

PHOTO: SIERRA NEVADA MTS.

"Tuesday, September 18. The summit of the great Sierra looms before us and must be passed today. It is steep and rocky, so much so as to make me doubt whether the pioneer wagons can ever be dragged over it. The ascent is between one and two miles. From the summit the eye takes in a stretch of country extending westward in a succession of mountain peaks, hills, and ravines far toward the Pacific Ocean. I could not help feeling joy at the thought that the great barrier was passed at last and we could now look down into the land of promise."

PHOTO: GOLD FIELDS.

NARRATOR: Bernard Reid arrived in the gold fields of California in late September 1849. A trip that had been advertised at 55 days took 165 days to complete. Reid was one of only eight members of the "Pioneer Train" to eventually reach San Francisco, the original advertised destination of the "Pioneer Line."

PHOTO: STEAMER\SAN FRANCISCO.

PHOTO: SCOTT FAMILY.

One family that chose to outfit their own wagon for the trip west was that of Sidney Scott who, in 1852, the year the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad reached its original goal of the Ohio River at Wheeling, sold his farm and packed up his wife and family of twelve children, to strike out for a better life in the Oregon Territory.

PHOTO: OREGON TRAIL WAGON TRAIN.

The Scotts joined a small wagon train for the 2,300 mile trek along the Oregon trail which would take nearly six months to complete.