

September 15, 1879

Dear Emily,

Emily! We have finally arrived in Boise. Our trip took five months and it was so hard. It seems that we were always tired and dusty. I have written to you three times, but I don't know if you received my letters. A man riding back east took our letters with him. I hope that they reached you.

Our wagon train had only 23 wagons at the end of the trip. We lost 21 wagons on the way. Some broke down and could not be fixed. Some floated away on rivers. Sometimes, the people just stopped and wouldn't go any farther. Some people even turned around and went back to Missouri.

Rosebud, one of our milk cows, died along the way. We still have Daisy so we have milk every day. When we were traveling, we made our butter by putting cream into a covered bucket. Then, we hung it on the wagon. The wagon bounced so much that by the middle of the day, we had butter. Now that we are in Boise, I am going to have to churn it again. Shucks!

The trail, especially the last part, was very rough. Ma and I walked while Pa led the oxen. We had ten oxen pulling our wagon. Can you imagine? Dan rode his horse Blazer. He turned 14 three weeks ago and thinks he is as smart as Pa. He is good at shooting rabbits for dinner, though. Several times we had to leave heavy things by the trail because the wagon was too heavy for the oxen. Ma cried when we had to leave her fancy new stove. Pa hugged her and promised he would buy her another one. She felt better then.

I miss you Emily,

Love,

Mary Elizabeth

Oregon Trail

Directions: Read Mary Elizabeth's September 15th letter to Emily. You will find all of the answers for this activity in that letter. Follow directions very carefully and you will end up with the correct answer.

Write the number of months the trip took	_____
Add the number of times Mary Elizabeth wrote	+_____
Total	_____
Add the total number of wagons that made it to Boise	+_____
Total	_____
Subtract the number of wagons lost on the trail	-_____
Total	_____
Add the number of milk cows that are alive	+_____
Total	_____
Subtract the number of oxen pulling the wagon	-_____
Total	_____
Add Dan's age	+_____
Final Total	_____

October 3, 1879

Dear Emily,

Our trip to Boise was so exciting. I am going to tell you about the last part of our trip. We traveled along Bear River by a place called Soda Springs. The water tasted fizzy here. There were two springs right by the trail. Just beyond them was a rock called Sheep rock. It was called that because of all of the mountain sheep there. Several days later, we reached Fort Hall. Jimmy and I had fun at Fort Hall because the wagon train stopped there for several days to rest. We played games with other children. We saw some Indians and even some trappers who came to the fort for supplies.

We went west along the Snake River. We came to a very large waterfall called American Falls. We could hear it long before we could see it. That same night, we camped by a large gray rock called Register Rock. Many of the travelers who had come this way had carved their names on it. Pa carved his initials on the rock.

We left the Snake River for a day and crossed the desert. We brought 7 beef cattle and 4 horses to start our new farm. During this part of the trip, two cows and one of the horses died. It was so hot and dry.

We reached the Snake River again, but this part of our trip was the hardest. We often could not get down to the river because the sides of the river were so steep. We reached a place called Three Island Crossing. The sides of the river gently sloped down toward the river. This place had three

islands in the river so there was not as much water to cross. It was very dangerous because the water was steep and the currents were swift. My family crossed the Snake River safely, but others did not. One wagon sank as it was crossing and a man drowned. We had a funeral for him. We buried him right in the middle of the trail between the tracks of the wagon. The wagons then rolled over his grave so that no one would know it was there. It was so sad to see his wife and children cry. Everyone pitched in to help them and they made it safely to Boise.

