The Settlement of Teton Valley, Idaho-Wyoming

David Brooks Green
Brigham Young University - Provo

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THE SETTLEMENT OF TETON VALLEY,
IDAHO-WYOMING

A Thesis
Presented to the
Department of Geography
Brigham Young University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science

by
D. Brooks Green
This thesis, by D. Brooks Green, is accepted in its present form by the Department of Geography of Brigham Young University as satisfying the thesis requirement for the degree of Master of Science.

Richard H. Jackson, Committee Chairman

Alan H. Grey, Committee Member

June 26, 1974

Robert L. Layton, Department Chairman
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PREFACE

Man has always been the most interesting creature living in the earth space and has certainly had the most profound influence on it. The study of man's interaction with that earth space, or geography, is therefore one of the most stimulating disciplines taught in our present-day school system, although few have discovered it. A vast field has been opened to those who want to learn why various phenomena are where they are and what man has had to play in it. Techniques such as remote sensing, aerial photography, and computer and statistical analysis, make the discipline more exciting and has opened up many new approaches for the geographer to study the surface of the earth and its leading character.

This study will add to the understanding of the reader concerning the settlement of the West while looking at the past geographies of Teton Valley, Idaho. More than this, however, it is hoped that this geographical study may open other possible avenues for further research and study.

Gratitude is therefore extended to those who stimulated my interest in geography and also in Teton Valley. First of all to my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Oscar C. Green, who were living in the valley at the time of my birth and gave me the opportunity to pursue my various interests. Also to the many people, who over the years, have aided me in my decision to become a geographer.

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Special mention is made of those who instructed and taught and associated with me while in school, in particular the members of the geography faculty, and especially Dr. Richard Jackson, my graduate advisor, who gave freely of his time and intelligence. Tribute is also paid to Dr. Alan Grey who offered many suggestions as this study was being completed. A sincere appreciation goes to my mother who obtained information for me when I was unable to get it because of distance and time, and also to other members of my family who may have contributed to the effort. Most of all, however, I am grateful to my wife, Kathleen, for her help in proofreading and typing and the other endless tasks completed by her.
Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Historical Geography

To really understand the present geographic conditions existing in a specific spatial unit a detailed examination of the past geographies as they developed through time, is necessary. A study of this type has been termed historical geography in that it examines change through time in space. Historical geography, then, helps to show the "significance of past geographic conditions in the interpretation of present geographic conditions."¹ As Richard Hartshorne put it, "each past period had its then present geography and the comparative study of the different geographies through successive periods of time depicts the changing geography of an area. Thereby, the historical dimension of time is combined with the dimensions of space."²

The historical tradition in geography is very old. It has been noted that many geographical overtones are found in the works of several ancient historians. For example, in Homer's poems one can detect some attempt to reconstruct the past.³ Herodotus and Strabo, as well,


never limited their works to only history but delved into the geographical past.\(^1\) Real attempts at writing historical geography, however, did not come until the 16th century with Philipp Cluverius. He was, perhaps, the first to deliberately attempt to write an historical geography and in 1616 he published a book on the historical geography of Germany.\(^2\)

Alexander von Humboldt and Carl Ritter, the "fathers" of modern geography, never really contributed to the writing of historical geography, but on one occasion Ritter did deal with the historical background of certain plants and animals.\(^3\) With the coming forth of the thoughts that surrounded Charles Darwin's evolutionary theory, a new type of historical geography came into being. The ideas of environmental determinism were put forth by such writers as Charles Lyell, Johann Gottfried von Herder, and H. T. Buckle.\(^4\)

After the deterministic approach had died down and the reaction to it had set in, more objective writings began to appear in the realm of historical geography. Paul M. J. Vidal de la Blache has been given the credit with developing a more balanced and objective approach to the study of past geography.\(^5\) Many countries have produced several historical geographers such as Great Britain who had men come forth such as Halford J. Mackinder, Gordon East, and H. Clifford Darby.

\(^1\)Ibid.


\(^3\)James and Jones, p. 77.

\(^4\)Ibid.

\(^5\)Ibid.
In the United States, George Perkins Marsh was among the first and greatest historical geographers. Other noted individuals include William Morris Davis, Ellen Churchill Semple, Perry Brigham, and Harlan H. Barrows. Perhaps the two most outstanding figures of our day have been Ralph H. Brown and Carl Sauer. Brown's *Historical Geography of the United States* is a monumental work and has not been equalled. Carl Sauer and those who have studied with him at Berkeley have been widely recognized as major contributors. They have "attacked their problems historically because they have believed that approach fundamental to the explanatory purpose."¹ Sauer's approach has also been called the developmental approach.

Other important works in the field of historical geography have been those of Andrew H. Clark. His *Three Centuries and the Island and Acadia* are valuable sources on the early geography of Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia. John Kirtland Wright's *The Geographical Basis of European History* is a short, but important work on the geographical influences on European settlement. One other work worth mentioning, though of a little different approach, is Clarence J. Glacken's *Traces on the Rhodian Shore*. In it he discusses the "nature and culture in western thoughts from ancient times to the end of the eighteenth century," and attempts to relate this culture to resulting geographical patterns.

At the present time many historical geographers are active and numerous volumes of literature can be obtained. One of the best was completed by Donald W. Meinig, called *The Great Columbia Plain: A

¹James, p. 124.
Historical Geography 1805-1910. Meinig also wrote an interesting study entitled *Southwest--Three Peoples in Geographical Change 1600-1970.* Also numerous articles have appeared in various journals discussing a variety of topics such as "The Early Settlement of Aurora, Nevada and Nearby Mining Camps,"¹ just to list one.

As one may detect, several types of methods or approaches are used in studying the past geography of an area. One approach that is important today, especially in regards to settlement geography, has been termed "sequent occupancy," suggested by Derwent S. Whittlesey. In using this method geographers have two basic routes in which to take when examining the human occupancy of a specific area; the Dynamic or vertical themes, and the Static or horizontal reconstructions. The Static approach in historical geography takes a horizontal cross-section in time and examines the geography of that period. By this approach an attempt is made to study a specific layer of occupancy, "much the same as a geologist studies stratifications."² This method was used by Derwent Whittlesey in his *Environmental Foundation of European History.*

The Dynamic method, which uses vertical themes to tie together the horizontal cross-sections, is also well used. D. W. Meinig and Andrew H. Clark, through the narrative approach, have both attempted to tie vertical and horizontal themes together in *The Great Columbia Plain* and *Acadia,* respectively.


This study, as well, attempts to develop that approach by examining the geographic conditions in Teton Valley during the several phases of human occupancy. By examining the horizontal cross-sections of occupancy and by tying them together with vertical themes, the past geographies of Teton Valley, Idaho-Wyoming, will be explained. A further significance of this study is that it is the first to attempt to recreate the settlement geography of an area in southeast Idaho. Though all of the information is not necessarily unique, the geographical analysis of the information is unique and the study adds to the growing body of work in settlement geography.

Methods

Basic to any formal study are the methods used in obtaining the information to reconstruct the geography of the various stages of development. The main method of this study has been library and archival research, examining old maps, journals, diaries, newspapers, existing histories, aerial photographs and topographical maps. Various locations such as Teton, Oneida, and Bingham County courthouses and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints archives were searched as were the libraries at Brigham Young University and Utah State University. In addition, older residents were interviewed to obtain oral histories of their participation in the settlement of Teton Valley. Field work was carried out to corroborate data gathered through archival research.
Overview

Permanent agricultural settlement in Teton Valley was preceded by various occupancy groups, none of which had any significant long term impact on the environment. Indian, explorer, and trapper contact was minimal, therefore any environmental change was small and practically nonexistent. This condition existed during these stages of occupancy and while occasional military and other expeditions passed through the valley. Large scale environmental change did not occur until permanent settlers began to enter the valley in 1882. From that point many changes began to occur, slowly at first, but gradually more noticeable alterations occurred until the landscape had taken on a completely different look. Cultivated fields, grazing cattle, farms, and eventually communities and villages began to dot the landscape.
Chapter II

GENERAL GEOGRAPHY OF TETON BASIN

Many places in the Rocky Mountain region of the western United States played an important role in the development of the West and stood out as landmarks for decades as the Far West was hunted, trapped, and settled. One of those places, which was well-known by Indians and mountain men alike, was Pierre's Hole, or Teton Basin as it is known today. To completely understand man's impact on the environment of Pierre's Hole, however, one must first have a basic knowledge of the physical setting in which the activities of man occurred.

Before the white man reached the West and Teton Basin the Indians referred to the valley as "Broad Valley,"¹ but as the trappers invaded the area a new name was soon attached to the "hole." Although John Colter was the first white man to enter the basin in late 1807, it was not named after him but was called Pierre's Hole, "by or for one Pierre (the 'Vieux Pierre' or 'old Pierre' of Alexander Ross) an Iroquois Indian who, in 1824, while scouting for Alexander Ross's Snake River expedition, entered this country."²

Robert Stuart explains in his narrative that in "old-time Western parlance the word 'hole' indicated a large, flat and usually


circular or quasi-circular valley surrounded by high mountains."¹ One of the ranges of mountains which aids to enclose Pierre's Hole is the Teton Range which contains those three famous peaks, the Three Tetons. These peaks are one of the most prominent landmarks of the West and border Pierre's Hole on the east side in Wyoming. In the early days the Snake Indians had two names for the peaks, one being "tee Win-at" signifying 'the pinnacles,'"² and the other being "the Hoary Headed Fathers."³ Another name many early trappers used was that of the Pilot Knobs,⁴ but the name that stuck to the peaks was that of the Teton Peaks. "The derivation of the term 'Teton' is purposed to have originated with the Donald McKenzie expedition, within whose ranks were several Frenchmen. They coined the word 'Trois Tetons,' meaning three teats, their contour suggesting the female breasts."⁵ It was from these peaks that the final name of the valley came. Changing the name of the valley from Pierre's Hole, "early pioneers of the Snake River Valley were the first to call it Teton Basin."⁶

The basin is located high in the mountains of eastern Idaho and western Wyoming. The Idaho portion is in Teton County at the extreme eastern edge of Idaho with the Wyoming state line as the eastern

¹Ibid.
²Ibid., p. 169.
⁴Rollins, p. 169.
⁶Driggs, p. 17.
boundary. Part of the basin extends into Wyoming. (See figure 1.)
The valley is at the eastern end of the vast Snake River Plains of
Idaho about seventy miles southwest of Yellowstone Park. Teton
County, which contains the valley, is bounded on the north by Fremont
County; on the east by the State of Wyoming; on the south by Bonneville
County; and on the west by Madison County. (See figures 2 and 3.)

The Teton County area has basically five major physical features
consisting of the valley floor, three mountain ranges, and a river
drainage system. The basin is a large, triangular lowland extending
southward for about twenty-five to thirty miles from the northeastern
end of the Snake River Plain. Near the north end the valley is at its
widest point, twelve to fifteen miles. The basin narrows from the
widest point in the north to about four miles in width just south of
Victor, Idaho. As mentioned, the northern end is much more open than
the other three sides, and being a silt covered upland originally
caused by Tertiary volcanics, it noticeably separates the Snake River
Plain from the valley to the south.

The floor of the basin is relatively smooth at an average of
about 6,200 feet in elevation, but the elevation does reach 6,600 feet
in places. From the valley floor, which consists of "long, gentle,
sloping alluvial fans, low terraces and level bottom lands of the Teton
River and its tributaries,"¹ mountains rise abruptly to the east, south,
and west. (See figure 3.) The mountain ranges and their foothills
flanking the valley are heavily forested with aspen and conifers,

¹U. S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service,
Figure 1. Location of Teton Valley Soil Survey, Teton Area.
Figure 2

GENERAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

- Marsh
- Cultivated Land and Range
- Mountain Foot Slopes
- Targhee National Forest

Soil Survey, Teton Area, p. 65

Scale in miles
0 1 2 3 4
Figure 3.

PHYSICAL FEATURES

After Hayden's map of the Snake River Country

SCALE IN MILES

0 2 4 6 8
including Lodge Pole Pine, Douglas Fir, White Pine, and Engleman Spruce. The ranges by name are: Teton to the east, Big Hole to the West, and Snake River Range to the south.

Early geological descriptions of the valley, which now have been shown to be inaccurate, indicated that because of the general "depression" of the valley floor it may have been a "broad stream valley." It was also suggested that because of the apparent lack of terminal moraines at the mouths of glaciated canyons, that the basin was once the site of a pre-historic lake. F. V. Hayden, who led a geological survey into the valley in 1873, observed the conditions and contributed the phenomena "to the floating off of the end of the glaciers upon the waters of a lake which once ... filled the basin of Pierre's Hole and the lower portions" of the outer canyons.

Though a lake may have existed, more recent studies have shown that the valley was formed by a high angle normal fault on the east, (the Teton Fault) forming the Teton Range and an overthrust from the southwest and west (the Darby Fault) which formed the Big Hole and Snake River Ranges. The resulting depression was filled with Tertiary and Recent alluvium. William D. Thornbury states that "the Teton Range is a Tertiary fault block which has been tilted downward to the west." He also concludes that:


2Ibid., p. 223.

It seems probable that the site of the present Teton Range was no more than a line of low hills as late as Pliocene times when the region was covered by lavas that may have extended from the Teton Basin on the west of the Teton Range into Jackson Hole. Later these volcanic rocks, along with the underlying bedrock were subjected to the faulting which produced the present Teton Range, and subsequent stripping of the volcanic rocks from the fault block has revealed the older rock and structures.\(^1\) (See figure 5.)

The most dominant and the most famous of the three ranges is the Teton Range. It is also the highest of the three, reaching upwards of 11,000 and 12,000 feet. The Tetons rise as "long dip-slopes out of the lowlands and culminate in alpine summits that are among the most famous of all Rocky Mountain peaks for their ruggedness and scenic beauty."\(^2\) (See figure 4.) One author poetically described the Tetons as follows:

... just east of the Hole rose the imposing Teton Range sweeping up abruptly from the valley in a mighty, tumultuous wave of bare rock, its tossing crest white with snow. Three peaks—Les Trois Tetons—flung themselves up above the range, incredibly close, incredibly remote. And of these three, towered above its rivals, thrusting its sharp spire into the sky scarcely bluer than the peak itself. That peak, the Grand Teton, was the central landmark, visible from afar in all directions, the pivot and pilot knob of all that vast welter of mountain and uneven plains, ... \(^3\)

The Snake River Range and the Big Hole Range, although not quite as rugged as the Teton, are much more heavily timbered. All of the ranges are well stocked with elk, deer, bear, and smaller animals.

The drainage of the basin gathers from many short mountain streams into the Teton River, or Pierre's Fork as it was originally

\(^1\)Thornbury, p. 370.


\(^3\)Stanley Vastal, Joe Meek, the Merry Mountain Man (Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1952), p. 45.
FIGURE 4. The Three Tetons
From Hayden's survey 1873

FIGURE 5.
Kinds of regolith in which the soils of
the Teton area formed:
1. Alluvium
2. Glacial gravel, sand, and boulders, loess covered.
4. Volcanic rocks, mostly loess covered.
5. Hard sedimentary rocks.
6. Chiefly undivided granite.

Scale in Miles
0 1 2 3 4
Bonneville

Soil Survey, Teton Area, p. 80.
called, which begins at the southern end of the valley. (See figure 2.) All streams of the valley drain into the Teton except a few in the northern end which flow into Badger Creek and the North Fork of the Teton River. The river flows in a northerly direction through the valley collecting the water of its tributaries along the way. Eventually it joins the North Fork and turns west after which the waters flow into the Henry's Fork of the Snake River. Some of the major tributaries of the Teton River are Teton Creek, Darby Creek, Fox Creek, Trail Creek and the North and South Forks of Leigh Creek.

The general climatic conditions of Teton Basin are heavily influenced by the topographical features at hand as well as the elevation. Basically one may describe the summers as being short and moderately warm, while the winters are long and harsh. The Big Hole Range to the west and the Teton Range to the east are the main features other than elevation and latitude that influences the weather. Because of these two ranges an orographic effect is created as a storm front approaches. Nearing the Big Hole Range, the moisture laden air mass is forced up. By the time it passes the crest, sufficient cooling and expansion has occurred to cause precipitation. As the front continues eastward and upward as it approaches the Teton Range, more precipitation occurs, but this time, much more heavily.

Generally the rainfall in the valley never exceeds fifteen to twenty inches per year. (See table 1.) Weather patterns coming into the valley bring few damaging storms, and hail and destructive winds are uncommon.¹ Deep winter snows are common, however, but not as

¹Soil Survey, p. 89.
TABLE 1

TEMPERATURE AND PRECIPITATION
AT DRIGGS, IDAHO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Average Temperature</th>
<th>Precipitation</th>
<th>Average depth of snow on days with snow cover</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Average daily max</td>
<td>Average daily min</td>
<td>Days with snow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>29.8°F</td>
<td>57°F</td>
<td>1.41 in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>29.8°F</td>
<td>57°F</td>
<td>1.41 in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>34.7°F</td>
<td>9.6°F</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>39.8°F</td>
<td>15.1°F</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>51.4°F</td>
<td>25.4°F</td>
<td>1.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>63.1°F</td>
<td>33.9°F</td>
<td>1.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>70.6°F</td>
<td>40.3°F</td>
<td>2.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>81.8°F</td>
<td>46.3°F</td>
<td>1.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>80.9°F</td>
<td>44.4°F</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>70.5°F</td>
<td>36.6°F</td>
<td>1.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>59.7°F</td>
<td>28.0°F</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>41.2°F</td>
<td>17.6°F</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>32.3°F</td>
<td>8.7°F</td>
<td>1.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


(1) Less than 0.5 Days.

NOTE: All data except that on snow is based on records from 1944 to 1973; data on snow is based on records from 1907 to 1919.
severe as those occurring on the eastern slopes of the Rockies. Perhaps the worst aspects of the climate are the early and late frosts in the fall and spring which result in a short growing season, thus limiting agricultural productivity to some extent. (See table 2.)

The human occupancy of the valley as it occurred, was definitely affected by the physical conditions. The physical aspects which brought the heavy snow fall made the valley a summer-only hunting ground for the Indians and mountain men alike. The remoteness and short growing season prevented permanent settlement from occurring as soon as in other areas nearby. Even when settled, agricultural activities were limited to high altitude crop varieties. The environment certainly played a leading role in the occupation of Teton Valley.

\[1\text{Ibid.}\]
### TABLE 2

**PROBABILITIES OF LAST FREEZING TEMPERATURES IN SPRING AND FIRST IN FALL AT DRIGGS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Probability</th>
<th>Dates of probability and temperature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>160 F.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spring:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 year in 10 later than</td>
<td>May 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 years in 10 later than</td>
<td>April 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 years in 10 later than</td>
<td>April 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fall:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 year in 10 earlier than</td>
<td>October 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 years in 10 earlier than</td>
<td>October 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 years in 10 earlier than</td>
<td>October 25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Soil Survey. Teton Area, p. 91.*
Chapter III

INDIAN CONTACT WITH PIERRE'S HOLE

As the white man came to and began to explore the North American continent, he found many tribes, of what he referred to as Indians, inhabiting the land. The whole continent was covered with various tribes, each living in specific areas or territories. As the western portion of the land was explored, there also was found the ever-present Indian.

