

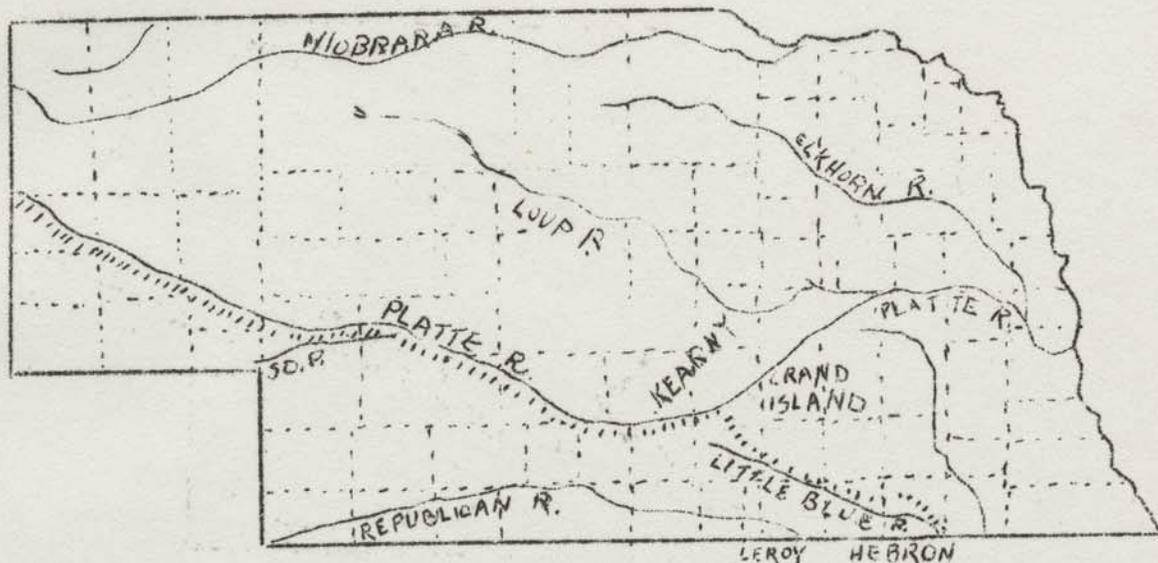
HISTORICAL TRAILS

OF NEBRASKA

Their work is done, their toil is o'er
These pioneers, for our trail they fell.
Let's lay a trail, with memories that tell,
We honor their names for evermore.

The Historical Trail - Signs and Activities

The historical trails of Nebraska will be so locally centered that it will be difficult to give type signs. Each town, such as Falls City and Plattsmouth where historical trails are being planned, will have to delve into the past of their town. Former sites of towns, Indian and pioneer trails and camps and the location of the Oregon Trail will be marked. Stories of the underground railroad, of pioneer bravery and self denial will be given on the signs and will play an important part in the programs given on these historical spots. Bird sanctuaries and floral and animal trails may lead out from the main historical trail. Falls City suggest some Indian symbolism and Plattsmouth the use of Turtle mound upon their signs. At McCook, signs upon the "Hero Trees" of the flood area will have thrilling stories to tell.



THE OLD OREGON TRAIL

Fig. XXXIX

This map was made according to the knowledge secured by Mr. W. Theodore Ocker, the artist of this bulletin, from researches made under the direction of the State Historical Society. The Oregon Trail entered Nebraska at the boundary line between Gate and Jefferson Counties, coming near to Hebron and Leroy, then following the south banks of the Platte River and out of the state. The Ash hollow crossing, Court House Rock, Mitchell Pass and Scottsbluff are all spots mentioned in the "Mighty Migration" as the story of the Oregon Trail is told by Francis Parkman who joined these covered wagon emigrants and traveled with them into the West.

If any Nebraska Nature Trails are laid near this noted historical highway, it would be most interesting to explore these trails and consult literature such as the State Historical Society can give, and possibly depict in pageantry some of the experiences of these pioneer travelers.

"THE WORLD'S GREATEST TRAIL"

"Worn deep and wide by the migration of 300 thousand people lined by the graves of 20 thousand dead, witness of romance and tragedy, the Oregon Trail is unique in history, and will always be sacred to the memories of the pioneers. Reaching the summit of the Rockies upon an evenly distributed grade of eight feet to the mile, following the water course of the River Platte and tributaries to within two miles of the summit of the South Pass, through the Rocky Mountain barrier, descending to the tide waters of the Pacific, through the valleys of the Snake and the Columbia, the route of the Oregon Trail points the way for a great National Highway from the Missouri River to Puget Sound: A roadway of greatest commercial importance, a highway of military preparedness, a route for a lasting memorial to the pioneers, thus combining utility and sentiment."

Ezra Meeker