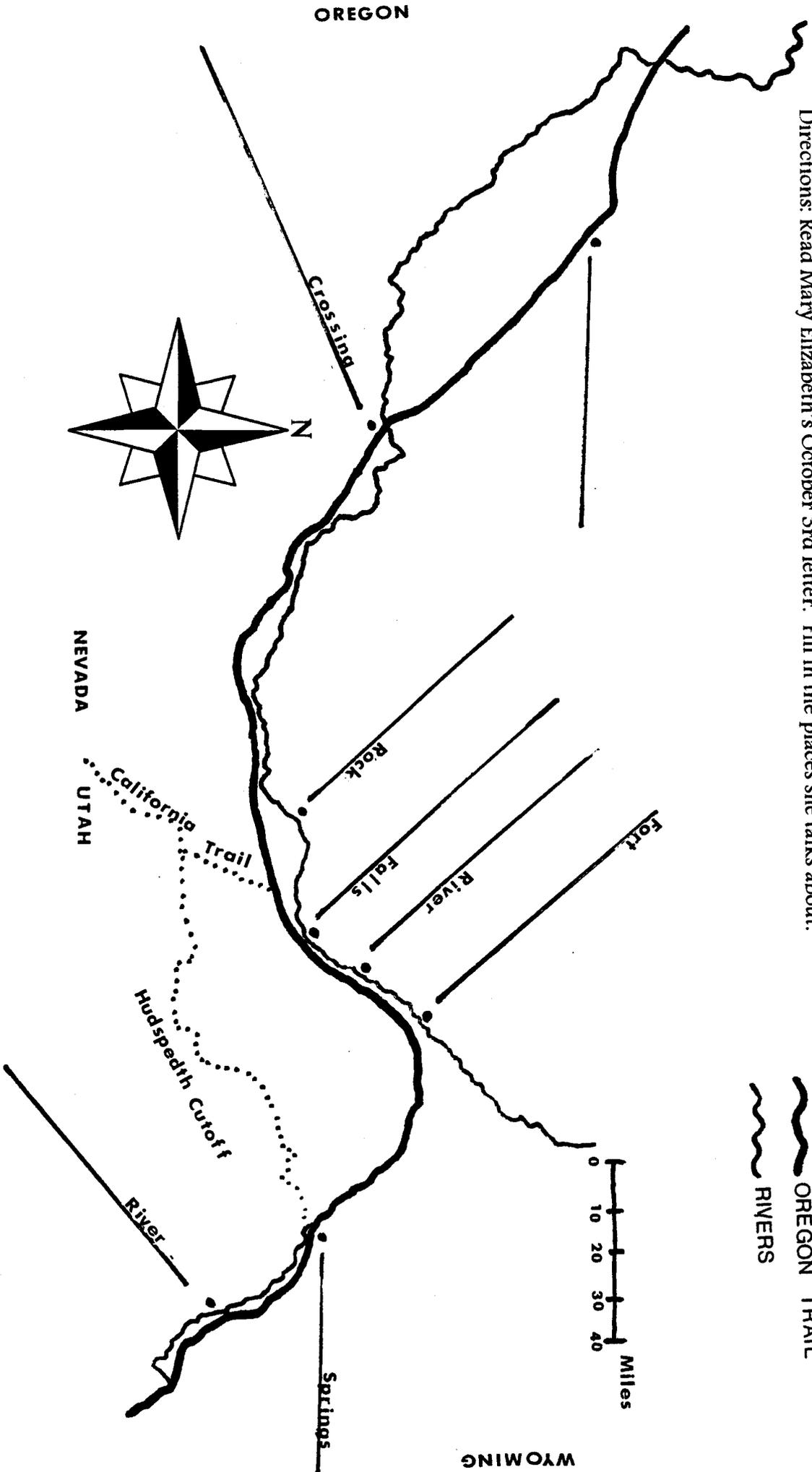
We camped three more nights on the trail before we reached Boise. There are so many trees along the Boise River and it all looks so green. We camped at the edge of town. Ma made all of us take baths in the river, then we went into town. There were so many stores and people. Many people continue to head west from here to Oregon. Pa has decided we will stay here. There are some good places to homestead not too far from Boise. He says it will be quite a state someday.

Emily, please write to me in Boise. Tell me what is happening in Cincinnati and to all of our friends. It has only been a year since we left there and went to Missouri to join the wagon trains, but it feels like forever right now. I don't think we will ever see each other again, but if we write, we can still be friends. I miss you. You are my very best friend in the world.

Love,
Mary Elizabeth

Oregon Trail

Directions: Read Mary Elizabeth's October 3rd letter. Fill in the places she talks about.



Legend

OREGON TRAIL

RIVERS

Oregon Trail

What Would You Take?

If you and your family were going by wagon train across America, what would you bring? Choose ten things that you would want to bring with you. They do not have to be things that the rest of the family can use. They could be toys or favorite books. Don't forget there would not be electricity. What ten things would you bring?

Now draw a picture of your ten items in the space below:

Oregon Trail

Directions: Read Mary Elizabeth's September 15th letter to Emily. You will find all of the answers for this activity in that letter. Follow directions very carefully and you will end up with the correct answer.

Write the number of months the trip took	<u>5</u>
Add the number of times Mary Elizabeth wrote	+ <u>3</u>
Total	<u>8</u>
Add the total number of wagons that made it to Boise	+ <u>23</u>
Total	<u>31</u>
Subtract the number of wagons lost on the trail	- <u>21</u>
Total	<u>10</u>
Add the number of milk cows that are alive	+ <u>1</u>
Total	<u>11</u>
Subtract the number of oxen pulling the wagon	- <u>10</u>
Total	<u>1</u>
Add Dan's age	+ <u>14</u>
Final Total	<u>15</u>

Key

Oregon Trail

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 OREGON TRAIL

 RIVERS

Directions: Read Mary Elizabeth's October 3rd letter. Fill in the places she talks about.