Pierre's Hole was no exception when it came to Indian occupancy. That region of the Rocky Mountains was roamed over and lived in by several tribes, the major ones being of the large Shoshonean family. The Shoshonean nation was made up of several tribes who lived in a scattered area of the West. The entire nation was spread over portions of Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, California, and Southern Idaho.1 Some of these tribes were the Commanche, Bannack, Northern and Western Shoshoni and the Utes. (See figure 6 for tribal locations.)

The major Shoshonean tribes that had considerable contact with Pierre's Hole were the Northern Shoshoni or Snake Indians, and the Bannack. Non-Shoshoni Indians who also made their way into the valley of the Tetons included the Nez Perce, Lemhi, Flathead, Blackfoot, and Crow.

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The Shoshoni or the Snake Indians\(^1\) were the most northerly tribe of the Shoshonean family. They occupied all of "aboriginal" Idaho south of the Salmon river. Although the Snake river area was their main region of occupancy, they did roam over other areas of western Wyoming, northwestern Colorado, northern Utah, and southeastern Oregon.\(^2\) Other areas of importance to the Snake were the valley of the Green river and northern portions of the Bear River Valley.\(^3\)

The Snake Indians in this area were characterized as being the "most destitute of all the necessities of life of any Indian west of the Mountains."\(^4\) Much of their impoverished state can be blamed on the area in which they lived. There was not an abundance of game or other types

\(^1\)There are many ideas as to why this tribe of the Shoshonean nation was dubbed the Snakes. Some seem more practical than others. Alexander Ross observed (Cox, 1957) that "the moment a Snake perceives a person pursuing him, he squats down among the grass; but instead of running forward to avoid his pursuer he runs backwards, as if to meet him; taking care however to avoid him; so that by the time his pursuer gets to where he first saw the Snake the Snake is back at the place from whence his pursuer started! . . . They are very appropriately called Snake, . . ." Another reason is that the traders in the northwest misunderstood the Indian because when asked their names by the trappers, they replied by making a peculiar snake-like motion with the index finger. These Indians intended to convey the idea that they were grass weavers. The trappers, thought they meant Snakes. (Brosnan, 1948) Also, Father De Smet, an early Catholic missionary in the West, said they were called Snakes by reason of their poverty, "which reduces them to burrow in the ground like those reptiles and to live upon roots." (Rollins, 1935)


\(^3\)Dean M. Green, "The Lemhi Indians of Eastern Idaho 1860-1902" (Master's Thesis, Brigham Young University, 1958), p. 17.

of food, thus forcing the Snakes to eat roots and reptiles, indicating their poor condition.

The Snakes, however, did not originally live in the dry region surrounding the Snake River Plain. At one time they lived in the plains area extending through Colorado, Wyoming, and Montana, just east of the Rockies.\(^1\) But not being as fierce as their neighboring tribes, the Blackfoot, Crow, and Cheyenne, who lived near them, they were gradually driven from the plains into the mountains. Firearms from the Hudson Bay Company aided the three warlike tribes in their removal of the Snakes and helped to reduce the tribe to a very low standard of living. By the time white men came in contact with the Snakes, "they were in a miserable condition."\(^2\)

Even after the Snakes were driven from the good hunting grounds on the east side of the Rockies, the Blackfeet, especially, continued to harass them. The Snake Indians seemed to be at constant war with the Blackfoot, Crow, and other tribes and because of the continuous fighting and the lack of food in their new home, "members were physically inferior to other tribes."\(^3\)

For food the Snakes were dependent upon roots, seeds, berries, insects, reptiles, and rabbits.\(^4\) But often these became very hard to come by, and when they were found there would be hardly enough to feed very many people. Out of necessity the tribe was forced to be somewhat

\(^1\)Rees, p. 111.

\(^2\)Ibid.

\(^3\)Rollins, p. 357.

\(^4\)Ibid.
nomadic and to make excursions to the lower Columbia river for salmon and to the plains of Montana and Wyoming for buffalo.

Because the tribe had to lead a wandering life to exist, many times they made their way to the headwaters of the Missouri river into what is referred to as the Three Forks area. While on these hunting expeditions they would pass near to and often enter Pierre's Hole where they could find game in abundance. It should be pointed out that during the winter months, Indians avoided the valley because of the harsh weather conditions and the scarcity of game. The snow was simply too deep, therefore, the main contact came in the spring, summer, and early fall.

Also during the fur trade era numerous tribes of Indians were present at the annual rendezvous. At the famous rendezvous of 1832, which occurred in Pierre's Hole, several tribes were there, including the Snakes. The Snakes often made their way into the valley of the Tetons on their way to the Green river in Wyoming for the rendezvous held there. At the 1837 rendezvous on the Green, there were about five thousand Indians present, the largest number being Snakes.¹

Chief Washakie, the famous Indian chief, was in the valley in 1857 and many times prior to that. He later told the story that when he was a small boy that on one of his tribe's annual food gathering trips into the valley, they had a great fight with the Sioux.² Even after the Indians were confined to reservations, at times they were permitted by

¹David L. Brown, Three Years in the Rocky Mountains (Cincinnati: The Darby and Wells Atlas, 1845), p. 16.
²Driggs, p. 19.
treaty to go on hunting expeditions. As late as 1871, which was a very bad year for food in the eastern Idaho area, the Indian agent was: "forced to send the Shoshoni on a hunting expedition to the Teton Country during the summer." 1

It is well noted that the Snake Indians did enter the valley of Pierre's Hole and made good use of the area as a hunting ground. Other tribes as well used the basin, perhaps the most important next to the Snake, was the Bannack tribe.

The Bannack tribe also belonged to the large Shoshonean family and were the most feared of them all. This tribe was "heartless, cruel, and bloodthirsty" 2 and "more warlike, and less friendly to the white man" than most other tribes. 3 This fierce tribe had occupied the area around present-day Fort Hall since pre-historic times. With Fort Hall as the center of their area, they did extend into the regions south of the Snake river and north of the Great Salt Lake. 4

The area in which they lived was similar to that of the Snake Indians since both tribes occupied in part, the same territory. Much of the region was very arid and covered with sagebrush with the only break in the dry area being the green bottom lands along the Snake, Portneuf, and Blackfoot rivers. 5 Like the Snake, the Bannack were wandering

2Louis J. Clements, "History of the Upper Snake River Area to 1880" (Master's Thesis, Brigham Young University, 1968), p. 11.
3Rollins, p. 357.
4Ibid.
5Madsen, p. 20.
hunters and gatherers. Much of their time was spent roaming the surrounding areas near their homelands in search for food as well as "on the look-out for plunder."¹ (See footnote 2 also.)

Due to the lack of food found in the sage covered plains of southern Idaho, especially in the summer, they had to venture from that area into the mountains and plains of Montana and Wyoming. By 1840, the vast herds of buffalo which once grazed the Snake River Plain had vanished and had been driven into regions east of there. That area, surrounding the headwaters of the Missouri, was a major hunting ground for the Bannack, and they often found their way through eastern Idaho on the long trek into Montana. Because of the barren country they lived in, it was necessary for them "to travel a large part of the year through nearby areas in search for food stocks to tide them over the winter months."² Pierre's Hole was on the route taken by the Bannack as they made their hunting trips into the Yellowstone region. Perhaps it was close enough to be classified as part of the hunting ground.

Other tribes besides the Snake and Bannack made their way into Pierre's Hole, but some were more important than others. One of the early trappers to go into the basin was Nathaniel Wyeth. In a journal

¹LeRoy R. Hafen and W. J. Ghent, Broken Hand (Denver: The Old West Publishing Co., 1931), pp. 58, 60.

²The Bannack had a reputation as being horse stealers and murderers. Next to the Blackfeet, the Bannacks were feared more than any other tribe. Occasionally, "lying athwart both the California and Oregon Trails, they were formidable, although usually on trading terms with the trappers." Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., Early Western Travels, (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1905), Vol. XXI, p. 192.

³Madsen, p. 20.
entry in 1835, Wyeth mentioned he was surprised "to find the Indians in the vicinity of the mountains and all around Pierre's Valley; the Black-foot tribe, and the Shoshonees, or Snake-tribe, so well provided with muskets, powder and ball."¹ He also mentioned that one Donald McKenzie sold the Indians whatever they wanted, but in any case, notice in particular the Blackfoot tribe. This tribe was the most feared of all tribes by the white man during his journey into and through the Rocky Mountains.

The Blackfoot Indians are of Algonquin stock and at that time were divided into four distinct bands; the "Blackfeet proper (Siksikau), the Piegan (Pikuni), the Bloods (Kainah), and the Grosventres of the Prairies or the Falls Indians (Atsina), . . ."² These bands lived primarily on the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains including the watershed of the Missouri and the Marias River Valley in Montana. In quest of plunder the tribe's raids led them on war parties on both sides of the Rockies into Wyoming and Idaho.

Of the four bands, the Grosventres were the most significant as far as Pierre's Hole is concerned. It was they, who in 1832, participated in the Battle of Pierre's Hole at the end of the annual rendezvous of that year. According to Chittenden the Grosventres came into the valley because:

The tribal affinity of the Grosventres was with the Arapahoes and the two tribes always maintained a feeling of friendship for

¹Thwaites, Vol. XXI, p. 192.

each other. They once lived together with another kindred tribe, the Cheyennes, near the headwaters of the Mississippi and the Great Lakes. For some cause they migrated westward, . . . the Grosventres kept on to the west until they reached the foothills of the mountains. It was the custom of the Grosventres to visit their friends every two or three years. It was on one of their return trips from the Arapahoes that they fought the trappers in Pierre's Hole.1

LeRoy Hafen also states that it was not uncommon for the tribe to venture that direction and said that very often "those Ishmaelites of the Mountains, the Blackfeet and Grosventres, swept down this region from their far northern home on enumerable raids."2

The Blackfeet had other influences upon the valley as well. Up until the early 1800's large herds of buffalo roamed the smooth plain of the basin, but when the Rev. Samuel Parker was making his way to Oregon in the 1830's while passing through the valley he stated that his party expected to find many buffalo in the valley "but saw none." He contributed the absence to the Blackfeet who often ranged that way and had "lately been here and frightened them away."3

It is easy to understand why the Indians of the drier Snake River Plains as well as the marauding Blackfeet enetered Pierre's Hole for food. During the early days before many settlers entered the scene many antelope, elk, deer, moose, bear, and vast herds of buffalo roamed the valley floor.4 Later, however, as mentioned, the buffalo were driven into the plains.

2Hafen and Ghent, p. 60.
3Parker, p. 88.
4Driggs, p. 20.
One other reason for Indian tribes to come to Pierre's Hole was to trade with the mountain men. The fur traders held annual rendezvous at which they bartered goods among themselves as well as with the various Indian tribes that were always present. The rendezvous for 1932 was chosen to be held in Pierre's Hole, thus drawing many famous figures and Indians into the area. The Snake and Bannack were commonly present as were the Crow "who often came to the eastern valleys of Idaho to hunt." ¹ The Crow Indians inhabited the area of the Wind River Mountains in Wyoming and north to the Yellowstone River, making it very easy for them to use the valuable resources of Pierre's Hole.

At the Pierre's Hole rendezvous there were "perhaps a thousand trappers and Indian warriors" present. "The Nez Perces and the Flatheads, allies of Fitzpatrick's company, were present in large numbers, their skin lodges dotting the banks of the streams." ² These two tribes came from northern Idaho, eastern Washington, and western Montana and were nearly always present at the yearly rendezvous.

The Indians did not occupy Pierre's Hole permanently but in their travels in search of food several tribes hunted there. The Indian occupancy of the land of Pierre's Hole was thus restricted to impermanent shelters, some casual burning of trees or shrubs, and the game they killed. They seemingly did not selectively kill one variety of game, but hunted it all. It is doubtful if this pattern of occupancy had changed significantly in centuries. The advent of the white man, however, changed the Indian's relationship to the environment.

²Hafen and Ghent, p. 97.
The first white man to enter the homeland and hunting ground of the tribes mentioned was John Colter, who in 1807 or early 1808, after leaving the Lewis and Clark expedition, descended into Pierre's Hole before turning back for the Yellowstone.¹ From this first visit it was only a few decades until so many whites had moved into the Pierre's Hole and surrounding area that they were competing with the Indians for the use of the land.

By the 1860's the Indians began to be placed on reservations. In October of 1863, "a treaty was concluded with the western bands of Shoshones. In this treaty the government acquired title to large tracts of land extending over part of Utah, Nevada, Idaho, and Oregon."² A few years later in 1866, "acting upon the advice of Governor Ballard, the Indian Commission instructed the Governor to set aside two reservations in Idaho: one in the north and the other in the south. Ballard chose a reservation in the Fort Hall region for the Shoshoni bands."³ The next year, by executive order from President Andrew Johnson, Fort Hall was set apart and established as the reservation to be the home of the Shoshoni, Bannack, and other tribes.⁴

These Indians were allowed by the Indian agents to leave the reserve during parts of the year for hunting expeditions into the mountains of eastern Idaho which included Pierre's Hole. In order to

¹Madsen, p. 42.
²Driggs, p. 21.
³Madsen, pp. 151-52.
⁴Ibid.
give certain areas to the Indians for this purpose, "the treaty of Fort Bridger, in the spring of 1868, . . . agreed to relinquish all lands in Wyoming and southern Idaho except certain parts reserved for their occupancy. Part of this cession embraced" the location of Pierre's Hole.¹ (See figure 7 for reservation locations.)

After the Indians had been placed on reservations, contact with Pierre's Hole continued, but on a limited scale. Two incidents in connection with the valley are worthy of mention, the first one occurred just prior to the coming of the first settlers and the second one and major occurrence took place in 1895, thirteen years after permanent settlers had entered the valley.

In 1878 a war broke out in southeastern Idaho called the Bannack War. During this uprising a war party captured the horses of an A. D. Wilson's topographic group at Henry's Lake. At that time Wilson fled while the Indians vanished. Apparently, the band headed east toward Pierre's Hole. In the valley at the time was Thomas Moran, the painter, who was camped with his guide, Beaver Dick, when a party of Bannacks appeared. Little happened at this time, luckily, because fortunately the Indians were relatives of Beaver Dick's second wife and she persuaded them to peacefully return to the reservation.² Beaver Dick, or Richard Leigh, which was his real name, was one of the last trapper-squawmen living in the valley just before settlement took place. It was fortunate that he and his wife were there on this occasion.

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¹Driggs, p. 21.

²Bradley, p. 25.
Figure 7. Reservations, 1875 above, 1900 below, from Paulin's Atlas

SCALE IN MILES
The second event had farther reaching effects than did the first. In the fall of 1895 a small group of Bannack Indians left the reservation at Fort Hall and headed for the Pierre's and Jackson's Hole area to hunt. Shortly after their arrival, on the 17th of July, Governor Richards of Wyoming telegraphed the Department of Interior the following:

Have just received the following telegram, dated Marysvale, Wyo., July 15, via Market Lake, Idaho, July 16:

Nine Indians arrested, one killed, others escaped. Many Indians reported here; threaten lives and property. Settlers moving families away. Want protection immediately. Action on your part is absolutely necessary.

Frank H. Rhodes,
Justice of the Peace
Wm. Manning, Constable

I have received other advices by mail representing situation as serious. The Indians are Bannacks from Fort Hall, Idaho. Arrested for the illegal and wanton killing of game. My letter to you dated June 17 relates the matter. Can you take immediate action for the protection of our settlers?¹

Upon receiving the above message from Wyoming, the Washington office replied to Teter, Indian agent at Fort Hall in this manner:

... Proceed at once to scene of trouble and do all in your power to prevent further disturbance and to return absent Indians to reservation. If troops are needed to protect settlers or prevent open conflict, advise immediately. If you have any information now telegraph same to me before starting.²

To enlarge the little known situation more, "sensational and alarming" newspaper reports began to appear that highly exaggerated the event. Finally, however, the Secretary of War, on July 24, 1895,


²Ibid.
requested military aid and ordered Brigadier-General Coppinger, commanding the Department of the Platte, to proceed to the scene of the disturbance.\textsuperscript{1} It appears that the militia was not really needed, however, as the true picture of what occurred came to light. The actual events are summarized in the following:

The Bannack and Shoshoni Indians have been in the habit for many years past of going to the Jackson Hole country to hunt game for subsistence. They have been guaranteed by treaty with the United States so long as game may be found there-on and so long as peace subsists among the whites and Indians on the borders of the hunting districts. The settlers of the country bordering this game region have looked upon the said hunting grounds as their own exclusive property, and for the past two years have been steadily complaining through official and unofficial sources to this office to the end that the Indians might be kept out. Further, the settlers have claimed that the Indians hunted and killed game in violation of the game laws of the State of Wyoming; and it would appear that they had at least organized a scheme to drive the Indians from these hunting grounds regardless of consequences.

The first serious affair occurred on or about July 15, 1895, when a hunting party of nine Bannacks with their families, encamped on the banks of a stream in Uinta County, Wyo., were surrounded by an armed body of settlers, numbering twenty-seven, who disarmed all of the Indians and 'drove' them all day in single file closely guarded. In the evening the Indians who had been roughly treated during the day, became frightened, and supposing they were all to be shot, made a dash for their liberty. The settlers without warning fired upon them, killing one outright and badly wounding another. Two papooses were lost, one of which was afterwards found alive, the other no doubt having perished, or been killed.\textsuperscript{2}

As the occurrence was settled, the Indians eventually were returned to the reservation at Fort Hall.

What, then, has this all got to do with Pierre's Hole or Teton Valley as it was known then? Although the small band of Indians never entered the valley, the effect of their presence in the region had

\textsuperscript{1}Ibid., pp. 64.

