the 1836 caravan cut their names on the south end of the rock.[25] If any member of the mission party did so, erosion has erased them, for no such inscriptions have been found.

July 4, 1836, was an epoch-making day in the history of the Pacific Northwest, for on that day Narcissa Whitman and Eliza Spalding rode through South Pass on the Continental Divide on their way to Old Oregon. They were the first white American women to do so and were seven years in advance of the first Oregon emigration wagon train of 1843. Narcissa and Eliza pioneered the way. What these two had been able to do riding side-saddles gave confidence to countless other women to follow in covered wagons.

Participants in some history-making incident are often unaware of its real significance at the time of the event. So it was with the Whitmans and the Spaldings as they rode over the Continental Divide on that July 4, in 1836. The only reference found in the contemporary writings of the members of the party is the following brief statement from Eliza's diary: "Crossed a ridge of land today; called the divide, which separates the waters that flow into the Atlantic from those that flow into the Pacific, and camped for the night on the head waters of the Colorado."[26] As far as Eliza Spalding was concerned, this was just another day of travel.

The editor of the *Missionary Herald*, in his report of the arrival of the mission party at Fort Vancouver in the October 1837 issue of his magazine, dismissed the significance of the crossing of the Rockies in a single

sentence: "Mrs. Spalding and Mrs. Whitman are believed to be the first white women who have crossed the Rocky Mountains." Although the editor failed to appreciate the significance of the event, Senator Lewis F. Linn of Missouri did not. When he learned of what Mrs. Whitman and Mrs. Spalding had been able to accomplish, he arose in the U.S. Senate on June 6, 1838, and declared: "*Thus has vanished the great obstacle to a direct and facile communication between the Mississippi Valley and the Pacific Ocean.*"[27] The great Rocky Mountain barrier had been breached. The door to Old Oregon had been opened for women and children!

After Whitman's visit to Washington and Boston in 1843, of which more will be said later, he returned with the first great Oregon emigration of 1843 and was largely responsible for the success achieved by the emigrants in taking their wagons west of Fort Hall and over the Blue Mountains into the Columbia River Valley. Writing to Greene on November 1, 1843, shortly after his return to his mission station, Whitman proudly stated: "If I never do more than to have been one of the first to take white women across the Mountains & prevent the disaster & reaction which would have occurred by the breaking up of the present Emigration & establishing the first wagon road across to the borders of the Columbia River, I am satisfied." Here we see a recognition by Whitman, seven years after he and Spalding had taken their wives over the Rockies, of the great significance of that accomplishment.

The Whitman massacre of November 1847 naturally focused attention on the Whitmans and the past history of the Oregon Mission. A writer in the *Oregon Spectator* for February 5, 1848, using the pseudonym "Oregonian," drew attention to the fact that Mrs. Whitman and Mrs. Spalding "were the first white females that ventured to try the perils of a journey across the mountains, which, at that time, was considered presumptuous in the extreme, and doubtless has contributed to dispel the fears and remove the dread of a passage from the Mississippi to the Columbia, more than all other adventures." Here is the judgment of a contemporary. "Oregonian" further stated: "I have no fears in venturing the assertion, that the simple act of these two females, sustained by others who have followed them[28] on a similar enterprise, has contributed more to the present occupancy of Oregon than all the fine-spun speeches and high-sounding words that have yet issued from the executive branch at Washington."

Years later the eloquent but historically inaccurate H. H. Spalding wrote the following highly embellished account of the crossing of the Continental Divide as part of a Resolution adopted by the Pleasant Butte Baptist Church of Linn County, Oregon, on October 22, 1869: "At twelve o'clock on the 4th of July last, thirty-three years ago, two Protestant heroines, Mrs. Spalding and Mrs. Whitman, alighted from their horses, themselves in great weakness, at the dividing point on the Rocky Mountains, in the famous South Pass, and after returning profound thanks to Almighty God for his heavenly care of them thus far, and dedicating themselves anew to his holy cause, with the banner of the cross in one hand and the stars and stripes in the other, they stepped down, the first American women, into the Territory of Oregon, and took formal possession in the name of their Saviour and their country, in the name of American mothers and of the American church; and being immediately confronted by the British lion, they instantly bearded the royal beast in his lair. Honorable day! It sealed the fate of Great Britain on these shores." [29]

The late Dr. Grace Raymond Hebard, once Professor of Economies and Sociology at the University of Wyoming, has added further embellishments to the story. In an article published in the *Washington Historical Quarterly* for 1917, she quoted Mrs. Spalding as saying when she stood in South Pass: "It is a reality of a dream that after four months of painful journey I am alive and actually standing on the summit of the Rocky Mountains where the foot of a white woman has never before trod." [30]

A drawing in Nixon's *Whitman's Ride Through Savage Lands* pictures the missionaries kneeling in prayer by a covered wagon and an American flag flying from a nearby flagpole. A similar illustration in Myron Eell's *Marcus Whitman* shows Spalding holding the flag while the other members of the party are kneeling as in prayer.

