



Wagon Wheel Kitchens: Food on the Oregon Trail

Jacqueline Williams

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Pioneer temperaments, Jacqueline Williams shows, were greatly influenced by that which was stewable, bakable, broilable, and boilable. Using travelers' diaries, letters, newspaper advertisements, and nineteenth-century cookbooks, Williams re-creates the highs and lows of cooking and eating on the Oregon Trail. She investigates the mundane—biscuits and bacon, mush and coffee—as well as the unexpected—carbonated soda made from bubbling spring water; ice cream created from milk, snow, and peppermint; fresh fruits and vegetables.

Understanding what and how the pioneers ate, Williams demonstrates, is essential to understanding how they lived and survived—and sometimes died—on the trail.

"This book holds an encyclopedia of information culled from diaries and contemporary newspapers. I can't think of a more intimate account of the lives of the overlanders, how they turned their rude wagons into homes, how they made meals both a comfort and a celebration. Some readers will want to try out recipes; others will read in awe as in the midst of difficult travel, women made certain their families marked the Fourth of July with cakes—fruit jelly and sponge-puddings, and ice cream—and clean underwear!"—Lillian Schlissel, author of *Women's Diaries of the Westward Journey and Western Women: Their Lands, Their Lives*



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