\textsuperscript{2}Ibid., p. 72.
strong affects. To gain an appreciation as to how the settlers felt in Teton Basin at the time of the troubles occurring in Jackson's Hole, two people who remember the event were questioned about the incident. When asked about the Indian problem, Jesse A. Edlefsen, a long time resident of the valley replied:

Yes, in Jackson's Hole, the Indian scare was. That's when the militia was sent in. I can remember that so well. We lived out north in the Leigh Creek country. When the militia was coming through, they had to ford the creeks and everything and kind of build their own road more or less as they went. The old road came within less than about thirty feet, maybe, from the front end of my uncle's house. From there they cut right off in a southeasterly direction. They came with big wagons with high seats, of course, they looked awfully big to me. They had about three teams of mules on there. They had the black Negro driving them. I can remember so well of standing out there in front of the house as they were passing through and reaching up and getting hold of my mother's dress in some way to bring me close to her for a little security.1

Another long time resident, George E. Stone, giving a better account of the situation and feeling of the settlers, responded this way:

Well, I'll tell you how that started, that Indian trouble. It was more a scare than anything else, but those Indians; I don't know whether they went out to hunt in Jackson's Hole or whether they didn't, because they came through later and they used to camp at our place as they went in. They had their own horses and tepees and like that. Anyhow, these settlers, they raised up and got after them. There was quite a band of Indians, that the settlers got a little mean with. They called for help from the government and there came in a bunch of soldiers. There was just a few of them. The officers were ... black. They were afoot. There was the cavalry, they went by our place up the lane. They camped right up at the mouth of Trail Creek. The Jackson Holers, I think they killed an Indian. Anyway, they drove them out. They got the soldiers. The soldiers just rounded them up and got them

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together and the people got quite excited here. The farmers got their guns and everything, they got scared. They thought there was going to be quite a lot of trouble, but there wasn't.¹

Though some of the facts are not completely accurate in the above recollections, they do indicate that the event brought a definite uneasiness to the people of Teton Valley and surrounding areas. Some moved out anticipating war with the Indians but most simply stayed and went to help put down the so-called uprising.²

Other than vacating a few cabins the actual effect of this particular Indian contact with the valley was very slight. The Indian, even when "causing trouble" did little to alter the environment of the area. This sequence of human occupancy in Pierre's Hole was perhaps the longest, but also the most insignificant as far as changing or modifying the physical milieu of the valley.

Chapter IV

EXPLORERS, TRAPPERS, TRADERS, AND OTHER OCCUPANTS

Introduction

The Indians of the West had dominated the whole area for centuries, but with the purchase of the Louisiana Territory from Spain, events rapidly began to change. The white man soon began to take advantage of the valuable resources contained in the mountains and rivers of the West. Although the British had penetrated into western Canada by the late 1700's it was with the Lewis and Clark expedition that the area west of the Rockies was really opened for further exploration and eventual trapping. With this expedition the young United States began to explore areas that the Spanish had not entered. This expedition opened the gate to the West.

The Explorers

The First Visitor

Although Pierre's Hole was many miles south of the Lewis and Clark trail it soon became a center of activity as a direct result of the expedition. Enlisted in that expedition was one John Colter. He was born in Virginia in 1770 and at the time of his enlistment on October 15, 1803, he was thirty-three. Colter was one of the first civilians to enlist with the Lewis and Clark party and left with them
on May 14, 1804 when the group headed westward. Colter remained with the party to the Pacific and returned with them as far as the Mandan villages on the Missouri. After the party had returned from the Rockies they received word that on March 3, 1807 Congress had given each member a grant of land. Some of the men, however, could not claim the grant at that time because they had not yet returned from the wilderness. John Colter was one who decided to return to the Rockies and explore some new territory and was unable to claim his gift till some years later.

As the party neared the Mandan villages, Colter requested a discharge so he could return west with the Missouri Fur Company, headed by Manuel Lisa. After joining this company, Colter and a few others began the trek back into the mountains. Eventually Colter joined a band of Crow Indians and with them continued his explorations. With the Crow as guides, Colter headed into the rugged country south of the Yellowstone. (See figure 9.) By the time he reached the Snake River in Jackson's Hole it was January 1808 and the snow was typically deep, especially as they made their way over Teton Pass. After crossing the pass, Colter entered Pierre's Hole, becoming the first white man to do so.

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2Clements, p. 20.


4Colter was only in the valley long enough to pass through it on his way north, but while in the basin he chipped a rock into the shape of a face and carved "1808" and his name on it. In the 1930's
Major Andrew Henry

While Colter was discovering the areas surrounding Pierre's Hole for Lisa and his Missouri Fur Company, a new figure came on the scene; this was Major Andrew Henry. He became a partner with Lisa and had been to the mountains many times by 1808. During the next three years Henry penetrated some of the most remote areas of the Rockies. He became the next major character to tramp through the tall grass of Pierre's Hole.

In the fall of 1810 Major Henry was again in the mountains. On his way west his route took him into Jackson's Hole where he crossed over Teton Pass and spent several days in Pierre's Hole. He noted the wealth of game in the valley while he was there and no doubt made good use of it. Henry eventually left the valley and continued on to the North Fork of the Snake, which from then on was known as Henry's Fork, and there built Fort Henry. The stay at the fort was short, for starvation and warring Blackfeet eventually drove everyone out of the country. In the early part of 1811 Henry was once again heading down the Missouri.

Included in Major Henry's party were three Kentucky hunters named Hoback, Rezner, and Robinson. When they left the fort, the stone was unearthed in the northern portion of the valley and can be seen in Moose, Wyoming. This was an important find because there had been some dispute as to the exact date Colter entered the valley. If the stone is authentic the question seems to be solved.

1Dale Morgan, Jedediah Smith (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1953), p. 27.

2Driggs, p. 29.

3Morgan, p. 27.
three Kentuckians found their way back through Pierre's Hole and Jackson's Hole and were on their way down the Missouri River when they ran onto another party coming up the river heading for the mountains.¹ The leader of this party was William Price Hunt. After some negotiations Hunt persuaded the three hunters to guide him back through the Rockies to the Pacific.

Hunt and the Astorians

The Hunt party was outfitted by John Jacob Astor in 1811 to go to the Pacific coast to set up a trapping business and also to find a better route than the one used by Lewis and Clark. The exploring party left St. Louis, journeyed up the Missouri where they met Hoback, Rezner, and Robinson, and eventually entered Pierre's Hole via Teton Pass, or as it was known for many years, Hunt's Pass. The group passed through the valley between October 4th and 7th and reached the deserted Fort Henry on October 8, 1811.²

After Mr. Hunt reached the mouth of the Columbia, it was his duty to send a message back to Astor telling of his arrival. The return trip of the Astorians, as they were called, began from the Pacific and aimed for St. Louis. Included in this returning journey as the leader was Robert Stuart.³ Stuart left a valuable journal of his trip which provides many interesting details of his overland trek.

¹Driggs, p. 32.
²Ibid., pp. 32-33.
³Robert Stuart was born in Perthshire, Scotland, February 18, 1785. In 1807 at the age of twenty-one he left Scotland and went to Montreal where he became clerk of the North West Company. Three years later in July 1810, he left Canada for New York. From there he sailed
With a few companions Stuart began his march to St. Louis, leaving the mouth of the Columbia June 29, 1812. After three months of traveling eastward the party reached the vicinity of Pierre's Hole and entered the valley from the northwest on Thursday, October 1, 1812. Coming in over the elevated uplands at the north end of the basin, the group could see the plain stretched out before them. Stuart noted that after traveling about six miles from the place where they first saw the plain, they reached a river (Teton River or Pierre's Fork) "50 yds wide and about knee deep with abundance of Willow & Beaver."¹ He also observed that the plain was about sixteen miles wide from where they entered to the Pilot Knobs in the east.

The group probably camped near the river that night, but the next day, October 2, Stuart stated they traveled six miles south up the river to where some of his companions had killed five elk. This particular event gives some indication as to the abundance of game in the basin. Two other important observations were made that day. One reason why Stuart had sent his companions out to hunt was that he did not know how long the group would have to remain in the valley "however disagreeable and dangerous on account of the advanced state of the season and the excursions of the Blackfeet Indians..."² He knew of the marauding Blackfeet and quickly discovered the harshness of the

to the mouth of the Columbia River. (Rollins, 1935.) It was here he became the leader of the returning party of Astorians.

¹Rollins, p. 151.
²Ibid., p. 152.
weather in the basin. In early October 1812, the "weather had . . . for several days . . . been piercingly cold."\(^1\)

The party camped at that spot for about three days, but on the fifth they again took route in a southerly direction. That day they traveled through eight miles of swamps until they found a suitable camping spot. As they traveled Stuart noted the abundance of beaver in the dammed up streams flowing from the Pilot Knobs running through the swampy area.\(^2\) October sixth was their last full day in Pierre's Hole. Early that morning the group left the swamps and proceeded thirteen miles in a south-south-east direction through the plain. At the south end of the valley they encountered present-day Trail Creek and ascended it to where it branched into nearly equal parts and camped there.\(^3\) The next day they crossed Hunt's Pass and continued on toward St. Louis. (See figure 8 for basic routes of explorers.)

Stuart's journey marked the end of the exploring parties to enter the Rockies in the Pierre's Hole area. From that point on other factors drew men into the mountains of the West. The news of the wealth in beaver spread rapidly and before long the western lakes and streams were swarming with fur trappers and traders. In the invasion, Pierre's Hole did not go untouched.

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\(^1\)Ibid.

\(^2\)Ibid., p. 153.

\(^3\)Ibid.
**Figure 8**. Map showing the routes of Robert Stuart, William Price Hunt, Lewis & Clark, and John Colter. Scales in miles.

**Figure 9**. Early map showing possible route taken by Colter. Taken from Hermit's John Colter.
The Trappers

The fur trade had been in progress for many years in various parts of Canada and areas in the United States, but the western fur trade did not really begin until about 1807. By then a few trappers had been near the east slope of the Rockies, but from then on with the knowledge brought back with Lewis and Clark, John Colter, Robert Stuart, and others, organized fur trading expeditions began to filter westward into the beaver laden areas of the West. (See figure 10.)

The era of intensified fur trapping in the far west fell between the years of 1812 and about 1843, the year when the first great migration to Oregon occurred. Although several trappers continued for a decade or so more, the height seemed to be in the 1830's. The British appeared early in the trapping business in North America by organizing the Hudson Bay Company in 1670. This was the major company until it was ousted from the Northwest by the Americans. Many of its men penetrated the forests of the West many years before others arrived. Before 1820 a Scotsman named Donald McKenzie was in charge of an area between Pierre's Hole and the Bear River for the Bay Company. Following 1820 Alexander Ross headed the area and in 1823, he, with Peter Skene Ogden, was ordered to occupy the Snake River country. ¹

Another large company was the North West Company which began in 1793 with its headquarters in Montreal and supposedly monopolized the trans Rocky country from 1813 to 1821. At that juncture, after

¹Diggins, p. 36.
much conflict and competition, the North West Company was absorbed into the Hudson's Bay Company.¹

Several American companies were organized in the early 1800's and began to compete with the British for trapping grounds. The two major companies were the Missouri Fur Company led by Manuel Lisa, organized in or around 1809, and the American Fur Company founded by John Jacob Astor in 1808.² Late in 1822 this company was changed to the Rocky Mountain Fur Company under the leadership of William H. Ashley.³ Many other companies existed but were small or were just groups of independent or free trappers. Some of those were the Bean-Sinclair Party organized in 1830; the Gantt and Blackwell Company created in 1831; the Nathaniel J. Wyeth group beginning in early 1832; and the Bonneville expedition, which started west May 1, 1832.⁴ Others were in the surrounding area but those mentioned above had significant contact with Pierre's Hole.

In 1818, ten years after John Colter had discovered Pierre's Hole and six years after the Stuart party passed through, trapping finally began in the valley. There may have been trappers previous to this time but the trapping business really began with the coming of Pierre's Hole namesake, Pierre Tivanitagon, or often referred to as

⁴Ibid., pp. 115-122.
Old Pierre. Old Pierre was a half-breed of French and Iroquois stock. He was with the North West Company in eastern Canada in 1804, but came west with Donald McKenzie and other Iroquois trappers in 1816. These half-breeds, with Pierre as their leader, were not always dependable and had to be watched closely and often were given their freedom to trap on their own merely to get rid of them. On one occasion in the Northwest, Pierre and his Iroquois friends were under the employ of Alexander Ross and because of continual trouble from Pierre, and after being "badgered" for weeks, Ross finally agreed to let them trap by themselves. The group, led by Pierre, took off across Washington, reached the Spokane House, and from there were led south by one Micheal Bourdon.¹ They were heading for the Bear River area, but trapped a great deal on their way. After crossing Henry's Fork, the group eventually entered Pierre's Hole where they trapped with good success for two months.² Perhaps because of this long stay in the valley and the character of Pierre, his name remained attached to the valley for many years. In anycase, the group trapped in the basin for a period and then made their way along the south bank of the Snake or Lewis Fork trapping as they went. Eventually they made it as far south as the Blackfoot and Portneuf rivers.³

Some time later, before 1827, Pierre had become part of the Smith-Jackson-Sublette firm and was trapping for them. After leaving


²Driggs, p. 37. Driggs also states that the group was attacked and plundered by a band of Snake Indians while there.

³Morgan, p. 127.
Bear Lake in 1818 the party moved north into the Three Forks area and Blackfoot country. Trade developed between the company and the Blackfeet but the friendliness did not last long. The Blackfeet became hostile and "Old Pierre became the price of the furs that were traded." Ashely later explained that:

P. Tontavantogan was killed by a party of Blackfeet Indians, who advanced near to where about 25 of our hunters were encamped, and proposed trading with them. Some difficulty arose—the Indians fired upon the whites, shot this man dead, and wounded another; took one horse and about one hundred and fifty pounds of beaver fur. Two other sources of information about the death of Pierre come from a letter from Smith-Jackson-Sublette to General William Clark and from a journal of Peter Skene Ogden. The letter, written on December 24, 1829, in part said:

Mudors committed in the vicinity of the Rocky Mountains since July 1826, on men belonging to the firm S. J. S.: Pierre Irrequois, by the Blackfeet. The entry in Ogden's journal came Sunday, February 17, 1827. In it he records:

... the two Americans ... arrived accompanied by one of their Traders and two men, they met these on Portneuf River near its sources ... he also informed me, they had a skirmish with the Black Feet, and Old Pierre the Iroquois Chief who deserted from me four years ago was killed and cut to pieces.

From 1818 to 1829 little is known about Pierre's Hole and any contact with it or about any trappers who were combing the mountain

1Ibid.

2Ibid.

3Ibid., p. 341.

4Ibid., p. 294.
streams in search of beaver. It can be assumed, however, that many trappers passed through the valley and trapped many of the streams on their way. Supposedly the Indians and mountain men had continuous contact with each other in the hole during those eleven years. At the end of that period, though, Pierre's Hole was better known and trappers continued to pass near or through it as they changed hunting grounds or were on their way to the annual rendezvous.

The rendezvous played an important role in the lives of the people occupying the West. Both white and red men alike made good use of the annual affairs. Beginning in 1824 and continuing until about 1840, yearly gatherings or rendezvous of trappers, traders, and Indians occurred. The purpose of these rendezvous was to gather at a central location where each company could trade their furs, reprovision, regroup, and plan for the next year's hunt.\(^1\)

Many of the rendezvous were held on the Green River in Wyoming because of its good location and easy accessibility for those coming from the east with provisions. Other locations were also used for the rendezvous such as Cache Valley, Bear Lake, and many other places. Pierre's Hole was used as a place of rendezvous in 1829 and 1832.

The rendezvous in the valley in 1829 was an unusual gathering in that it was the second one held that year. An earlier rendezvous took place on the Popo Agie River in Wyoming in June, whereas the one

\(^1\)The rendezvous were not always serious. During the few days of the gathering, several types of competition developed such as races, wrestling, and shooting matches. Often the matches would end in fierce fighting but nonetheless the rendezvous was a necessary recuperation period for the trappers.
in Pierre's Hole was held in the latter part of August. The second rendezvous was not necessarily meant to be held in Pierre's Hole, but since that was where all concerned met, that was where it was held.

Sources are a little vague and contradictory about the events which lead up to the August rendezvous, but an attempt will be made to reconstruct them as well as possible. In 1822, William H. Ashley and Andrew Henry joined together and organized the Rocky Mountain Fur company in St. Louis. Under the command of Major Henry about one hundred men began the trek west into the mountains. Among the enlisted men was one James Bridger. After four years of trapping, Ashley and Henry found it advantageous to sell their company to three men who had been with them since it had begun. So, in July 1826, the Rocky Mountain Fur Company was sold to Jedediah S. Smith, David E. Jackson, and William L. Sublette. These three owned and headed the company for the next three years and were in charge of it in 1829.

As mentioned, a rendezvous was held at Popo Agie previous to the one held in Pierre's Hole. Jedediah Smith and David Jackson were not at this gathering, but their partner, William Sublette, was. At the breakup of the rendezvous Sublette and a party of forty, including Thomas Fitzpatrick, Jim Bridger, and Joe Meek, journeyed through the Big Horn Basin into the upper Snake Valley, just south of Yellowstone Park. At this point they ran into David Jackson and his party. After

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1Driggs, p. 42.

2Ibid., p. 44.

3Hafen and Ghent, p. 72.
the meeting Jackson and Fitzpatrick headed for Flathead country, perhaps in search for Smith who was supposed to be returning for the fall rendezvous.

While they were with the Flatheads, Jackson and Fitzpatrick did run into Smith as he was returning from Vancouver. Smith had been in California and Oregon and was on his way to meet his partners at the time he found Jackson and Fitzpatrick. From the Flathead River, the two partners worked their way south where they expected to meet Sublette and the rest of the party.

Meanwhile after some time had passed Sublette became anxious to meet Smith and Jackson so he sent Joe Meek and others to search for them. The search party headed south through Jackson's Hole and made their way over Teton Pass into Pierre's Hole. While in the basin:

They saw four men coming, leading a single pack horse. On the pack horse were a few moose hides, a few beaver plews and a few sea-otter skins. Apparently all the Diah had to show for his years' expedition to the coast.

Meek had found Smith and Jackson so he quickly sent word to Sublette. The three finally met in Pierre's Hole August 5, 1829 where a general rendezvous was held that lasted about two weeks. At this rendezvous nearly two hundred trappers assembled, but many were not associated with the Smith-Jackson-Sublette group. It may be assumed

2 Ibid., Vol. IX, p. 222.
3 Vastal, p. 43.
that other companies were represented, as well as free trappers, benefiting from the trading.\(^1\)

Another change occurred in the leadership during the August rendezvous. For some reason Smith, Jackson, and Sublette sold out to Milton Sublette, Jim Bridger, Thomas Fitzpatrick, Henry Frapp, and John Baptisté Jervais.\(^2\) After the trading and talks were over, in early October, the rendezvous broke up. Each man or group of men once again departed for their favorite trapping ground.

As mentioned, little is known about the valley between Old Pierre's visit and the rendezvous of 1829. Chittenden suggested that there was little contact with the valley during those years, but pointing to the significance of the rendezvous, he said, "This was perhaps the first time that the beautiful valley of Pierre's Hole came prominently to the notice of American traders."\(^3\)

Over the next couple of years the valley was left pretty much alone except for an occasional visit by a trapper or Indian. One who did go through the valley, for example, was Kit Carson, as he was on his way to the Salmon River area.\(^4\) No doubt a few others were in the area during the years of 1830 to 1831, but the records are silent on specific examples. This was to change in 1832, however, for Pierre's Hole was once again chosen for the site for the annual rendezvous.

