



The Cost of Moving West

In Chapter 6, Greg details all the supplies the Pirate provided for their trip west. Let's look at the cost of such a trip.

Most of the opportunities in Oregon related to farm work. In 1853, a farm laborer made approximately \$10 a month in the eastern United States. On the west coast (California and the Oregon territories), he would earn about \$50 per month.

Why would a farm laborer make more money on the west coast?

How long might a laborer or farmer have to work to save enough money for such a trip?

Why would a farmer be better prepared to make such a trip?

Why might a farmer who owned his own farm be better prepared to make such a trip?

In 1853, one US dollar equaled about \$21 in today's worth. After you figure out the cost of your trip based on a family of 4, two adults and two children. Multiply that amount by \$21 to know the cost of such a trip in 2018.

You can use the next page (developed by Mr. Gigliotti) to plan your expenditures. You should plan to spend less than \$1000.00 for all of your supplies. Don't forget you'll need some money along the way and once you reach either California or Oregon. (The following pages are borrowed from www.mrgigliotti.com.)

HINT: You might use Greg's list of what was left for them by the Pirate as a guide. Make sure you keep track of cost as well as weight! If you go over 1800 pounds, you'll need more than one wagon. You will also need more oxen! Some overloaded wagons used 6 or even 8 oxen! That means more cost in grain for the animals - don't forget they have to eat as well. By the way, who is going to drive that second wagon? If you need to add a wagon, are you going to need to add an adult to your party? That means extra food, etc. . . .

Mr. Gigliotti didn't include clothing, bedding, furniture, etc. . . . so I have added some costs for your figuring.

GENERAL STORE- INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI

DIRECTIONS: Shop for your supplies here. Consider what is necessary, how much money you have, how much weight you want to carry in your wagon, how much money you will need on the trail and in Oregon, and how you will prepare yourselves for disaster, should it strike.

Crossing the continent to settle in Oregon was not a journey for the faint of heart, and neither was it a journey for the poor. It required a minimum of about \$500 to outfit for the trip, and this could easily become \$1000 or more if an emigrant needed to purchase a wagon and draft animals. The food and other provisions needed to sustain a family on the Oregon Trail for six months took up most of the room in their wagon -- though the overlanders' wagons were structurally capable of carrying as much as two tons when in good repair, the conventional wisdom at the time was not to carry more than 1600-1800 pounds of cargo. A typical emigrant wagon started out from Missouri loaded down with flour, sugar, bacon, coffee beans, lard, spices, dried fruit, beans, rice, and perhaps even a keg of pickles (a popular and tasty choice for warding off the dangers of malnutrition). Add to that the weight of cast iron pots and pans, a kettle or two, a Dutch oven, and even more food for large families and you can see why some wealthier families brought two wagons... one for the food and one for everything else!

DRAFT ANIMALS

ox	\$30-35		
		minimum of 4-6, but it would be wise to have more	
milk cow	\$70-75		
beef cattle	\$8-20		
		priced by age (typically 1-3 years old)	
mule	\$10-15	mule collar	\$1.25
pack horse	\$25	horse blanket	\$2
riding horse	\$75	whip	\$1
bridle & blinders	\$3	pack saddle	\$2.50
tack & harness	\$5	saddle & bags	\$5

WAGONS

covered wagon	\$70		
farm wagon	\$30		
		had no "bonnet" to protect goods from the elements	
grease		potentially free	
		before petroleum could be distilled, animal fats were used as lubricants; the tallow was usually mixed with pine resin, or sometimes beeswax thinned with turpentine	
bucket	\$1		

SUNDRIES & CAMP EQUIPMENT

woolen blanket	\$2.50	candles	\$0.15 per pound
tent	\$10	wash tub	\$1.25
nails	\$0.07 per pound	bucket	\$0.25
soap	\$0.15 per pound		"tar buckets" for storing axle grease
sheet iron stove	\$15 - 20		had tight-fitting tops to keep flies out,
coffee mill	\$1.00		cost \$1
coffee pot	\$0.75	axe/shovel/hoe	\$1.25
frying pan	\$1.50	hand tools	\$2.50
stew kettle	\$0.50		such as augurs, planes, and saws
bread pan	\$0.25	rope	\$2.50
butcher knife	\$0.50		50' - 75' coil of 3/4" hemp rope
tin table settings	\$5		
			includes flatware, plates, and cups for a family of eight

WEAPONS

rifle	\$15		
shotgun/musket	\$10		
single-shot pistol	\$5		
powder & shot	\$5		
		shot was generally sold by the pound	
hunting knife	\$1		

FOOD

Recommended for each adult:

150 lbs. flour, 20 lbs. corn meal, 50 lbs. bacon, 40 lbs. sugar, 10 lbs. coffee, 15 lbs. dried fruit, 5 lbs. salt, half a pound saleratus (baking soda), 2 lbs. tea, 5 lbs. rice, and 15 lbs. beans

"... always remembering that such things do not lose their good taste by being brought on the plains.

