



# On the Western Trails: The Overland Diaries of Washington Peck (The American Trails Series)

*Washington Peck*

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## **On the Western Trails: The Overland Diaries of Washington Peck (The American Trails Series)**

Washington Peck

A cooper and farmer from Ontario, Canada, Washington Peck (1801–89) spent decades traveling across the western frontier before finally settling in Washington Territory. Peck’s chronicle of his itinerant life offers fresh insight into some of the less traveled emigrant routes across the nineteenth-century West.

Peck left two wagon-train diaries—published here for the first time—that log western routes not often recorded: an 1850–51 trip to the California gold fields via the Platte River Road–Mormon Trail, the Salt Lake–Los Angeles southern route, and the California coastline; and a journey over the Santa Fe Trail in 1858, continuing on the Beale Wagon Road along the 35th parallel. In the course of their journeys, Peck and his wife Mercy witnessed many important nineteenth-century events, including the Gold Rush, the Mormon building of Salt Lake City, the Underground Railroad in Illinois, the buildup in New Mexico to the Civil War, and the admission to the Union of Washington State.

Through biographical commentary and explanatory annotation, editor Susan M. Erb enriches our understanding of the diary entries. Featuring numerous illustrations and maps, this book is must reading for trail enthusiasts and provides valuable new perspectives for western historians.

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