\(^1\)Ibid., Vol. I, p. 100.

\(^2\)Driggs, p. 50.

\(^3\)Chittenden, p. 292.

Early in the year the trappers began preparation for the meeting and began their long marches from the trapping grounds toward Pierre's Hole. By late June trappers from every direction began to flow into the valley. Ending their spring trap, the leaders of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, Bridger and Fitzpatrick, entered Pierre's Hole.¹ Because this rendezvous "was one of the largest and most picturesque gatherings ever held in the mountains"² many others were there ahead of them and many more would follow. One group which was already there was a party of trappers led by William Henry Vanderbourgh.

As time passed other companies and parties of men poured into the valley along with the tribes of Indians eager to trade with the white men. All in total nearly a thousand people had gathered, including the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, a party from Arkansas under Fred Sinclair,³ Aaron Stephen's men who were working in the firm of Gantt and Blackwell,⁴ and some of Captain E. L. B. Bonneville's men were also present. Scattered over a large area, apart from the trappers, were the lodges of the Indians. Among the tribes represented were the Nez Perce, Flathead in large numbers, and a few of other various tribes.⁵

¹Hafen and Ghent, pp. 91-97.
⁴Hafen and Ghent, p. 97.
⁵Ibid., p. 98.
The second week in July, 1832, found the rendezvous well under way. By the fifteenth goods had been sold, plans were made for the fall hunt, and the trappers were ready to set off for their grounds. Leaving earlier than most, Milton Sublette, with seventeen of his men, Sinclair's party and half of Wyeth's men, left the rendezvous and traveled to the southern end of the valley. Early on the eighteenth, while continuing south, the trappers saw a long file of horsemen coming down the slopes into the valley. At first the trappers thought it was the late supply train of Provost, but it turned out to be about one hundred and twenty Grosventre Indians.¹

When the two parties finally approached each other, Baihoh, chief of the band, came out with a peace pipe to meet two of the trappers who had been sent out by Sublette. These two men were Antoine Godin and a Flathead Indian for an interpreter. Without any warning Godin ordered the Flathead to shoot the chief. Baihoh fell from his horse, dead. With this incident the Battle of Pierre's Hole began. Fighting continued throughout the day and into the night, but by morning the Indians had fled unnoticed. Several were killed and wounded on both sides, but casualties were not heavy. (See figure 11.)

After some recuperation for those wounded during the battle the trappers continued on their journey and eventually left the valley. This large gathering ended large group contact with Pierre's Hole for several decades. No other rendezvous was held there and in the years to follow only an occasional visitor other than the trappers entered the valley. Group contact would not occur again until the 1880's.

¹Ibid.
Possible Rendezvous and Battle Sites

Figure 11.
Taken from Idaho Terri Toe Spring 1973
Further Contact

Some of the first people to go into the mountains were the missionaries of the various denominations trying to convert the "heathens." One such individual was the Rev. Samuel Parker, who was probably the first religious leader to enter Pierre's Hole. He was on his way to Oregon with Marcus Whitman in a party led by Fontenelle. Whitman later turned back eastward, but Parker continued on to Oregon.¹

The Parker group reached and entered Pierre's Hole on the 28th of August, 1835. That night they camped in the southeast portion of the valley "among the prairie vale." Parker observed there were no buffalo which the group had expected to see and blamed the Blackfeet for scaring them away. On the 29th, a Sunday, he conducted a worship service with a considerable number of Indians, mainly Nez Perce and Flathead. Parker said he got as many as he could in one of their lodges and explained to them the Ten Commandments "and endeavored to make them understand the way they could be saved."² From the valley Parker continued on his route to the coast.

During the declining years of the intensive fur trade era, many trappers continued to pass through the valley, but by 1840, the old fur trappers began to leave the mountains in search of other means of making a living. The beaver were becoming scarce and so were the trappers. Joe Meek and Robert Newell were among the last trappers to trap the streams of Pierre's Hole. In 1840 they trapped briefly in the basin as they were enroute to Oregon.³

²Parker, p. 88.
³Driggs, p. 98.
In that same year, however, Father Pierre-Jean De Smet was heading for Oregon and passed through the valley and during his stay of fifteen to twenty days, baptized nearly six hundred Indians, most of which were Flathead and Pend'Oreille. He entered the basin July 11 by way of Teton Pass. The night before two feet of snow had fallen on the pass and De Smet thought it was remarkable that in that area it rained in the valleys and snowed in the mountains at the same time.

After traveling one day north down the valley, they reached a large camp of Indians. The Indians were expecting De Smet and upon his approach all the women and children came running toward him to greet him and shake his hand. He stated that the elders wept for joy and the young men leaped and shouted joyously. Nearly 1,600 Indians were present. The first night a spiritual exercise was scheduled and all the people gathered about De Smet's lodge to hear him. After the speeches and baptisms and the activities of the next day, De Smet left Pierre's Hole, and resumed his journey to Oregon.

Just prior to the time when Idaho was organized as a territory, in April, 1862, President Abraham Lincoln asked Brigham Young, governor of Utah Territory, to raise an army to protect the telegraph and mail near Independence Rock. Young chose Lot Smith to lead the army. While enroute the company came upon a band of Indians and pursued them up the Green River Valley on into Jackson's Hole and finally into Pierre's Hole. Whether or not they caught the Indians is not important, the

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2Driggs, p. 109.
fact that a "Mormon" militia entered the valley and feasted upon the wild game, may be the important factor. Presumably the Captain reported to Brigham Young and told him of the area in which they had traveled. Though no evidence can be shown, perhaps this event had something to do with the Mormon settlers who entered the valley some twenty years later.

After the trappers had left the area, only a few individuals dared to go into the valley because of the Indians. Some of those were miners seeking their fortune. After the gold rush of 1849 in California it did not take long for the miners to begin to overflow into outlying areas in search for large gold deposits. It was not until 1862 that the flow was directed into the mountains of Idaho and Montana and the vicinity of Pierre's Hole. The first party through the valley was led by Walter W. DeLacy, who came to the valley in September, 1862. This group merely prospected as they passed through the valley on their way to Jackson's Hole.\(^1\) Other mining attempts did not occur for many years.

Ten years prior to the first settlers another event occurred that may have influenced those who first settled in the basin. In 1873 a Geological Survey led by Dr. Ferdinand Vandiveer Hayden was authorized by congress to obtain information about the Yellowstone-Teton region.\(^2\) Therefore a survey party consisting of two divisions started for the location.

\(^{1}\)Ibid.

The Yellowstone division was led by Hayden himself and the Snake River division was led by James Stevenson. His mission was to explore the Teton Range and immediate vicinity. Richard Leigh was selected as guide and he led the group to Pierre's Hole, eventually reaching the mouth of Teton Canyon where they camped for about ten days. From this point groups were sent out to parts of the valley to explore as another group attempted to ascend the Grand Teton, 13,766 feet above sea level.\(^1\)

In 1877 another Hayden expedition entered the valley and more detailed geological information was obtained. More of these surveys will be said in the next chapter.

In 1879, Thomas Moran, a famous painter, made a short visit to the basin to paint the peaks. He was escorted to the valley by a small militia from Fort Hall under the leadership of Captain Augustus Hudson Bainbridge. The importance of the journey, however, is that Moran kept a daily diary of the trip. His descriptions, as well, are important in understanding the geography of the area.

**Summary**

These then, were the first occupants of Pierre's Hole: explorers, mountain men, trappers, missionaries, U. S. Geological Surveyors, a painter, and a few military personnel. Over a seventy-four year span they visited the valley and exploited its rich resources of grass, fur, game, and scenery. Their visits were ephemeral, but their import was profound. Their horses grazed the meadows, their guns and traps claimed the wildlife. What was the reaction of these restless western

\(^1\)Ibid., p. 23.
frontiersmen as they visited the high mountain valley? Did they consider the possibility of settling down permanently? Although it is impossible to ascertain the way in which all of the visitors viewed the environment, because they left no records, a few diaries are available which provide a glimpse of the reactions of some.
Chapter V

THE REACTION OF THE OCCUPANTS

TO THE ENVIRONMENT

In reconstructing the geography of Pierre's Hole as it existed during the visits of those discussed in the last chapter, several sources of valuable information have been made available. Many of the trappers and other visitors kept excellent diaries and journals. These documents provide information regarding the paths followed by the individuals, what happened on their way, and comments on what the landscape looked like in their mind as they passed through it. The early outlook and perception of those individuals aids in the understanding of the future settlement of Pierre's Hole.

A variety of geographical phenomena was observed by those who entered the valley, but may be broken down into the following categories: (1) Landscape, vegetation, and soils. (2) Climatic conditions. (3) Wildlife, and (4) Drainage and associated vegetation.

Landscape, Vegetation, and Soils

Generally there were two major routes used in entering and leaving the valley. Coming from the east one entered by crossing the Teton Pass in the southeast corner and exited by traveling north through the basin and finally leaving over the prairie hills in the northwest. Coming in from the west, the path was just the opposite.

This northern upland has been described by several men over a period of about fifty years. Warren Angus Ferris, an employee of the
American Fur Company crossed the "prairie hills, decked with groves of aspen trees."¹ Important observations of this area made by the Hayden survey of 1877 also adds to the description. They recorded that as the group approached the highlands from the Snake River Plain, the plain rises "in gentle grassy acclivities, whose surfaces are scored by narrow canons hemmed in by precipitous walls of dark basaltic lava, which in places rise to the height of several hundred feet above the stream beds."² Further, when describing the "low, gentle, undulating prairie upland,"³ they explained that the surface of "this upland barrier is generally composed of finely comminuted light-brown soil, covered with a luxuriant growth of grasses and herbaceous plants."⁴

Another very good view of the area, although short, comes from Thomas Moran's small diary in 1879. He gave some idea what he and the settlers to follow encountered as they neared the valley. Moran explains that after leaving the Snake River Plain, the small company reached Canyon Creek, "after a 15 mile ride over rolling country covered with excellent grass and free from sage."⁵ Continuing the next day toward the east Moran records that about every mile they came to a gulch "bordered with aspens in depths from 100 to 200 feet," but they

¹Warren Angus Ferris, Life in the Rocky Mountains 1830-1833 Salt Lake City: Rocky Mountain Book Shop, 1940), p. 120.
³Ibid., p. 441.
⁴Ibid.
found no difficulty in crossing them.\textsuperscript{1} \hfill Reaching the crest of the up-
land he noted that from that point to the basin, the terrain was a

gentle or a smooth rolling country.\textsuperscript{2}

Concerning the floor of the valley, the Hayden survey of 1873
quickly noticed that the plain was thickly covered with a "luxuriant"
growth of grass and other good forage-plants. They did, however, find
small areas of sandy and comparatively barren soil.\textsuperscript{3} The 1877 report
is as equally interesting. Describing what eventually became the main
agricultural tracts in the valley, Hayden wrote as follows:

Within the basin area, the large streams have built up quite
extensive detrital deposits in the form of broad tongues extend-
ing out into the basin from their debouchures, the channel follow-
ing their crest, from which the surface very perceptibly slopes
in either direction into shallow troughs which in some instances
are occupied by the smaller drainage channels that rise in the fore-
land.\textsuperscript{4}

One of the most noticeable facts, though the valley was well
covered with grass, was the fact that like "most other places" it was
"deficient in woodland, . . ."\textsuperscript{5} Other feelings such as "the grass is
good, the land ordinary,"\textsuperscript{6} were also expressed.

\textsuperscript{1}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{2}Ibid., p. 9.

\textsuperscript{3}F. V. Hayden, \textit{Sixth Annual Report} p. 214.


\textsuperscript{5}Parker, p. 88.

\textsuperscript{6}F. G. Young, ed., \textit{The Correspondence and Journals of Captain
Nathaniel J. Wyeth 1831-6.} (Eugene, Oregon: University Press, 1899),
p. 159.
The mountains surrounding the valley also were described and merit attention. Being the highest and most rugged, the Tetons were written about more vividly than the other ranges as in this example:

... a cluster of four or five finger-shaped peaks, connected together at their bases, on the summit of the Mountain, but rising some thousand feet above the surrounding peaks, ... These lofty pinnacles are entirely inaccessible, and may be seen across the plains of Snake River one hundred and fifty miles. The great height and peculiar appearance of these peaks, being finger-shaped and not angular, makes them one of the most observed landmarks to be found in the Rocky Mountains.1

Osborne Russell, another frequent visitor to the basin, wrote about the peaks in this manner: "... wild and rugged Mountains; the East range resembles Mountains piled on Mountains and capped with three spiral peaks which pierce the clouds, ..."2

Climatic Conditions

There are not many statements regarding the climatic conditions of Pierre's Hole, but they were probably experienced and talked about more than they were written about. It is interesting to compare the observations of the visitors concerning the weather with the actual patterns described in the second chapter. Ferris records that:

Throughout the month of June, scarcely a day passed without rain, hail, or snow, and during the last three days of the month, a snow storm continued without intermission, the whole time, night and day; but disappeared from the earth a few hours after the sun reappeared.3

1Ferris, p. 83.
2Russell, p. 15.
3Ferris, p. 121.
During the month of July in 1832, Wyeth noticed that "the weather is warm in the day time but frost every night, . . ." Parkersaid, however, that the valley was "less frosty than any part we have gone through this side of the rocky chain of mountains" when he was in the valley in August, 1835. Hayden was correct in his statement when he said that "the seasons are probably too short for corn, but wheat should succeed well here."  

Wildlife

Mention has already been made of animal life in the basin, but some other comments are interesting. In 1833 Nathaniel Wyeth was once again in the valley and noted that "Buffaloe" still could be found. Ferris, in 1834, with his party, killed a few buffalo and an antelope. When Russell was through on one occasion he also recalled the presence of large numbers of buffalo, elk, deer, and antelope. Perhaps the most detailed description appears in the 1873 Hayden survey which reports the following:

The sportsman need not despise the region. Antelope still abound on the plain; the tracks of deer and elk were abundant about the swampy bottoms of Pierre's Hole; several bears were seen, and one small grizzly was shot; . . . a moose cow and two calves were shot in a thicket on West Teton Creek; and abundant tracks of mountain sheep were found as high as the saddle south of Mount Hayden, where no other animals were seen larger than the swallows

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1Young, p. 159.
2Parker, p. 88.
3Hayden, p. 214.
4Young, p. 204.
5Russell, p. 15.
which were skimming about over the snow-banks, gathering insect-food. The thickets along the streams, and especially the groves near the upper line of timber, are full of two or three varieties of grouse, while ducks and geese abound in the swampy ponds of Pierre's Hole.¹

One of the most interesting observations was made by Wyeth in 1833 as he neared and entered the valley. Toward the south end of the basin, especially, a "great quantity of grasshoppers" were found so thick that they discolored the ground.²

**Drainage and Associated Vegetation**

The most written about and most observed feature to be described by the early inhabitants of the valley were the long streams flowing across the wide, level, basin floor. These streams were very noticeable in that they were lined with a heavy growth of timber and one could trace the path from the foothills to the river. Of course, bordering the streams was the "large extent of excellent pasturage."³

Upon entering the basin in 1832, Wyeth described the valley as being a large valley with many streams running through it.⁴ Parker, as well, noted the "well watered" condition of the valley and observed the "supply of cotton-wood and willows scattered along the streams."⁵ Captain Bonneville's records, provided for us by Washington Irving, are very descriptive of the above conditions. This record explains

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² Young, p. 204.
³ Ferris, p. 150.
⁴ Young, pp. 158-9.
⁵ Parker, p. 88.
that the valley had many winding streams passing through the green meadows and forests of willow and cottonwoods. ¹ The river was viewed as a fine stream, fed by rivulets and mountain springs. A good view of the features and the surroundings near the streams is provided by Osborne Russell in the following passage:

We traveled to the north end of the valley and encamped on one of the numerous branches which unite at the northern extremity and forms a stream called Pierre's Fork, which discharges its waters into Henry's Fork of the Snake River. The stream on which we encamped flows directly from the central Teton and is narrowly skirted with cottonwood trees, closely intermingled with under-
valley and reported that because of the extremely gradual slope of
the plain, streams flowing through were very much "checked" so "as to
cause broad stretches of swampy ground along these banks, . . ." In
addition, Hayden reported that the swampy tract was covered with
"luxurient meadows, dense copses of willows and ponds, through which
the channel can with difficulty be traced." This swampy area pre-
sented some difficulty for the early travelers, and as Wyeth put it, they had to cross the "difficult swamps" to reach the pass in the south-
east.

Zenas Leonard gave an interesting picture of the general con-
ditions of the valley as they existed in the days of the trappers and
explorers. Though his information concerning the valley length is some-
what distorted, his observations summarize many of the features dis-
cussed above. His view was that:

This valley is situated on the river of the same name, and is
from seventy to eighty miles in length, with high mountains on the
east and west—each so high that it is impossible to pass over them,
and it is from eight to ten miles wide. The river runs immediately
through the center, with a beautiful grove of timber along either
bank; from this timber to the mountain, a distance of four or five
miles, there is nothing but a smooth plain. This meadow or prairie
is so perfectly level that a person may look up or down as far as
the eye will reach without meeting anything to obstruct the sight,
until the earth and sky appear to meet.

Summary

From the time of the last trappers in 1840, little occurred in
Pierre's Hole other than a couple of minor visits by Hayden and Moran.

1Ibid.
3Young, p. 204.
4John C. Evers, ed., Adventures of Zenas Leonard, Fur Trader
The activities that took place were limited to the Indians who con-
tinued to use the valley and a few squaw men who tried to make a living
by trapping what few beaver could be found. The major contact of the
fur trade with the valley had ended, the descriptions had been written
and passed on to others. By the late 1880's the description of Pierre's
Hole was known by many people, but nearly all of those who wrote about
the place or visited the valley had no intention of settling down there
to make it their permanent home. The majority were carefree and rest-
less and roamed at will.
Chapter VI

THE EARLY SETTLEMENT OF PIERRE'S HOLE

During the period in which little was happening in Pierre's Hole, some acts of Congress were passed that did have an affect on the area and played an important role geographically. Before 1846 the area west of the Louisiana Purchase was thinly settled and unorganized, but in 1846 the Oregon Territory was organized including all of present-day Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and parts of Montana and Wyoming. In 1859 Oregon State was extracted from the area and Washington Territory was created. Pierre's Hole was included in both the Oregon and Washington Territories. Four years later in 1863, Idaho Territory was created with Lewiston as the capitol and William H. Wallace as Territorial Governor.\footnote{Rees, pp. 15-16, 18.} With this act, Pierre's Hole was situated on the eastern edge of the Territory with part of it in the Territory of Wyoming. (See figure 12.)

