

**JOURNAL OF A TRAPPER:
OR, NINE
YEARS IN THE ROCKY
MOUNTAINS, 1834-1843**

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Journal of a Trapper: Or, Nine Years in the Rocky Mountains, 1834-1843 by Osborne Russell

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OSBORNE RUSSELL

**JOURNAL OF A TRAPPER:
OR, NINE
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MOUNTAINS, 1834-1843**

JOURNAL
OF A TRAPPER,

—Or—

*Nine Years in the Rocky
Mountains*

1834-1843

Being a General Description of the Country,
Climate, Rivers, Lakes, Mountains,
Etc., and a View of the Life
Led by a Hunter in
those Regions

By OSBORNE RUSSELL

"I envy no man who knows more
than myself and pity them that
know less."—Sir T. Brown

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APPENDIX

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

This journal ends so abruptly, with no hint of the personal fortunes of this most interesting author (who, by the way, was a great uncle of the writer of these explanatory notes), that we have gathered such information as we were able from surviving relatives, and append it hereto.

Osborne Russell was born in Maine June 12, 1814. He had very little schooling, and like most of the boys raised on the Kennebec River, dreamed of going to sea. Forbidden by his father to indulge this desire, at the age of sixteen he ran away from home and shipped on a sailing vessel. They had a hard skipper and the crew deserted the vessel when she touched New York. Here he joined the Northwest Fur Trapping & Trading Company, operating principally in Wisconsin and Minnesota. Two or three years in the employ of this company brings the author to the initial chapter of his "Journal," April, 1834. The Journal records his fortunes up till June 6, 1843.

From information gathered it appears that Mr. Russell took a prominent part in political affairs, and was a member of the Executive Committee of the Provisional Government of Oregon. The family recollection has it that he was the defeated candidate for Governor of Oregon at the first election under Territorial organization, his defeat being due, in part at least, to his outspoken disapproval of the government's policy in western affairs—notably, refusing military protection to the settlers from the Indians, and at the same time attempting to recruit soldiers from that domain for the war in Mexico.

Hon. John Hailey, pioneer of Oregon and Idaho, who had charge of the Idaho Historical Society exhibit in the Capitol building, has a copy of "Recollections and Opinions of an Old Pioneer," written by Peter H. Burnett, the first governor of the State of California. Judge Burnett was prominent in the political history of Oregon 1843-8, and we find the following mention of Osborne Russell at pages 161-2 of his very interesting book, written about the year of 1860.

"I have already mentioned the name of Judge O. Russell as one of the Rocky Mountain men. He is a native of the State of Maine, and came to the mountains when a young man, in pursuit of health.