- William N. Byers

flour	\$0.02 per pound	corn meal	\$0.05 per pound
bacon	\$0.05 per pound	sugar	\$0.04 per pound
coffee	\$0.10 per pound	dried fruit	\$0.06 per pound
salt	\$0.06 per pound	pepper	\$0.08 per pound
lard	\$0.05 per pound	vinegar	\$0.25 per gallon
saleratus	\$0.12 per pound	tea	\$0.60 per pound
rice	\$0.05 per pound	beans	\$0.06 per pound

ON THE TRAIL

Some examples of expenses the emigrant encountered while en route...

Indian moccasins	\$0.50	many emigrants wore out several pairs of shoes on the road to Oregon
buffalo hide	\$4.00	
crossing bridges	from \$0.15 to \$0.50 per wagon	prices for bridges and ferries were generally negotiable, and additional charges per head of livestock were common
ferrying rivers	\$2 - \$5 per wagon	
re-supplying	once beyond the frontier, prices at trading posts along the Oregon Trail were typically at least twice as high as those back East and could be much higher	

Miscellaneous:

butter churn	\$0.75 each	gunpowder	\$0.18 per pound
chicken coop	\$2.00 each	pistol	\$17.50 each
hammer	\$0.25 each	lantern	\$0.80 each
hatchet	\$0.25 each	books	\$1.00 each (most had a Bible)
featherbed & 2 pillows	\$18.00 set		
plow	\$5.00 each		
scythe	\$2.50 each		
shovel	\$0.25 each		
spade	\$0.25 each		
quilt	\$2.00 each		
washboard	\$0.20 each		



We can expect everyone to have at least one suit of clothing. But the rough wear their clothing will face in the next 7 to 10 months will mean each member of the family will need two additional sets of clothing.

Most women could and would sew their family's clothing from purchased cloth. Men could purchase ready made clothing such as pants, vests, and coats, even shirts.

For the purpose of this exercise, a lady's dress used about 10 yards of material. (Print fabric - \$0.11 per yard) A girl's dress about 3 yards (\$0.11 per yard). They also needed petticoats (6 yards), camisoles (2 yards), and pantaloons (3 yards). All would be made of muslin at \$0.10 per yard. They would also need two nightgowns, about 6 yards of flannel at \$0.15 per yard. Figure two of each for each female member of the family. Each would need a ready-made coat at \$10 each.

Men - two each shirts at 4 yards each (shirting at \$0.10 per yard). Coat - one at \$10 each. Vest - two at \$1.25 each. Pants - two at \$5 each.

Boys - One coat at \$10. Pants and shirt made by their mother. Pants two pair - 3 yards each of wool or ducking at \$0.15 per yard. Shirts 3 yards each (shirting at \$0.10 per yard).

Figure on shoes at \$5 each for adults and \$3 for children. At least two pair each as they will do a lot of walking.

Add in \$20 for miscellaneous clothing like hats, bonnets, shawls, scarves, etc. . . .

Add in \$10 for sewing implements such as needles, thread, scissors, and extra cloth to be used on the journey.



Map Exercises

A fun game can be found at <http://fourthgradegerich.weebly.com/oregon-trail-game.html> and <https://bit.ly/2YUPtJ4>

Beware - I died at the first river crossing!

Maps of both the Oregon and California Trails can be found at:

Oregon: <https://www.nps.gov/oreg/planyourvisit/maps.htm>

Interactive Trail Map: <https://imgis.nps.gov/> (Just click on the icon for the trail you wish to explore.)

California: <https://www.nps.gov/cali/planyourvisit/maps.htm>

Interactive Trail Map: : <https://imgis.nps.gov/> (Just click on the icon for the trail you wish to explore.)

Greg writes about several of the important landmarks along the trail. Pick one of the following and find images and information about the place on line. Create your own travel brochure about the site.