The visitors of Pierre's Hole described in the foregoing pages were all temporary occupants. According to the sequence of settlement proposed by Fredrick Jackson Turner,\footnote{Turner proposed that the sequence of occupation of an area would occur in the following manner: (1) Indians, (2) Explorers, trappers, miners, and military, (3) Cattlemen, (4) Pioneer Farmers, (5) Permanent Farmers, (6) Merchants, (7) Small towns, villages, and (8) Urban frontier.} the permanent settlement of cattlemen would be the next step expected in the peopling of the valley
• Indicates Location of Pierre's Hole

Figure 12.
since mining was never really important. There were, however, certain aspects of Pierre's Hole which prevented settlement from occurring until the 1880's.

One of the major repelling factors was the remoteness of the basin. Being far removed from any town with law officials or even a military headquarters, presented some problems to the settlers if an Indian uprising occurred. There would be little if any protection against such an occurrence. Along with the possibility of an Indian intrusion the valley maintained fairly harsh climatic conditions, which also discouraged an agrarian minded people from settling.

Another important factor affecting settlement, aside from the environmental characteristics, was the development of the political boundaries, specifically county lines. The distance from the county seat and land office provided some concern for the residents of Pierre's Hole. At the time settlers began to enter the Hole, it was part of Oneida County and remained therein for several years. When action occurred that needed judicial officials the people had to travel to Malad City, the county seat. A few years later Bingham County was formed with Blackfoot as the county seat. This condition was altered with the formation of Fremont, then Bonneville, and eventually Jefferson, Madison, and finally Teton County, which contained Pierre's Hole. The organization of Teton County occurred January 26, 1915.¹ The county

was the thirty-sixth to be formed out of forty-four and contained four hundred sixty three square miles.¹ (See figure 13.)

The political boundaries had a definite effect on the settlement of this remote area. Generally they found themselves far from any county seat or aid from governmental agencies. Law enforcement was almost nonexistent, as mentioned, and transactions concerning homesteads had to be taken care of in Blackfoot, nearly a hundred miles away. Even later when the county seat was in St. Anthony, Fremont County, the distance was burdensome for the settlers.

Another boundary that affected the valley was the establishment of the Idaho-Wyoming state line. Although established prior to settlement, the position of this political barrier affected settlement then as well as in future generations. The state line ran along the eastern edge of the valley and therefore cut off a portion and included it in Wyoming. The position of the boundary was very illogical in that people who lived on the Wyoming side were completely cut off from the rest of the state and interaction with it. A high mountain range divided these people from their home state with only one access route leading east. Logically the state line should have run along the crest of the Teton Mountains instead of the present position. But because of this geographical blunder interesting conditions developed as settlement occurred.

Because of the Indians, the physical conditions, including climate, remoteness, and distance, and the county boundary situation,

Figure 13.
COUNTY DEVELOPMENT
Compiled from Boling's "Economic History of Idaho" and the 1911 Climatic Summary and the 1900 Agricultural Statistics.

- Indicates Location of Teton Valley
"the valley was virtually abandoned until the year 1882" by permanent settlers. ¹

Though there were a few semi-permanent trappers in Pierre's Hole, the cattlemen's frontier began to develop quite early. After the West began to be settled and as early as the Civil War, Pierre's Hole became an important rendezvous for horse thieves. The thieves stole from the soldiers at Fort Hall and many of the settlers in the Snake River Valley as well. Because of the seclusion and remoteness of the valley, it was a convenient place to hide and keep stolen stock. ²

Although a few early settlers braved the condition for a short while, many were discouraged from settling the area because of the "bad" people wandering in and out of it.

Eventually, however, despite the outward forces from the valley discouraging settlement, people, with more than a visit in mind began to trickle into the basin. The question may now be asked, why did settlement occur in Pierre's Hole when many other better places could be found?

The horse thieves found the area very suitable for their needs because it was far away from so called civilization, but more important than anything else, the valley was covered with grass knee high or higher. Excluding the remoteness, others began to realize that the valley afforded excellent conditions for raising stock. ³ From 1882

¹Bradley, p. 20.
²Driggs, pp. 121-23.
³Beal, p. 212.
to well into the 1900's the excellent pasturage and cheap available
land of Pierre's Hole were the major drawing forces in initiating
settlement.

In 1882 Hyrum C. Lapham, his wife and two children, as well as
four of Lapham's relatives, entered the valley to become the first
settlers. Lapham, a school teacher from Kansas explained that:

Being broke, as tenderfeet usually are, and as I had taught
school in Kansas, was glad to accept the school at Albion during
the winter of 1878-9. This was my first introduction to the Mormons
and must say they were very kind to me. In 1881, we went up Snake
River to where Plano is now, and afterwards located there, but
there was no hay to be had, and wanting to raise stock, we moved
to Teton Basin in 1882.¹

This group of Laphams located in the northern sector of the
valley and began to raise their cattle. Although they endured the
harsh climatic influences and the remoteness, the Laphams could not
tolerate the stock thieves. Mr. Lapham soon discovered that the valley
was not the safest place to be with his animals or family. After much
harassment from the thieves and losing cattle, the Laphams decided to
leave the valley in 1887.² Before leaving, however, they did have the
distinction of having the first white child to be born in the basin.
A son, Harry Deane, was born in September, 1883.³

In the same year the Laphams entered the basin an interesting
event occurred that motivated several people from the Bear Lake area
to move to Pierre's Hole. In that year, two trappers, Robert Benbrook,

¹Driggs, p. 151.
²Ibid., p. 124.
³Bradley, p. 21.
and his friend Sam Hill stole two young girls for wives from Bear Lake. For some reason, probably for distance and seclusion, they went to Pierre's Hole to live. They entered the valley and built a couple of cabins at the point of the willows, southwest of the present Driggs townsit.\(^1\) The two men and their young wives only spent the next two winters there, but in some way, people in Bear Lake received word where the trappers had gone. Because of this, many citizens became interested in Pierre's Hole and for reasons of curiosity and perhaps upon hearing about the natural feed, many of them moved to the valley in 1883. Included in the group were the Hubbards, Hibbards, Lyons, and Watermans.\(^2\)

During a five year period between 1882 and 1887 several people settled in the basin. In 1882 there were approximately fourteen and by 1887 the figure had grown to nearly seventy. Out of this group the majority or about fifty-eight had come to utilize the natural pasture. Of the remaining twelve, three came to trap, three others were outlaws, and two came for unknown reasons. The last four were the trappers and their stolen wives. The goal of most in going to the valley is summed up by Enoch Cal Carrington, who casually observed, "its a damned good place to pickett a horse."\(^3\) There is not any doubt that the primary reason for the initial settlement of Pierre's Hole was for the purpose

\(^1\) Bradley, p. 21.

\(^2\) Ibid.

\(^3\) Interview with Enoch Cal Carrington by Dwight Stone, Driggs, Idaho 4 August 1958.
of raising stock. The physical conditions described previously show why this was the case. (See figure 14 for location of those arriving between 1882 and 1887.)

Two other conditions had a definite impact upon the settlement of Pierre's Hole, one being the public land survey and the other the Homestead and Desert Land Acts. When settlement began in 1882, the first public land survey in the valley had just been completed. But this survey, with John B. David as chief surveyor, only covered the extreme northern sections of the valley. To be more exact, it reached as far as township 7 north and ranges 43 and 44 east. This reached to the south as far as Badger Creek and to the east, not quite to present-day Felt.\(^1\) It was not until 1890 that range 45 was surveyed, east of the 1882 survey. Also in 1890, the main survey of the valley was completed but was not filed in the land office until 1891.\(^2\) Between the years of 1882 and 1891, any settler who entered the basin had to get his bearing from the 1882 survey. (See location of surveys on figure 15).

According to the records, no homesteads were claimed and recorded in a land office prior to 1891. After the main survey, the people still had to travel to Blackfoot to file, which may have caused some of the slowness in claims being filed on. Because the valley was not surveyed the settlers used Metes and Bounds to delimit their homesteads.\(^3\) A good example of this is given by Jesse A. Edlefsen, who is

\(^1\)Driggs, p. 155.

\(^2\)Ibid.

\(^3\)The Metes and Bounds system used physical features on the
Figure 14. Original Homestead Locations. Compiled Patent Records

1882 to 1887

1888 to 1890

1890 to 1900

SCALE IN MILES
one who remembers the system. He stated that the settlers would pick out an area:

Somewhere that would take in about 160 acres and they kind of laid it off from this spot where we stand to a certain tree over there then another direction to another spot like a big rock or something like that, another one over to a certain turn in the creek and back on down the creek for so far and then on in another direction and around to the place of beginning.\(^1\)

The availability of cheap land was the other major reason for settlement in the valley. It is under this category that the Homestead and Desert Land Acts came into play concerning the valley.

The Homestead Act was put into effect in 1862. Generally the land was surveyed then opened for settlement with a land office available to file for homesteads. In the case of Pierre's Hole, since it was not surveyed until 1890, no homesteads could be claimed prior to that time. There was a provision, however, that enabled the settlers to claim land. Before the survey a person or family could squat on a piece of ground and have squatter's rights on the ground. This provided the person with the opportunity to claim the land as soon as it was made available through surveying and a land office established. Such was the situation in Pierre's Hole. Up to 1891, the settlers were squatting on the ground waiting a survey so they could legally file for the property and have definite boundaries set according to township-range lines.

The Homestead Act itself:

Secured to qualified persons the right to settle upon, enter, and acquire title to not exceeding one quarter section, or 160

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landscape to show boundaries, such as rocks, trees, creeks, or other prominent landmarks.

\(^1\)Interview with Jesse A. Edlefsen, Driggs, Idaho 13 October 1973.
acres, of public land, by establishing and maintaining residence thereon and improving and cultivating the land for the continuous period of five years.¹

Qualified persons in this case were those who were the head of a family, twenty-one years of age or older, and who were citizens of the United States or who had filed a declaration to become such.² It also recommended, for obvious reasons, that before filing on a homestead, the person should "select and personally examine the land and be satisfied of its character and true description."³ One other provision of the law that may have had some affect on the dates of claims files by Pierre's Hole settlers is the following:

The homestead law originally required the applicant in all cases to appear personally at the district land office and present his application. This requirement was modified 'allowing parties who are' prevented by reason of distance, bodily infirmity or other good cause, from personal attendance at the land office."⁴

In the records containing the original entries, many were not filed on until several years after the person's entrance into the valley and after the survey had been completed. Perhaps the above provision applied in many of those cases.

The other law, the Desert Land Act, also influenced the settlement and farm size. The Desert Land Act of 1877 entitled those residing in desert defined areas to claim additional acreage besides their homestead.

²Ibid.,
³Ibid., p. 20.
⁴Ibid., pp. 11-12.
Defined in the act of March 3, 1877, which was entitled "An Act to Provide for the Sale of Desert Lands in certain States and Territories," were the criteria for desert lands. Note the following points:

1. Reclamation of such land by conducting water upon the same.

2. All lands exclusive of timber land and mineral lands, which will not, without artificial irrigation, produce some agricultural crop, shall be deemed lands within the meaning of the act.

3. Act applies only to states of California, Oregon, Nevada, and Territories of Washington, Idaho, Montana, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, and Wyoming and Dakota, and determination of what may be considered desert land shall be subject to General Land Office.

Presented as follows:

1. Lands bordering streams, lakes, or other natural bodies of water are not subject to desert land unless proof is furnished.

2. Land that produces native grass in sufficient amounts to make an adequate crop of hay is not desert land.

3. Land which will produce an agricultural crop of any kind in amounts to make cultivation remunerative is not desert.

4. Land with sufficient moisture for trees is not desert.¹

Although Pierre's Hole was far from what we now consider a desert, many of the early settlers there were able to use this in parts of the valley that came under the description of desert land to obtain

¹Ibid., pp. 39-40.
additional acreage. The Homestead and Desert Land Acts were two strong forces which drew settlers to the valley.

During the first migration period, between 1882 and 1887, nearly all the settlers came individually, not knowing any of the others in the vicinity. All came for various reasons, from different directions and from different backgrounds. All seemed to be strangers entering a strange land. This category may also apply to those who came in 1888, but by 1889, this was to change. In that year organized and planned groups of people moved into the basin.

During 1889 two groups from Utah, nearly all Mormons, left their Utah homes and went north into Idaho and Pierre's Hole. A large majority of the first group to enter the valley came directly from the Salt Lake City area. It may be assumed that members of this group were looking for more open range and room to grow where there would be few people. In 1888, at a L. D. S. meeting in a Sugarhouse ward in Salt Lake City, mention was made of the good open range and feed for cattle in the Pierre's Hole region. Three individuals, Mathoni W. Pratt, Thomas Ross Wilson, and Benjamin W. Driggs, were interested enough to go and look for themselves. In that year they journeyed north into Idaho and eventually to Pierre's Hole.\footnote{Beal, p. 213.} Upon seeing the new faces looking over the valley as a possible place to live, the few "squatters" who were located in the valley at the time tried to discourage them from coming back. The squatters told them of the harsh winters and that it froze "even in August."\footnote{Driggs, p. 159.} This attempted discouragement failed, for
in 1889 a great number of permanent settlers entered the domain of the pioneer settlers.

Being elated with what they saw, the three men immediately returned to Salt Lake City and began to advertise for people to join them in a move to the basin for reasons of settlement. By March enough people were interested that the group was able to leave Salt Lake. On the 18th of March the party formed a wagon train consisting of ten wagons\(^1\) in front of the Temple block in Salt Lake City.\(^2\)

On that day they left for the north. After two more men joined on the way to the valley, they eventually reached the area. Quoting from the author of the *History of Teton Valley*, B. W. Driggs, who was a member of the group, an understanding of their feeling is gained as they saw the valley:

> When the party beheld the beautiful valley covered with grass like a waving lawn, and its abundant streams of clear water, its immense forests of timber and good soil, they exclaimed to paraphrase the expression of the greatest pioneers, 'This is the place.' They were of the opinion expressed by Jim Bridger to Captain Raynolds when he guided him and his company into this valley on June 19, 1860, as stated in Captain Raynold's journal 'It almost deserves the extravagant praises bestowed upon it by Bridger who declared it to be the finest in the world.\(^3\)

Entering the valley, these people from Salt Lake decided to locate near the center of the valley bordering the swamps on the east and close to a major stream called Teton Creek. The reasoning for this was very sound, for at that location they had easy access to the natural

\(^1\)Deseret Evening News, (Salt Lake City) 8 April 1900.

\(^2\)Bradley, p. 23.

\(^3\)Driggs, p. 158.
meadows and could cut the wild hay whenever they needed it.\textsuperscript{1} Since they were stock raisers, feed was a prime factor in determining a suitable location.

A short while after their arrival, the Deseret Evening News reported that the group had located at "Pine Arbor, which consists of a store, three cabins, a tent, and several covered wagons."\textsuperscript{2} Apparently the settlers called the new location Pine Arbor, although no other reference to this name has been found. Two other names have been suggested as early names for the settlement, those being Aline and the Buffalo Springs district.\textsuperscript{3} The reasoning behind these seem to be more logical, but Aline was the name of the first L. D. S. ward and may have caused some confusion. There were springs all along the edge of the swamps, however, so Buffalo Springs may have been used. In any case, from this location they began to spread out and locate on their separate land units. (See figure 14 for locations of homesteads established during 1888 and 1889.)

The other large group from Utah came from Cache Valley and the Logan area. By the late 1870's and the early 1880's the land in and around Cache Valley had nearly all been taken, which presented a problem for those who wished their children to settle near them. Joel E. Ricks has stated that, "men with large families could not secure land enough to settle their sons around them. In the latter years of this first generation, many of Cache Valley's sons sought land outside for

\textsuperscript{1}Ibid., p. 159.
\textsuperscript{2}Deseret Evening News, (Salt Lake City) 12 June 1889.
\textsuperscript{3}Interview with Jesse A. Edlefsen, Driggs, Idaho 13 October 1973.
now and more abundant homes and farms."¹ Many people at the time went into the Uinta basin but found the soil contained alkali and left. A number, however, went north into the valleys of Idaho and some went as far as Canada. In the spring of 1889, a group made up primarily of Cache Valley residents entered the basin. When they arrived much of the land in the northern and central parts of the valley had been settled on or at least claimed. Finding suitable land still open at the narrow southern end, they settled there next to the foothills, along the south side of present-day Trail Creek. Because settlers were scattered in an east-west direction between Trail Creek on the east and Piney Pass on the west, the settlement was referred to for a long while as the String.² (See figure 14 for location.)

By 1890, the first large influx of people into Pierre's Hole had ended. Because of this movement, especially after 1888, within "two or three years, the entire valley had been filed as claims, . . ."³ The factors which had hindered settlement had been overcome or at least ignored, and the development of the valley became very rapid. After 1890 not many more settlers would venture into the basin in large groups, but many individuals and families would increase the population and the land would see its first major changes. After eighty years of occupation by the white man, drastic environmental change finally began to occur and would continue fairly rapidly. Agricultural and

² Driggs, p. 161.
industrial development would soon be needed to make the valley prosperous and to attract more people, a prerequisite for growth and advancement.
Chapter VII

MAKING THE LAND PRODUCTIVE:
AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

By the end of the 19th century most of the usable land areas of Teton Valley had been settled or claimed. Some of the poorer ground was left but it and the rest of the valley began to take on a different look. The influx of men into the virgin area had far reaching affects on the environment and a definite change on the landscape. Prime consideration for homestead locations was judged by how much natural feed was available for the stock. Environmental conditions played a large role on where they located, and generally speaking, nearly all of the original sites bordered the swamps or other locations near meadow hay.1

The main reason for locating on the swamp was simple, in that nearly all the settlers were stock raisers. Here they had easy access to the deep, natural meadows to feed cattle, horses and other livestock animals. Much of the area toward the marsh was naturally irrigated by the high water table existing because of the levelness of the land near the river. The swamp extended some distance from the river especially to the east, enabling the settlers to have many acres at

1Driggs, p. 159.
their disposal. The location suited the people for some time until they were able to build canals and ditches on the higher and somewhat drier ground.

But since stock raising was the primary occupation upon arrival at the basin, the first effort was in keeping the stock alive. Therefore a good crop of feed was necessary. In those days they could go nearly anywhere in the swamps and cut enough hay to feed their animals through the winter. During the summer months and as long as the snow did not cover the feed, the animals were allowed to roam at will.