If such a dramatic prayer meeting had ever been held, surely Narcissa or one of the three men would have referred to it in some of their writings. Not one of the mission party ever referred to having a United States flag on their journey. Only Eliza Spalding made reference to the pass, as has been stated, when she wrote: "Crossed a ridge of land today; called the divide." We must dismiss Spalding's account as being nothing more than the embellishment of an old man's fertile imagination. Since the missionaries were accustomed to hold daily devotions, it may be that

when they met in worship on the evening of July 4, some mention was made of God's providence in bringing them safely over the Rockies. Such a meeting could have been the basis of Spalding's remarks made some thirty-three years later when memory and imagination became inseparably intertwined.

Eighty years after Narcissa Whitman and Eliza Spalding rode through South Pass, in June 1916, a patriotic citizen of Lander, Wyoming—Captain Herman G. Nickerson—placed an upright stone monument about three feet high at the summit of the pass along some of the ruts made by Oregon bound wagons. This monument bears the words:

NARCISSA PRENTISS WHITMAN. ELIZA HART SPALDING.
FIRST WHITE WOMEN TO CROSS THIS PASS. JULY 4, 1836.

1 Drury, *F.W.W.*, vol. I contains copies of Narcissa's travel letters and her diary.

2 Ray A. Billington, *The Protestant Crusade, 1800–1860*, Quadrangle Books, Chicago, 1964, gives an excellent history of the rise and spread of the anti-Catholic sentiment in the United States. One of the most influential and outspoken critics of Roman Catholicism was Dr. Lyman Beecher, under whom the Spaldings had studied at Lane Theological Seminary, Cincinnati.

3 Drury, *F.W.W.*, I:186.

4 Hulbert, *O.P.*, VI:189.

5 Copy in Office of Indian Affairs, Letters Received, 1843, Schools, W-2091, National Archives.

6 From copy in Coll. H., sent by Spalding to Hiram Bingham, Sept. 19, 1836. Permits were likewise secured for members of the 1838 reenforcement to the Oregon Mission.

7 Hulbert, *O.P.*, VI:194.

8 Eells, *Father Eells*, p. 89.

9 HBC Arch., B/223/b/8a.

10 Lovejoy's printing establishment in St. Louis was destroyed by an anti-abolitionist mob about a month after the Whitmans were in the city. Lovejoy then moved to Alton, Illinois, where he continued to publish his *Observer*. On November 7, 1837, another mob destroyed his press and killed him.

11 See Drury, *Whitman*, pp. 134 ff, for more details about this medical cult.

12 Italics, the author's.

13 Hulbert, *O.P.*, VI:197. Greene directed this letter to Independence, Mo., which was about fifteen miles from Liberty.

14 Eddy to Greene, Coll. A. Hulbert, *O.P.*, VI:188 ff.

15 Gray's name was not included in Greene's letter to the Secretary of War dated Feb. 25, 1836, when Greene asked for a passport for Spalding.

16 Gray, *Oregon*, p. 113, claimed that Goodyear was only sixteen years old and that he was from Iowa. See Hafen, *Mountain Men*, II:179 ff., for a sketch of his life.

17 See article by Allis, "Forty Years among the Indians on the Eastern Borders of Nebraska," in *Transactions and Reports of the Nebraska State Historical Society, II* (1887): 133 ff. Reference to his marriage is on page 148. Allis, in a letter to the American Board, July 14, 1836, said: "I think it is a hasty step to take Females across the Mountains at present."

18 Drury, *F.W.W.*, I:190.

19 Jason Lee took a small band of cattle across the country to Oregon in 1834. So far as is known, the taking of cattle by Whitman and Spalding was the second time such was done.

20 From letter of Cornelius Rogers, July 3, 1838, in *Oregonian & Indians Advocate* December 1838, p. 35. Also, *P.N.Q.*, 56 (1965):4:159.

21 See article by G. M. Christman on "The Mountain Bison," *American West*, Palo Alto, Calif., VIII (1971):3:44 ff. The mountain bison was a different subspecies of that of the plains. One characteristic was that the mountain bison was larger. A herd of the mountain bison is in Yellowstone National Park.

22 *T.O.P.A.*, 1905, p. 441.

23 Here is one of the few instances in the letters of Narcissa when she referred to her husband by his first name. Usually she called him "husband" or "the Doctor." The same reticence to the use of Christian names is found in the writings of all members of the Oregon Mission. It was never "Henry" or "Eliza" but rather "Mr. Spalding" and "Mrs. Spalding."

24 Drury, *F.W.W.*, I:191.

25 Gray, *Oregon*, p. 118.

26 Drury, *F.W.W.*, I:193.

27 *25th Cong. 2nd Sess., Document No. 470*, Report of Sen. Linn on Senate Bill, No. 206. Italics, the author's.

28 "Oregonian's" reference to the women who followed Mrs. Whitman and Mrs. Spalding was to the four women who crossed the Rockies in 1838 as members of the American Board's reenforcement to the Oregon Mission and to the five wives of independent missionaries who went out to Old Oregon in 1839 and 1840. Altogether eleven women rode horseback through South Pass before the first great Oregon emigration went west in 1843.

29 Spalding, *Senate Document*, p. 75. A similar statement appeared in the Chicago *Advance*, Dec. 1, 1870, p. 11.

30 *Op. Cit.*, VIII (Jan. 1917): p. 30. Although Mrs. Hebard refers to Mrs. Spalding's diary, she gave no precise reference and this quotation has not been found. The author does not believe it is authentic.