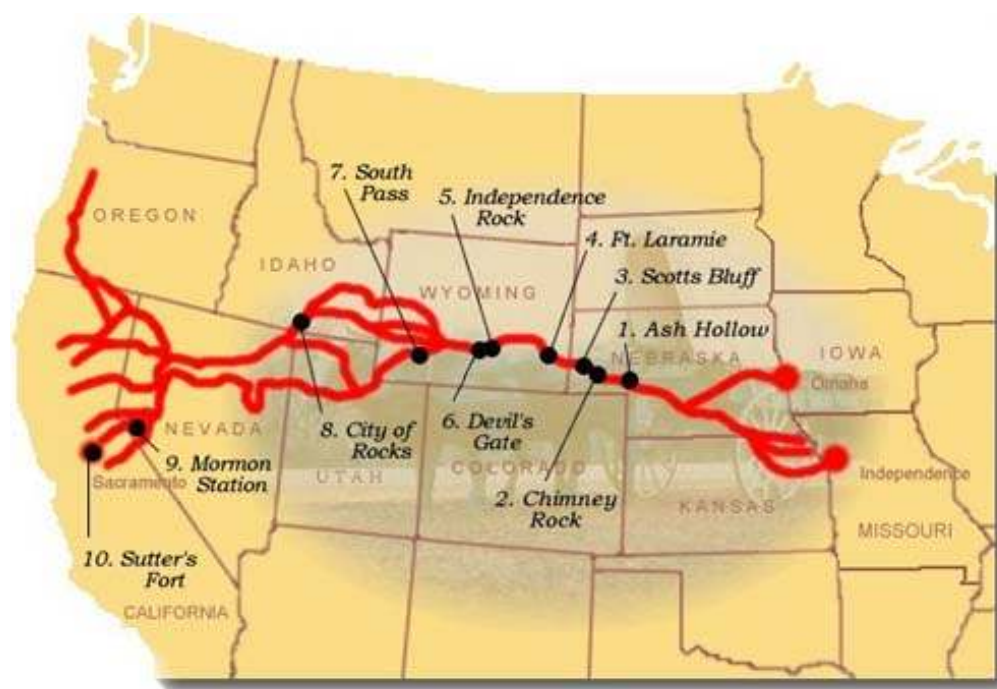
Fort Kearny
Fort Bridger
Fort Laramie

Independence Rock
Courthouse & Jail Rock
South Pass

Sweetwater River Crossings
Chimney Rock
Massacre Rock

You should include a location map, a description of the landmark and how/who named it. Pictures might be current or historic.

Try this link for historic images: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/>



Primary Sources

A History Channel short video introduces the subject of Westward Expansion. It also relates how primary sources can be used to study events in our past. Primary sources are written records of events compiled at the time of the event, such as diaries, newspapers, letters, official documents, family Bibles, etc. . .

Video at: <https://www.history.com/topics/westward-expansion/oregon-trail>

To explore primary sources for the Westward Expansion, you might try to find one of several volumes compiled by Kenneth L. Holmes. Each is entitled “Covered Wagon Women” and contains diaries from certain years. Volume 1 is from 1840 to 1849. Later volumes present diaries from only one year. Volume 6 covers the years 1853 to 1854, when Greg and his family were on the trail. You can also find diaries online at various sites. Here are a few:

<http://thediaryofkatedunlap.umwblogs.org/motivations-for-westward-movement/>

<http://www.over-land.com/diaries.html> (This is a list of available diaries.)

<https://digitalcommons.wou.edu/butlertranscripts/> (Look at the 1854/1854 letters)

<https://www.womenhistory.blog/2017/04/amelia-stewart-knight.html> (great site!)

<https://history.lds.org/overlandtravel/sources/92018646527763273990-eng/clayton-william-diary-1847-january-december?firstName=Green&surname=Flake>

Assignment:

Read portions or all of at least 3 diaries. Then create your own diary entries for three days in each month from May to September. There is a calendar on the next page to help you organize your trip and where you are on each day. You might include who you traveled with, how many wagons in your party, what you see each day, food you ate, rivers crossed, weather, etc. . . be inventive!



Comprehension Questions by Chapter

Answer each question with at least one complete sentence unless otherwise instructed.

- Chapter 1. Why is Greg grounded?
- Chapter 2. What conclusion could Greg and his Dad make from their search for the Pirate?
- Chapter 3. What time-travel adventure does Rose suggest to her father?
- Chapter 4. Name three other historic people Rose and her father meet.
- Chapter 5. How does the Pirate trick the Harrison and Jackson families? (Use 3 sentences)
- Chapter 6. Why did the two families decide to go west instead of east?
- Chapter 7. What task proves difficult for the Harrisons and Jacksons on the first morning in 1853?
- Chapter 8. What recent invention allowed the families to measure their travel distance each day?
- Learn more at: <https://www.farmcollector.com/equipment/roadometer-counted-settlers-distance-traveled>
- Chapter 9. Who was Melissa, and why was she at the Harrison's ranch?
- Chapter 10. Why did Ken visit Fort Kearny and Fort Laramie?
- Chapter 11. What did Greg do to get grounded? (Use 3 sentences.)
- Chapter 12. What made Rose believe the Harrisons and Jacksons were on the Oregon Trail?
- Chapter 13. Name four dangers the families encountered during this portion of the trip. Which one do you believe was the most dangerous and why?
- Chapter 14. Why did Rose suggest they start their time-search at 1840?
- Chapter 15. Who did Ken meet on his search?
- Chapter 16. Why was Maisie enlisted to help in the search?
- Chapter 17. What is South Pass?
- Learn more at: <https://www.wyohistory.org/encyclopedia/south-pass/>
- Chapter 18. Why did the search party go from Fort Laramie directly to Fort Bridger? (Use 3 sentences.)
- Chapter 19. Why did Rose shoot John Bomgarten?
- Chapter 20. Why did the Jacksons decide not to return to their time?
- Chapter 21. At Fort Hall, Rose reveals a bit about her ancestry. What does she tell us? Have there been any clues about her ancestry in this book or previous books in the series?
- Chapter 22. The Forty Mile Desert proved dangerous for the travelers. Name three dangers they encountered and how they handled each. (This answer should be a complete paragraph.)
- Chapter 23. What modern conveniences helped the travelers cross the snow covered mountains?
- Chapter 24. What language is the word Baidepe from? What does it mean?

Send the author an email at gregtimetravel@gmail.com about where you would like Greg to go next. Remember he cannot go into the future without some TTI from the future coming back to his time.