**Initial Perception and Occupance**

Early perception of the valley had always regarded it as too high in elevation with associated weather conditions which made it unsuitable for anything but stock raising. No one considered the idea that crops on a large scale might be grown in the valley. As late as 1899 "cattle raising" was the most "profitable industry" carried on by the settlers.¹ For the time, raising cattle and other stock was fairly prosperous because the people of the valley found a ready market for their cattle and it was stated in 1899 that the valley was "getting noted" for its fine cattle.² By 1898-99 the area was attracting sheepmen as well to take advantage of the winter feed and summer ranges. A Salt Lake newspaper reported that many ranchers were selling their cattle and going into the sheep business.³

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¹ *Deseret Evening News*, (Salt Lake City) 31 December 1899.
² Ibid.
³ *Deseret Evening News*, (Salt Lake City) 7 December 1899. Hereafter referred to as D E N.
Knowing beforehand that the valley was rich in natural hay, the settlers came prepared to harvest the crop. The first attempts at harvesting was completed by using a horse drawn mower. After drying, the hay was stacked in the field with a derrick.\(^1\) Throughout the first years of agricultural development, the hay crop was fairly consistent except in a few severe years. There was usually enough hay put up to last the settlers through the winter until new pasture grass was again available. An example of one exception was the winter of 1895-96. In that winter, "a large number of new comers" entered the valley.\(^2\) This influx placed additional pressure on the hay supply and the winter itself was especially harsh, thus much of the hay was gone. Most winters stock could graze well into December, but not that year. Winter in the valley "began very rough with high winds and cold snow storms. From the 1st of December to the 1st of January, 1896, were a series of cold storms, with high winds, . . ."\(^3\)

Most years, however, the hay crop was as good as could be expected. In August of 1900 the hay was selling at $4.00 per ton. Many new settlers moving into the valley had caused the good prices.\(^4\) By 1905, 100,000 tons of hay were being produced.\(^5\)

\(^1\) Since most of the settlers were Mormons, the derrick was a common agricultural apparatus used by the ranchers. More will be said of this in following pages.

\(^2\) Deseret News, 21 February 1896.

\(^3\) Bradley, p. 31.

\(^4\) Deseret News, 23 August 1900.

\(^5\) Deseret News, (Salt Lake City) 1 September 1906.
To supplement the hay crop, further development took place. Some of the original leaders saw the need to increase the hay yield and to add more plants to the feed. Thus, T. Ross Wilson, Mathoni Pratt and D. C. Driggs had a thousand pounds of Timothy seed shipped in from Omaha, Nebraska.\(^1\) This was a great help to the valley residents and added to the hay crop as well as providing seed as a cash crop. Soon two or three car loads of Timothy seed alone were being shipped from the valley each year.\(^2\) In 1906, 100,000 pounds of Timothy seed were produced.\(^3\) Further progress occurred when many people began to start their farms with alfalfa "and harvested two crops."\(^4\)

**Beginnings of Farm and Home Life**

The early settlers, though mainly cattlemen, began very early to develop traits of the pioneer farmer. Besides feed for cattle and other stock, feed crops for the people had to be produced. One of the first activities that occurred after their tents were pitched was to take a little plot of ground and plow it and "try" to plant a small vegetable garden.\(^5\) Also, in the early days of settlement, sage hens and grouse were very numerous all over the valley. With these and larger game and trout, the settlers never lacked fresh meat. In fact,

\(^1\)Driggs, p. 172.

\(^2\)Deseret News, 21 January 1900.

\(^3\)Deseret News, (Salt Lake City) 1 September 1906.

\(^4\)Deseret News, 21 January 1900.

Another consideration of prime importance was some type of living quarters. Typical of the West where there were large amounts of timber, the log cabin was the first type of house to be built. The following account is probably indicative as to how the first log cabins were constructed. First a foundation was laid consisting of loose, flat rock. There was no mortar so the rocks were merely piled on top of each other. To keep the rocks in place, logs were staked down around the outside of the foundation, and for the same purpose, as well as to keep out the draft, the central area was filled with dirt. Rough planks, shaped with the use of an adze were used as a floor to cover the dirt. From that point logs were placed on the rocks until the desired height was achieved, then the roof was built.2

Besides the adze mentioned, settlers usually carried a variety of tools with them. Some of these were a hand plow, harrow teeth, ropes, a pick, shovels, hammers, cross-cut saws, a broad axe, and a tongue and grove plane.3 Being thus equipped they were somewhat prepared to engage in the battle against the environment.

After getting situated in the basin with their homes built and gardens planted it was not long until various other crops began to appear. The perception of the area as only capable of supporting stock and not crops, began to be disproved. One of the first crops to be grown successfully was the potato. At first it was only a garden crop,

1Diggins, p. 160.
3Ibid.
but later developed into a valuable commercial product. By 1899 there had been little attempt at trying to raise grain in the valley, but potatoes had been produced since 1882.\textsuperscript{1} Because of the harsh climate and potato variety, the first ones grown were very small. "If you ever got over a four ounce potato that was a pretty good sized potato."\textsuperscript{2}

Enough potatoes were grown to merit a place to store them through the winter. The main concern was to keep the potatoes cool but not allow them to freeze. To accomplish this, a shallow pit was dug in the ground, lined with straw and then filled with potatoes. On top of the potatoes was placed another lining of straw and then finally a good layer of dirt. This method provided an excellent way to preserve the potatoes and allowed the settlers to get to the potatoes as they were needed.\textsuperscript{3}

Eventually some grain types were planted in the valley. Some Pearl barley was planted, wheat was attempted but nearly always got frozen and oats were fairly successful but they could not "choose the variety."\textsuperscript{4} The development of the grain crops was slow mainly because different varieties had to be developed to adapt to the cold climate and short growing seasons. Not much is said about the grain crops in particular, but mention is made of general conditions. For example, in 1899 it was stated that the grain crop "fell a little short of the

\textsuperscript{1}D E N, 12 June 1889.

\textsuperscript{2}Interview with Jesse A. Edlefsen, Driggs, Idaho 13 October 1973.

\textsuperscript{3}Interview with George E. Stone, Bates, Idaho 14 October 1973.

\textsuperscript{4}Interview with Jesse A. Edlefsen, Driggs, Idaho 13 October 1973.
average"¹ and by 1900 it was shown "that small grain and vegetables" could be grown in the valley with some success.² Grain was beginning to sell at a good price and more success was being achieved gradually.³ By 1903 this report was filed; "it is supposed to be a region suitable only for stock-raising . . . but it appears . . . that grain and small fruits are raised there now in abundance."⁴ The year of 1906 was reported to have produced 200,000 bushels of grain, indicating some advancement in the grain business.⁵

The early settlers relied on traditional farming methods. When planting the various grain crops a technique called "broadcasting" was utilized. This method consisted of the grain being thrown by hand from the back of a horse drawn wagon until the entire field was planted.⁶ Harvesting was accomplished with the use of a reaper; the first one in the valley being owned by George Dewey. The reaper cut the grain and dropped it into bundles so that the two or three men following behind could bind them with straw.⁷ By 1889, Charles and Henry Foster, with Thomas Bates, began to use the first threshing machine.⁸

¹Deseret News, (Salt Lake City) 1 September 1906.
²Deseret News, 7 December 1899.
³Deseret News, 21 January 1900.
⁴Deseret News, 23 August 1900
⁵Interview with Zina Hill by H. S. Forbush, Driggs, Idaho 24 July 1967.
⁷Driggs, p. 166.
Irrigation

Many of the acres claimed in the valley were Desert entries. Being so, they were drier than most parts of the basin, thus irrigation was necessary to improve the land. Many settlers began immediately to turn water onto the land by taking water directly from the many streams which were available.\textsuperscript{1} The ditches were generally made with a plow pulled by a team of horses. They "just took the team and plow and went right up and plowed a ditch and took it right out of the creek. There was plenty of water."\textsuperscript{2} The first canals were constructed in the Darby area by Henry M., Douglas M., and John Todd.\textsuperscript{3} An observer reported that in 1899 "green patches of cultivated fields, where the settlers have been taking out water and putting life into the soil" could be seen scattered over the valley floor.\textsuperscript{4}

Outside Landholders

One of the drawbacks to further development and settlement during the late 80's and 90's was the large tracts of ground which were being held by people that did not reside in the valley.\textsuperscript{5} Two thirds of the land in the valley was reported to be owned by "Salt

\textsuperscript{1}Interview with Jesse A. Edlefsen, Driggs, Idaho 13 October 1973.

\textsuperscript{2}Interview with George E. Stone, Bates, Idaho 14 October 1973.

\textsuperscript{3}Driggs, p. 163.

\textsuperscript{4}\textit{D E N}, 1 August 1899.

\textsuperscript{5}Ibid.
Lake and Utah" people.¹ Many of those "neither turned it to use or threw it upon the market. They are waiting for its value to rise so they can turn it to big profit."² Though this condition prevailed, movement into the valley was not hindered for long, many settlers continued to enter the area and many more were expected. Land by 1911 was being sold at $25 to $100 an acre.³

**Perceptual Change**

During the original settlement of Teton Valley an interesting perceptual phenomena occurred. Prior to the settlement and during the first years of settlement it was commonly believed that the climate and elevation would severely limit "agriculture efforts of the settlers."⁴ But once the settlers began to raise crops successfully that perception changed. But, because crops began to be produced, a new thought was introduced and continues somewhat today. At first some crops failed but as they adapted to the conditions the produce increased. Not completely understanding this, the settlers and others attributed the success to settlement. As one put it, "because of settlement, the climate tempered."⁵ A report in 1903 recorded "the climate has been modified, the

¹*Deseret News*, (Salt Lake City) 1 September 1906.
²*Deseret News*, (Salt Lake City) 1 September 1906.
³*Teton Valley News*, (Driggs, Idaho) 18 February 1911.
⁴Beal, p. 213.
⁵Interview with Hazel P. W. Brower by H. S. Forbush, Driggs, Idaho 31 October 1969.
water for irrigation has increased, the elements have become more pregnant with vitality, repeated efforts to cultivate the products of field and farm and garden have been crowned with success; the difficulties attending the settlement of newly opened districts have been overcome, . . ."¹ Similarly, "it is astonishing what marked effects upon the climatic conditions in the upper valleys of this region following their occupation by human beings and the cultivation of the soil."²

Many settlers assumed that the climate would get better as the area was settled.¹ In an interview with George E. Stone, he was questioned concerning the climate and weather to obtain a present-day opinion. He replied in this fashion:

It seems to be getting a little better over on this side of the valley than it was in the early days. Because I know it hasn't been too long you couldn't raise potatoes down as close to the river as they do now. The winters are nothing like they used to be. They aren't so hard. Not as severe.³

Certainly much of what the newspapers said was merely promotional, but the settlers actually believed the climate improved as the land was settled and cultivated. Even today this perception could probably be found to be quite prevalent in Teton Valley as well as in other places. During the days of settlement, though, the idea that "those in search of good land, water, timber, and healthful climate could do no better" was common.⁴ Actual climatic records examined indicate no

¹Deseret News, 27 October 1903.
²Deseret News, (Salt Lake City) 1 September 1906.
⁴Deseret News, 21 January 1900.
significant change in the conditions. Extremes are found and are probably the ones remembered most.

Agriculture was very important to the early settlers in Teton Valley. It brought them there and sustained them while they lived in the basin. Raising cattle and crops proved to be successful enough to encourage the settlers to remain in the valley and even drew others in from the outside. Because of the increased agricultural activities and population, the landscape began to be dotted with more and more homes and small villages began to appear.
Chapter VIII

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Agricultural activities to this day are the main concerns of the valley residents, but over the years attempts at different types of industry were made. The first industry, as such, besides that of agriculture, was sawmilling. This was essential for the settlement processes in the community and provided material for further development, especially in building. The first sawmill was erected in the mouth of Teton Canyon by George E. Little in 1889\(^1\) with a second one being built that same year on Bitch Creek (now called the North Fork of the Teton River) by Ed Morris.\(^2\) By 1890 three or possibly more sawmills had been built.\(^3\) They were located in Darby Canyon, Teton Canyon, on Bitch Creek, and maybe one in the Leigh Creek area.\(^4\)

These mills at the time must have been insufficient, for one resident said, "we are in need of a good sawmill and a grist mill, . . We have timber, water, and stone, . . ."\(^5\) Other mills were built after that and by 1911 the lumber industry in Teton Valley had accumulated six or seven sawmills.

\(^1\)Driggs, p. 166.
\(^2\)Ibid.
\(^3\)Rees, p. 335.
\(^5\)Driggs, p. 166.
In 1890 a shingle mill was built in Mahogany Canyon, operated by John and Alma Penfold. Another one was built south of Victor in the foothills.\textsuperscript{1}

Because of the agricultural nature of the basin, the industries of the most importance were associated with agriculture. A Swiss family entered the valley in 1893 from Bear Lake Valley and erected a cheese making plant in the Cedron area. By 1895 a cheese factory existed in the village of Driggs and two or three others were built at various locations, such as Victor and Clawson.

Other minor industries were attempted in the valley but most were not successful. One of these was the coal mining activities on the west side of the valley. Coal has been said to be the basis for the strength of a nation; to a very small degree this may also apply to Teton Valley. The discovery of coal in 1890 certainly aided the development of the basin for many years. The Big Hole mountains were said to be full of coal and some mines were started; the major ones being Horseshoe, Brown Bear, Packsaddle, and Last Chance. These mines provided coal for many of the valley residents who would take the long trip to the mines. At times it took two nights for some to wait their turn to be loaded. An indication of this is reported in the Teton Valley News, which stated:

Coal is getting scarce. Teamsters returning from the Brown Bear Coal mine reports as many as 18-20 teams waiting to be loaded. Don't go unless prepared to wait for 2-3 days for your load. It is hoped that the management of the mine will put on more help in order that local demand for coal may be supplied promptly.\textsuperscript{2}

\textsuperscript{1}Driggs, p. 166.

\textsuperscript{2}Teton Valley News, (Driggs, Idaho) 3 February 1911.
The citizens made good use of the coal while the mining lasted. At first reports huge amounts of coal existed, enough so, that when the railroad was finally built to the valley in 1911-12, a line was built to the mining areas. Today reports contend that "there are still hundreds of thousands of tons of coal in the area which could be mined with the proper methods. However, faults in the rock formation makes it difficult to mine, and the costs are too high. At the present the demand for coal is satisfied by imports from Utah."\(^1\)

The coming of the railroad to the valley was an important event for valley residents also. No longer would produce have to be hauled by wagon to Ashton, Rexburg, and Market Lake, which were 32, 45, and 70 miles away respectively. Population as well as agricultural activities increased because of the railroad.

Today most of the early industries do not exist. There are only two or three sawmills in the valley now, none of which are very large. Over the years the amounts of timber useable for good lumber has diminished and much of what is left is not accessible. The mills that do operate do so on a limited scale and do not support the owners completely.

There are no longer any shingle mills in the basin. Competition from outside the valley, high cost, and low demand, eventually forced them to close.

The cheese factories lasted longer than most other industries, but they too went out of business. The Driggs factory operated until about 1968 while the Victor plant served the farmers till 1970. The

\(^1\)Our Scene, Teton County, 1972 A Teton County Publication p. 11.
loss of these factories hurt the valley and the production of mild. The farmers, now, who continued with their dairy herds, have their mild transported out of the valley to creameries in the Snake River Valley at Rexburg, Ashton, or St. Anthony.

The industrial development of the valley has always been slow because of the lack of resources, demand, and workforce. But if the right steps and technology were introduced to the valley, other types of industry might develop. Large deposits of Talc may be found and have attracted some interest but no action. Tons of limestone are hauled out of the valley and used by the Utah and Idaho Sugar Company, which is the only firm using the limestone. Phosphate is present in large amounts but is being held in reserve. Inaccessible deposits of copper and some silver are also awaiting the developer. One company does process and sell Peatmoss and continues to show a profit. The lumber industry is not large and shows no promise of growth.

For the future the two most important industries may be that of tourism and recreation, but development of these has also been slow and may be hindered by the present (1974) fuel shortages. It is recognized, however, that further development in the valley is needed to take full advantage of what few non-agricultural resources that are available.
Chapter IX

COMMUNITY AND VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT

Making an area productive involves more than agricultural and industrial activity. Developing at the same time as these two functions was the evolution of the pre-urban frontiers in the forms of dispersed and nucleated settlements. In Teton Valley the pre-urban frontier began to evolve as settlement took place, but because agrarian activities were the major acts of livelihood, the 'town' aspects were slow to develop and to the present day they have not passed the village-town classification. Limited population and occupational choices, combined with various other factors, have prevented the valley from leaving the pre-urban frontier and entering into the urban frontier of urban growth. (Refer to figure 16 for settlement locations.)

Today there are only three nucleated villages in existence in the basin; Driggs, Tetonia, and Victor. In the past, however, a total of eight townsites were dedicated and another eight dispersed communities have been in existence. Although many are now gone, they were important in the historical geography of the valley since they were an outgrowth of the nature of the initial occupancy of the valley.

Within the northern third of the valley eight separate communities have at one time existed, but now only four remain. The four abandoned settlements were Oasis, Valview or Hunnidale, Richvale, and Haden. Those in existence are Cache, Clawson, Felt and Tetonia.
The two smallest places were Oasis and Hunnidale. Several families located east of present Felt and called the site the Hunnidale district. The area was also referred to as Valview because the Mormon church branch located there was named Valview. Besides the individual homes, which were few in number, the only other buildings were a post office and a church. Later both were abandoned leaving just a few homes, but eventually they too, became scarce.

As far as Oasis is concerned, there is some doubt of its actual role in the settlement of the valley and little is known about the place. Only two references were found concerning Oasis, one by way of an interview and the other in an old newspaper. If correct, straight west of Cache, there existed a building used as a post office and/or a distribution point. According to Jesse A. Edlefsen, a long time resident of the valley, "our first post office that was in the valley was near the river right straight west of Cache. I think it was called Teton Basin. If that wasn't the post office it was a distribution point that people who used to go to the lower country would stop. I believe they called it the Oasis Post Office." Though some confusion is evident, this place may just have been some type of mail distribution point before being spread throughout the valley, but what little is known, is interesting.

One other small community about which little is known, is Richvale. Nothing other than the location could be found about the

1 Driggs, p. 228.
2 The Current Journal, (Rexburg, Idaho) 10 July 1908.
community. More information is probably contained in the minds of some of the older residents, but in any case, it was located in the mouth of Packsaddle Canyon across the river west of Cache.

The area in which Felt later came to be located is in the extreme northern end of the valley on a flat between Bull Elk and Badger Creeks. One of the first settlers in the area was Ed Morris who settled there in 1890. It was he who made the first irrigation ditch from Beaver Swamp in Dry Creek and established a sawmill.

The reason for Felt's existence is the railroad. By 1907 the Oregon Short Line had reached the Felt area, thus drawing several businesses. One was the Felt Merchantile Company, built by brothers of that name. On September 30, 1911, a townsite was actually dedicated by the Felt Investment Company. A street and block system were planned but were never completed. If completed the streets would have been eighty feet wide while most of the lots would have been 130 feet by 25 feet. The layout may be seen in figure 26.

Because of the railroad and location in a fertile dry farm belt, Felt was expected to grow considerably. The next year after dedication, a post office, general merchantile store and a pool hall were built. A school was being constructed and a lumber yard and grain elevator were promised. The town itself never developed, however. The

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1. Teton Valley News, (Driggs, Idaho) 9 September 1912.
3. Ibid.
4. Teton Valley News, (Driggs, Idaho) 9 September 1912.
elevator and remains of the store are all that exist now, even though farms are still in operation in the area.

In 1889, Spencer Clawson made a Desert Claim on the flat about five miles north of Driggs. Though he never lived long on the land, he gave much of it to citizens for the purpose of building public facilities such as a school and church.¹ The area was therefore called Clawson, but prior to that it had been known as the Leigh district. The only store to be built was one erected by Jacob Rouche in 1896. In 1909 the local paper described the town in this fashion: "The town consists of 160 acres divided into town lots with the highway and county road running through the center."² Blocks were laid out on paper but were never engraved on the landscape. They were, however, to be 265 feet square with 10 lots per block each 50 by 125 feet. (Figure 27.)

Scattered through the area were approximately four hundred people and by 1910 a school and church had been built. On December 15, 1915, the townsite was dedicated.³ Today many of the descendents of the original settlers remain in the area, but the school has vanished and the original church has been replaced with a new one.

The dispersed settlement of Cache is a little more colorful in origin than those previously mentioned. Two suggestions have been put forth as to where the name came from. John E. Rees suggests that,

¹Driggs, p. 212.
²Teton Valley News. (Driggs, Idaho) 15 April 1909.
³Driggs, p. 212.
"this is the place where some Hudson Bay trappers, who were the first white men in Pierre's Hole, cached some furs."¹ This may have been possible but unlikely because Hudson Bay trappers were not the first white men in the valley. There have been reports of a "cache" in the area, however. A second and more probable reason for the name is that many settlers from Cache Valley, Utah, settled in this part and called it Cache, after their old home. This was a common practice, and naturally the settlers hoped the valley would be like the one they left behind.²

Enough settlers congregated in the vicinity to allow the organization of a Cache school district in 1901, and by 1907, a townsite had been dedicated. The layout for the townsite, as shown in figure 27, required that the streets were to be 124 feet wide and the blocks 371 feet square. At one time, on the townsite itself, a post office, church and school existed in addition to the residences.³ A store was also erected, but this and the other public buildings were later abandoned as population decreased and the school children were sent elsewhere to school. (All settlement sites and dates of dedication can be seen in figure 15.)

One of the most interesting communities in the valley was the old town of Haden. As mentioned earlier, F. V. Hayden entered the valley on a geological expedition and while there, his party named many of the geographical features. Perhaps because of this settlers called

¹Rees, p. 61.
²Beal. p. 415.
their town Haden, merely dropping the "Y." The townsite itself was
dedicated November 13, 1905 by the land owners who were Willard G.
Homer, Joseph A. Black, and George E. Little. Located at a central
location on the main route into the valley, Haden became a primary
stopping place for the stage as it entered the valley from the north-
west.

The townsite actually was located about "three miles southeast
of the river bridge on the main highway into the valley." The road
from the northwest leading from the Rexburg area had been staked out
previously by David Breckenridge and Samuel Swanner. Edwin S. Little
plowed a furrow from Haden to Canyon Creek marking the route.

The blocks for Haden were laid out to be 569 feet square with
the streets measuring 99 feet across. Though many of the streets were
never completed, the town got off to a good start when several people
began businesses there. The Black Hotel was prominent as the place
where teams were exchanged and where meals were served to the passen-
gers. A Mr. Porter and Mr. Lyon began the first store and two merchan-
dise stores operated by H. A. Campbell and Joseph C. Gustaveson soon
followed. A blacksmith shop, livery barn, several small shops and many
residences were built. A church and school also were added to the town.

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1Driggs, p. 209.
2Ibid.
3Ibid.
4Ibid.
5Ibid.
Haden prospered and seemed as if it would become a prominent center in the valley, but certain events changed that. Shortly after the turn of the century news was received that a railroad was to be built into the basin, but it was to run east of Haden through Tetonia. This had pronounced effects on the people and by the time the railroad reached Felt in 1907, people were already beginning to move out of Haden to the Tetonia area. The town flourished until the railroad neared and entered Tetonia, but from then on it was all down hill. Eventually all the businesses moved to Tetonia, followed by most of the residents. Finally in 1912, the townsite was abandoned and today few remains can be found of the old townsite which once held great promise. In 1900 it was one of the two places in the valley to report a population to the U. S. Census in which 611 people were reported. (Figure 27.)

Tetonia was not established during the pioneer period. Several families lived in the neighborhood, however, and quite an "influx of people settled in the vicinity from 1895 to 1898." A few families gradually began to collect at the foot of the large "bluff that projects like a peninsula out into the center of the northern end of the valley." The news of the railroad route through the immediate locality

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1 Ibid.
3 Driggs, p. 223.
4 Ibid.
drew more people and eventually all the businesses of Haden. The in-flux of people into the town enabled it to be dedicated on November 3, 1910, but the actual growing period did not occur until 1912 when the railroad finally arrived.¹ The layout of the town as seen in figure 19 was similar to the others mentioned thus far, but the blocks were much smaller. The Tetonia blocks varied from 315 by 290 feet to 275 by 290 feet. The streets and alleys were consistent, though, at 80 feet and 15 feet respectively. (See figure 19.)

During the growth period many businesses were attracted to Tetonia. By 1912 there existed the Tetonia Merc. Company, the Foster Lumber Company, the Gustaveson Company, two pool halls, two barber shops, a livery barn, hotel, rooming house, and a branch of the First National Bank of Driggs.² Grain elevators, a Drug company, and a hardware store were added later. This seemed to be the height of the growth of this railroad town, for over the years population and businesses have decreased. Though its size today is not what it used to be, Tetonia is the only town to remain in existence of those dedicated and discussed to this point. It is also the only one to develop most of the planned streets and blocks. All of the others have been abandoned as towns and some have nearly been forgotten.

In the southern portion of the valley, Victor is the main community with Cedron and Chapin close by. Little has been written about Cedron, a dispersed settlement at the foot of the Big Hole Mountains west of Victor. It probably has not seen much change since original

¹Ibid.
²Ibid.
settlement occurred. A family group from Europe by the name of Kunz was among the first to locate in the area. Their main business was cheese making and they quickly constructed a cheese factory which, however, was only to be removed in a few years. No townsite was planned or dedicated there, but a church and school was built as was a common practice in the early days. The area is still strictly a dispersed rural-farm community.

Chapin on the other hand developed somewhat differently. The original settlers settled along the foothills with a few locating toward the river in the swamps, but basically bordering Fox Creek. Because of that the area was called Fox for some time.¹ After several families moved in, a post office was sought, but a name could not be agreed on. Primarily two families were involved in the dispute over the name, the Vails and the Kimballs. When the request or application was sent to Washington D. C. for approval, the man in charge simply named the area after himself to settle the dispute, thus Chapin was formed.²

Chapin, like Cedron, did not have a townsite but boasted a school and the second post office in the valley.³ Perhaps that is the reason why it was one of the two places to report population in 1900. At the time it reported 344.⁴ Along with Haden's 611, an estimated 955 people may have been residing in the valley in 1900.

¹Rees, p. 364.
³Driggs, p. 219.
Victor was the only location in the southern part of the valley to have a townsite dedicated. The surrounding area was settled by colonizers from Utah in the fall of 1889. Being mostly Mormons, a branch of the church was organized and the area was called after it, Raymond. ¹ Most of the families settled in a long line south of Trail Creek stretching east and west across the southern tip of the basin. At this point timber was readily available for building purposes. The tall grass in the swales was utilized for feed since most had livestock. Irrigation canals were also built shortly after their arrival. It was several years after the original settlement that a town was started because "the people were scattered out on their homesteads and had to remain there until final proof was made"² on their claims.

Eventually people were able to follow the Mormon practice of gathering in towns and commuting to their farms. The land for the town was granted by the government and was platted and dedicated on January 10, 1901 and called Victor after Claude Victor, a mail carrier respected by the people. The townsite was platted by John T. Smellie. All streets except Main and Center streets were 99 feet in width, but they were 132 feet wide. Though there were just a few blocks, as the diagram in figure 18 shows, there were three sizes ranging from 660 feet square or 660 feet by 495 feet or 495 feet by 280.5 feet. The lots were consistently 165 feet by 230 feet, however. (Figure 18.)

After the town was surveyed, the lots were distributed by lottery as inducements to attract businesses and dwellings. Thomas W.______________________________

¹Rees, p. 426.

²Driggs, p. 203.
Porter was offered a lot if he would construct a store on it, which he did.\(^1\) A hotel was built in 1897 and it was reported that many shade and apple trees were planted. The Deseret Evening News reported that the town had two stores in 1899, a drug store and a saloon.\(^2\)

Of the 3,500 people reported to be living in the valley in 1909 Victor claimed 700 itself.\(^3\) By 1912 the town had two general merchandise stores, a hotel, livery barn, blacksmith shop, a real estate office and a pool room.\(^4\) That year eight new dwellings were built as well as a new church.\(^5\)

Victor continued to develop and its importance was enhanced as it became the terminal point of the railroad. It became a general shipping port for the southern portion of the valley and for people living in Jackson's Hole to the east and in Swan Valley to the southwest. The height of population was in the period between 1910 and 1920 when there were about 700 people living there, but by 1940 the population had fallen drastically to 294 and many of the businesses had also gone. One of the major contributors to this downhill trend was fire. Over the years several fires drove businesses out as well as residences. One of the worst fires occurred in April 1940 when the town's high school burned to the ground, causing the students to be sent to the school in Driggs.

\(^1\)Ibid.
\(^2\)Deseret Evening News, 1 August 1899.
\(^3\)Teton Valley News, (Driggs, Idaho) 15 April 1909.
\(^4\)Ibid. 9 September 1912.
\(^5\)Ibid. 4 January 1912.
Since then fires have added to the misfortune of the community. In the mid-1960’s the village’s major hotel burned down and was not replaced. One other aspect that added to the decrease of the town’s importance was the discontinuation of daily railroad service. Because of the lack of use by passengers and freight the railroad limited its entrance into the valley to once a week. This hurt the valley as a whole and especially Victor as the terminus, aiding the town’s declining condition.

The central portion of the valley was dominated by Driggs which was surrounded by the four small communities of Bates, Alta, Sam, and Darby. Bates, named after Thomas Bates, is located on the west side of the river, the only one other than Cedron, Sam, and little Richvale to do so. Here Thomas Bates and Charles and Henry Foster began to operate the first threshing machine in 1890. The area has always been sparsely populated, but has maintained a productive farm land. No attempt at forming a town or businesses was made, thus the area has remained a rural-farm community. Names such as Bates, Furniss, and Foster are still common there, however.

Across the valley from Bates and somewhat northeast of Driggs is the community of Alta, presumably Spanish meaning “high.” The area is perhaps the highest settled area in the valley and certainly deserved the name. Alta, or Pratt, as it is often called because of the Mormon ward by that name, is across the Wyoming line. Soon after the settlers arrived in the valley, polygamy was outlawed by the United States Congress, thus those who had more than one wife moved to this area to take advantage of the states line’s safely. Here they could have a family on
both sides of the state line and hopefully avoid the law. In anycase, the practice of polygamy by some of the settlers contributed, in part to the settlement of Alta.

Other families came and settled a little farther into Wyoming and took advantage of the fertile soils along the foothills and the timber in the mountains, such as the Wilsons, Rigbys, and the Greens. At one time a post office was in use and a small store, but both were short lived. A small school and a church were built and are still in use and are in good condition today. A cheese factory was also run for a short while but was abandoned.¹ Alta never did have a townsite surveyed or platted, but one was in the planning stage. The townsite planned for the area was to take 560 acres, on which the scheme shown in figure 26 was to be formed. The townsite plans were entered in the county records June 10, 1908.

Since the beginning of the settlement of Teton Valley, one mining town developed and at one time claimed about 250 people. The little town of Sam, named after Sam Morris, was located in the mouth of Horseshoe Canyon directly west of Driggs in the Big Hole mountains. The town was built along Horseshoe Creek which flowed from the canyon. Being a typical mining community, no pattern was apparent in the layout of the several unpaved streets, but many buildings made up the town. Among the buildings constructed were a post office, completed in 1925, several cabins, a boarding house, and a store.² There were a few saloons

¹Driggs, p. 224.

in the beginning but the prohibition laws closed them, but nonetheless, bootleg whiskey, manufactured locally or imported, was smuggled into the camp.1

Besides the other buildings a small one room school house was built of logs and was used to educate the children as well as a meeting place for community events. There was no church in the mining town, however, and those who wished religion went to the valley churches.2 By 1931, the community had grown to about 250 people and twenty-six buildings.3

During the highest coal producing years, a twelve mile spur from the Oregon Short Line station near Tetonia served the mines. This stretch of rail, however, was not completed by "the Ogden-based Utah Construction Company (with federal and coal mine money) until the fall of 1919."4 With the aid of this line, during World War I, "there was an estimated one hundred tons of coal mined and shipped. After the war the mine was practically abandoned by the railroad and not much coal was mined."5 Though the track remained in place until the late 1940's, the town and coal supply were abandoned. The mining facilities were removed as well as the businesses, therefore leaving little of what was once a fairly prosperous community.

1Ibid., p. 26.
2Ibid., p. 30.
3Ibid., p. 36.
4Ibid., p. 42.
Our Scene, pp. 10-11.
The last dispersed settlement to be discussed is that of Darby. The Darby area was actually one of the first places to have settlers, although many of them were only temporary. In the spring of 1882 a man by the name of Jim Darby came to the valley and located one half mile west of the present highway on Goodfellow (Darby) Creek.\(^1\) He made a hut but only stayed a short while. It was from this individual that Darby received its name.

The first permanent settlers arrived in 1889-90 and began to cultivate the land located on the large alluvial deposit about four miles southeast of Driggs next to the foothills. The Todds were the first to make a canal in the area and soon after, Jim Collett began a sawmill. A lime kiln was later operated by Frank A. Pascoe.\(^2\) A shingle mill was also in operation for a short while. By 1902 a school was erected and finally the townsite was dedicated on October 19, 1907 by H. M. Olmstead.\(^3\) The townsite, as shown in figure 26, included four rectangular blocks with 124 feet by 289 feet lots and 82.5 foot streets.

Darby, along with many of the other settlements, never retained its industry or school. The church still stands but is no longer used. No town functions operated and the area today totally remains an agricultural district.

One townsite which did develop and still remains other than Tetonia and Victor, is the county seat of Driggs. The village is the largest nucleated settlement in the valley for several reasons. (1)

\(^1\)Driggs, p. 215.
\(^2\)Ibid.
\(^3\)Ibid., p. 216.
It is centrally located. (2) It was one of the first towns to be established. (3) It became the county center geographically as well as the county seat and the headquarters for the Mormon church in the valley. And (4), it has the largest hinterland, encompassing the entire valley.

The Driggs area was first settled by Salt Lake residents in 1889. They chose the location of the settlement to be on the eastern edge of the swamp and near a sizeable stream called Teton Creek. This placed them near the center of the valley with easy access to all parts whether it was for timber, water, or land for cultivation or grazing.

Leaving their tents and covered wagons, the settlers began to build immediately to the southwest of what came to be the original townsite. One reason for this was that Henry Wallace had claimed 160 acres of ground as a Desert Claim. He later, however, gave his land to the town so people would begin to build there. Most of the first homes, though, were built near the southwest corner of his claim.\(^1\) The first home built there was a small log cabin owned by D. C. Driggs\(^2\) who homesteaded the land adjacent to the Wallace land. Leland Driggs, a brother of D. C. Driggs, homesteaded the land immediately south of Wallace and east of D. C.'s place. Soon after Leland Driggs and Henry Wallace obtained the land they had it platted for a townsite. It was some time before the settlers began to build on Wallace's ground, but people quickly started to build on the Driggs homestead. Up until the

\(^1\)Interview with Jesse A. Edlefsen, Driggs, Idaho 13 October 1973.

\(^2\)Driggs, p. 199.
dedication of the townsite all buildings and businesses were "erected on the west side of the main road, on the D. C. Driggs homestead and south of Little Avenue on the L. M. Driggs homestead east of the main road."

Some of the first places built off the townsite besides Driggs' cabin, were a few homes across the road to the east about where the Pine Crest Motel is now and in through that vicinity. (See figure 20.) The first store in the locality was located north of the townsite in an "H" shaped polygamy house owned and run by Mathoni Pratt, called the Star Commercial. Later when Pratt had to move into Alta because of the Edmunds-Tucker Act which prevented further practice of polygamy, the store was abandoned. A store was then began in Driggs called by the same name but run by B. W. Driggs in his cabin, located across from the present site of the Pine Crest Motel. Near there, just south of the old ranger's home, one of the Driggs brothers began an implement business called the Consolidated Wagon and Machine Company. Very early also, a general mercantile company was started near the above business. Another store was erected across the street and a little north of the Driggs store, built by Harry L. Cannon. Due to conflicting information

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1Ibid., p. 194.
3Ibid.
4Driggs, p. 195.
5Interview with Jesse A. Edlefsen, Driggs, Idaho 13 October 1973. See also DEN, 23 August 1900.
6Driggs, p. 195.
7Ibid., p. 194.
it is not quite clear as to how many businesses actually existed in the beginning or even their location, but most of the activity was in the same general area.

Henry Wallace did not stay in the valley so his son made sure the land was taken care of properly. The land given to the town by Wallace was dedicated 2 December 1909 and efforts began so that streets could be platted.\(^1\) Clifford and T. Ross Wilson, who had degrees in engineering, were asked to survey the townsite so that the actual layout could become an actuality.\(^2\) The 160 acre square was laid out in twenty-five blocks, five on each side and each contained four acres. Streets ran north-south-east-west and were all eighty-two and a half feet wide. Mainstreet, lying on the west side of the townsite, was eventually made to be ninety-nine feet wide.

The north-south streets were numbered as First, Second, and Third East, and so on as they got further from Main Street. The east-west streets, or avenues, however, were named for the Wallace family members and relatives. According to Clair Wallace Butler, a granddaughter of Henry Wallace, the avenues were named as follows:

1. Little Avenue was named for Mrs. Wallace's mother's family.
2. Wallace Avenue was named after the family name.
3. Ashley Avenue was named for an uncle of Mrs. Butler's, her father's brother.
4. Howard Avenue retained the name of Henry Wallace's son.

\(^1\)Interview with Jesse A. Edlefsen, Driggs, Idaho 13 October 1973.

\(^2\)Interview with Clair Wallace Butler, Driggs, Idaho 14 October 1973.
5. Harper Avenue was named for Mrs. Butler's grandmother's maiden name.

6. Ross Avenue was named after Mrs. Butler's father's brother.¹

In that the Wallaces had given the land to the town and had the lots and blocks platted, they thought it should be named Wallace, after them. When the name was submitted, however, it was turned down because a Wallace, Idaho was already in existence.² Eventually a petition was sent to Washington D. C. for a post office. The people had forgotten to request a name, so because there were so many names on the list by the name of Driggs, that was selected and has remained.

Both Henry Wallace and Leland Driggs had their ground platted into lots and shortly after dedication of the townsite people finally began to move onto it. Some of the first homes on or near the site are still standing as indicated by figure 20. It was reported in 1900 that "the town of Driggs has a bright prospective future. Some new residences have been erected the past season, and more contemplated in the spring."³ Also the town was stated as being "a thriving little business center, with implement houses, one general store, drug store, school house and meeting houses, and has the appearance of a prosperous village."⁴ Many new buildings sprang up over the next few years such as a bank, two hotels, a photo studio and saloons.

¹Interview with Clair Wallace Butler, Driggs, Idaho 14 October 1973.
²Ibid.
³¹R E N, 1 January 1900.
⁴Ibid., 8 April 1900.
Figure 15. Original townsite and dates of dedication.

Information from map drawn by Wilson Bros Engineers Jan. 1917
Figure 16.
Location of Settlements

- ▲ NUCLEATED
- ○ DISPERSED
- S SCHOOL IN USE
- C CHURCH
- P POST OFFICE IN USE
- SA SCHOOL ABANDONED
- CA CHURCH
- PA POST OFFICE

Information as of 1974. Compiled from Barrett, Driggs and Edlefsen
May 23, 1910 saw the town incorporated and it became the county seat in 1915. An electric light system was started in 1912 after the completion of the Teton Valley Power and Milling Company's power plant in Teton Canyon.\(^1\) A water system was also installed that year from the same canyon, a distance of five miles. Reporting in 1912, the Teton Valley News listed the following businesses.\(^2\)

1. one bank 
2. two general merchandise stores 
3. one dry goods store 
4. two hotels 
5. one restaurant 
6. one newspaper office 
7. two millinery establishments 
8. livery barns 
9. pool room 
10. telephone exchange 
11. jewelry store 
12. photo studio 
13. one church 
14. one high school 
15. two blacksmith shops 
16. two physicians 
17. one dentist 
18. a drug store 
19. a butcher shop 
20. one attorney at law 
21. one planing mill 
22. two barber shops 
23. a dance hall 
24. realestate firms 
25. the C. W. & M. Co. 
26. the Studebaker Co. 
27. an optician 
28. an elementary school 
29. a post office

By that time a fairly good sized community had developed, one of the few in the valley to develop and continue in trade and growth.

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\(^1\)Driggs, p. 198. 
\(^2\)Teton Valley News, (Driggs, Idaho) 4 January 1912.
Chapter X

MORMON INFLUENCE ON SETTLEMENT

Most of the early settlers in Teton Valley, as well as many others to follow, were members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints or more commonly called the Mormons. As mentioned earlier, these people came from the Mormon dominated regions of Utah in search for land because much of the usable agricultural land then in Utah had nearly all been claimed. For this reason many soon began to leave the Utah areas for other regions which they hoped held greater promise.

During the 1880's the Mormon people "spread quickly" to the north into the Snake River Plain and rapidly settled along many of the river's tributaries, one of which was Teton River. At first the movement to the north was not directed colonization by the church,¹ but as many Mormons continued into the region a stronger interest developed and assistance was finally given. The town of Rexburg, forty-five miles west of Driggs, was actually founded by the church as a "principal center" to serve the many members of the church in the eastern Idaho area.

¹Soon after the Mormons entered the Salt Lake Valley, Brigham Young, their leader, began to send colonists out to settle the outlying areas. The church directed the colonization by "calling" individuals to leave Salt Lake City and other places and to settle in other localities.

When the Mormons entered the valleys of Utah, they brought with them many unique cultural characteristics that became observable on the landscape as settlement evolved. As population grew and colonization took place in outlying areas those same characteristics were taken with the settlers and thus are observed in most areas settled by Mormon people. By locating certain of those unique features, the area in which the Mormons settled can quite easily be determined.

Several have attempted to define the "Mormon Cultural" region, but perhaps the most significant study was completed by D. W. Meinig. In his study he defined the cultural region and specified three main parts as seen in figure 17. According to Meinig, Teton Valley lies within the "domain" of the culture region, therefore, the valley should contain many of the unique features as they were taken there from Utah.

Perhaps the most noted contribution to settlement patterns in the West by the Mormons was the so called "Mormon Village." It has been stated that Mormon towns "missed or generally rejected much of contemporary American culture" and therefore were much different in various aspects, such as layout, than most other western American cities. Though other main distinguishing features mark the Mormon town and will be discussed in the following pages, one of the most peculiar aspects of it, is the fact that the inhabitants, who were agrarian in nature, lived within the confines of the town with their farm buildings and animals, but commuted back and forth from their homes to their farms.

\[1\text{Ibid.}\]

surrounding the towns. This function did not originate with the Mormons, however, but was unique with them in the West in that the pattern had been abandoned by settlers as they flowed from the east coast.

The origin of the above pattern seems to have started in the New England colonies. Several men have voiced their opinion as to how the "New England" village, as it was called there, began. One of those, Joel Parker, stated:

A careful examination of the history of the New England towns will show that they are not founded or modelled on precedent. . . . But like most other useful machinery, they had their origin in the wants of the time, and came into existence by a gradual progress from imperfect beginnings.

A Mr. Frothingham, in his History of Charleston says, "the nearest precedent for New England towns were those little independent nations, the free cities of the twelfth century, or the towns of the Anglo-Saxons, . . ." P. Emory Aldrich, partially disagreeing with the above, says that "neither English towns or towns on the continent had a common origin." He contends that "there were no pre-existing models for New England towns. These towns were original creations, formed to meet the exact wants of the settlers of a new and uninhabited country." According to Lowry Nelson:

The limited valley lands of New England were not suitable for the development of large estates. Moreover, it was a common practice of the trading company which held the land from the Crown to


2Ibid. 3Ibid., p. 116. 4Ibid., p. 118.
make grants to groups of persons rather than to individuals, a
practice which in itself promoted the idea of small units of land
for the several members of the group. Then, too, there was the
ever present danger of the Indian, with whom the newcomers in the
strange land did not for some years develop stable and peaceful
social intercourse. Their sense of insecurity led quite naturally
to compact communities which provided a more effective basis against
the feudal tenure of the Old World, and sought greater equality in
the distribution of land. This led naturally to establishment of
small freeholds.¹

A more recent explanation, given by Page Smith, in his As a
City Upon a Hill, contributes the idea that religion was the basis for
the town structures. He said that the "New England colonists wished to
form a new kind of community dedicated to certain articles of faith.
This in itself was revolutionary."² The covenanted community, as he
called the towns, were:

Composed of individuals bound in a special compact with God
and each other. The ties extend vertically within the society to
God. This community, so covenanted, was the unique creation of
New England Puritanism. It found an ideal social form in the town-
ship, modelled on the English original. Adopted self-consciously
by the Puritans, it became the matrix into which innumerable com-
munities were poured.³

After the eastern sea board became filled with people and farm
lands the New England village pattern was abandoned as the westward
expansion took place. There were several reasons for this, the main
ones being: (1) Settlement to the west was not group, but individually
oriented. (2) The population was not homogeneous, but heterogeneous.
Many varieties of settlers with distinct social backgrounds existed.
(3) Governmental laws promoted the dispersed settlement.⁴

³Ibid., p. 6.
⁴Nelson, Mormon Village, p. 10.
One of the congressional acts that promoted scattered settlement was the rectangular survey of 1785. This ordinance "provided for the division of land into townships consisting of sections of one square mile each. The sections in turn were divided into quarter sections of 160 acres."¹ Within some sections much of the land was also given out in lots. Because of this grid iron type pattern a dispersion of homes resulted and the isolated farmstead was created.² In addition to this, settlement took place so rapidly that the surveys were unable to keep ahead of the settlers. This resulted in many "squatters" claiming scattered acres of the land waiting for the surveyors so they could legally claim the land. One other peculiarity that cause the New England settlement to be forgotten was that no roads existed in the frontier, therefore, living on a farm was more advantageous than collecting into towns.³

The question now arises, why then, after the New England town had been abandoned, did the Mormons, who came from the east, adopt the same pattern and continue to use it as they were driven from the midwest to the Great Basin? Lowry Nelson contributes one point of view for the Mormon continuation of the New England pattern, and suggests:

It does not appear that it was intended primarily as a protective device, although it was said that when the end came, 'safety' would be found in Zion. It was surely not essentially a response to the geographic environment, for then other settlers in Ohio and Missouri must have adopted it. It could not be simply an attempt to barrow from New England, otherwise the new plan would have corresponded more nearly to the 'town'in general structure; and other

¹Ibid., p. 11.
²Ibid.
³Ibid.
Yankees on the Western Reserve should certainly have known the New England community. The only logical explanation would seem to be that it resulted not from these external influences, but was rather the product of the group ideologies.¹

Though some have criticized Nelson's viewpoints,² his ideas, nonetheless, give some indication as to why the Mormon people continued the pattern.

Besides the general pattern of living in town and farming outside as discussed above, several specific features may be found in and surrounding Mormon towns which makes them different from other communities. Some of these are as follows:

1. Wide streets laid out in a grid iron fashion running north-south-east-west. According to Francaviglia these streets are generally seventy-five feet wide or wider and "consist of well-driven dirt or gravel (many are now paved)³ central strips about twenty feet wide flanked by wide, weedy 'shoulders' each often thirty feet or more in width."⁴ This type of pattern, says Nelson, developed from the ideas of the City of Zion which "probably was formulated by the knowledge the


²Dr. Robert L. Layton, in his "Analysis of Land Use: Twelve Communities in Utah Valley, Utah County, Utah" (Doctoral Dissertation, Syracuse University, 1962), pp. 24-25, says that Nelson is misleading and makes too great a point of the "City of Zion" plat and the following of the plat by those villages he studied. Nelson fails to mention many items such as the lack of ten acre blocks and eight rod streets in many cities.

³Parentheses mine.

Mormons had of the rectangular survey method, the New England town, and their understanding of city lay-outs."¹

2. Roadside irrigation ditches. These are functional ditches used for irrigation within the town. The occupants of Mormon towns regularly take their "turn" as the water passes by in the ditches.

3. Barns and granaries right in town. Being consistent with the New England village, Mormon towns have large lots devoted to farm use. Stock, barns, haybarns, sheds, granaries, and other farm structures are seen in town.

4. Unpainted farm buildings.

5. Open field landscape around town, devoid of farmsteads, windmills, and other features.

6. The hay derrick.

7. The Mormon fence consisting of crude, unpainted slabs, planks, posts, poles, etc., in a picket style.

8. Dominant use of brick. Adobe at first, but eventually fired brick. The City of Zion plan called for the use of brick and stone.


10. Domestic architectural style. A large percentage of "I" houses.²

The "I" house is another one of the features which was abandoned by early settlers in the expansion westward, but was continued by the

¹Nelson, Study in Social Origins, p. 20.

²The suggested landscape features are taken from Francaviglia's "The Mormon Landscape," p. 60.
Mormon people in the West. Basically this type of house has a "symmetrical plan and facade, is one and a half to two stories high, only one room deep, and usually has a chimney at each end"\(^1\) or one in the center. The Central-hall house, another name for the style, was well established in the eastern United States by the end of the 1700's. It probably would have disappeared if the Mormon people had not continued the use of it.\(^2\) (See figure 28 for "I" House plans.)

The continuation of the use of the "I" house by the Mormons can be attributed to the following: (1) The type was reinforced by Old World tradition brought by European converts. (2) They were forced to leave Nauvoo but were not about to forget the fine homes they had there. (3) It was an easy style to translate into masonry and lingered in the mind, associated with Zion. (4) And many settlers who had proven their worth in one area were requested to settle other areas in the same fashion. These moves partly account for a definite visual repetition in Mormon Settlement.\(^3\)

In that Teton Valley falls within the reaches of the Mormon Culture region many of the suggested Mormon features are seen on the landscape. Originally there were eight townsites platted, but only three; Driggs, Tetonia, and Victor, developed significantly and exist today. These three all contain people who have farm buildings in town and run a farm within a few miles from town or adjacent to it. Many farm buildings, sheds, etc., are found right in town, unpainted.

\(^1\)Ibid., p. 65.

\(^2\)Ibid.

\(^3\)Ibid., p. 70.
Each of the original townsites were laid out in a grid iron pattern or some variation of it and contained wide streets with the central portions well worn. Today the three existing villages are basically alike, but each have specific differences that may be detected. The blocks in Driggs are four acres each, whereas in Victor they are ten acres and Tetonia's are two acres. The Driggs blocks are arranged into eight half acre lots, alternating on each block. This trend of lot alternation is also unique in most early Mormon town. Supposedly this was carried out so that the houses on the corner lots would not be facing each other. It is interesting to note, however, that the lots in Victor do not alternate and this town is more like Salt Lake City's layout than most of the others in the valley. As seen in the illustrations Tetonia is quite different from the others as well, both in block structure and lot positioning. Victor and Tetonia have had no new additions added to the towns, but Driggs has. These new additions, shown in figure 20 by the dashed lines, do not have alternating lots and were only one forth acre each instead of one half as in the original site. This gives some indication how traditions change as time goes on. (See figures 18 and 19 for Victor and Tetonia.)

Roadside irrigation ditches were found in all three villages but very few seemed to be used. Town water systems have probably replaced their necessity as far as in-town garden plots are concerned. Many also have been covered and were difficult to find.

Francaviglia's contention that Mormon towns use mostly brick as a house building material does not hold true in Teton Valley. Some factors that may have caused this phenomena were that: (1) Adobe and
Figure 18. Street and block layout of Victor, Idaho.

1" indicates central houses

1/2 inch equals 400 feet

Figure 19. Street and block layout of Tetonia, Idaho.

1" indicates central block houses

1/2 inch equals 400 feet

Information from Tetonia County records
brick making material was not available in the valley. Nearly all of the original homes were built of wood and were of a frame construction. This may be attributed to the fact that large amounts of timber were easily obtained. (2) Because the valley was not settled until the late 1880's, perhaps some aspects of the Mormon settlement were not carried with the settlers. The traditional nature of the people may have been changing. (3) Being near the outside edge of the "domain" may also have been an influencing aspect. Views, other than Mormon, could have altered the thinking of many of the settlers as they began their new way of life. Today, however, most of the new homes are of brick construction. Improved transportation and access to brick has increased the use of the material. All of the Mormon chapels except one are also built of brick. The other is built of stone, as are a few homes.

The central hall house, another common feature of the Mormon landscape, is also evident in the villages of Teton Basin. Several are scattered throughout the countryside, but most of them are found in the towns, and are of frame construction. In Driggs, approximately nineteen exist out of a total of about 236, or nine percent. Tetonia had six "I" houses, or eleven percent of the fifty-five in the village. Victor had the highest percentage with thirteen, which was eleven of eighty-one homes. (See town layouts for location of central Hall Houses.)

Most evident other than the village features and layout is the open field landscape around the villages. Within that landscape the old Mormon derrick can still be found, but very few in number. Many have been out of use for so long that they are no longer useable. (See
figure 29 for illustration of a hay derrick.) The open field landscape itself has undergone several changes also. Because of the original homestead laws the valley was first settled in scattered farmsteads, approximately sixty in number, each with 160 acres or more. Until the land had been proven up, they had to remain on the acreage, but when the five years ended, many moved into the villages. This therefore left homes and farms scattered throughout the landscape. Many of the children and descendants of the original settlers continued to use the farmsteads, but as mentioned, many still run the farms from the villages. If it had not been for the homestead laws, the appearance of the valley would be much different. The effect of the Mormon people on the land is very evident and a unique settlement pattern had developed in Teton Valley, as in other Mormon dominated areas.

Mormon influence on settlement has not always been beneficial. As time passed and technology advanced a number of problems began to occur. The original layout of the towns with the few lots per block, caused the homes to be scattered out to quite an extent. At first most of the homes were built on the corners with others eventually built in the center as more people moved into the villages. In many instances the small Mormon villages have not grown very much, as is the case with Driggs, Tetonia, and Victor. Therefore, today, they still are fairly spread out. This situation has hindered the development and establishment of the services for the towns. This meant that when a sewer or water system was constructed a lot of territory had to be covered just to reach a few homes, therefore increasing the cost to the taxpayers. The same held true for power and telephones; a lot of material to serve
few customers. The wide streets have also caused some problems as paving has become popular. The cost is high. Perhaps this is the reason that so many of the smaller Mormon villages have only paved the central portions of the streets, leaving the wide "weedy" shoulders. The functional aspects of the earlier villages, have to some extent, become at least partially non-functional.
Chapter XI

NEW ATTEMPTS AT SETTLEMENT

The loss of Mormon characteristics can be seen throughout the valley as they have developed over the years. New additions are different than the old regular patterns and new towns attempting to start are not patterned after the Mormon style, but are irregular. The landscape has continued to change, especially since 1969. Increased recreational activities and the development of new communities are taking advantage of the wide open spaces left by the nucleated Mormon villages.

Since the very moment humans began to enter Pierre's Hole or Teton Valley in 1882, a gradual change began to occur. The land was grazed over by various types of livestock reducing much of the tall, luscious grass to useless sage brush; it was cultivated for many varieties of vegetation; and it was built on and lived on by several types of people. During the years of change the valley developed into a prosperous community, which over the years drew a number of people into the basin. Each community, dispersed and nucleated, grew to its largest size and schools and churches were scattered throughout the valley. The environment had been greatly altered from the days when only Indian and trapper were wandering in and out as they pursued their interests.

After reaching what seemed to be the height of the settlement process in the early 1940's, as far as population and natural increase was concerned, another change began to occur. Instead of a forward
motion the valley began to feel the effects of a retrograde motion. A downhill trend was beginning. Schools, churches, and post offices were being consolidated and even farms were decreasing in number. Worse still, however, was the beginning of the loss of population. From 3,601 people in 1940, by 1970 the population had fallen to 2,351. This made it all the more difficult to further any industrial growth or any other opportunities that may have been available.

Table three and figures twenty-one through twenty-four show statistically several changes that have occurred during the settlement of the valley. Population, after peaking out during the 1920's through the 1940's continued to decline, the number of farms decreased, and the village populations fell sharply. These types of changes have been noticed by the residents, but also, during the 1960's another change began to occur. When asked what had been the biggest change in the valley, George Stone, who has been in the basin since 1895, replied:

Well, the biggest change I've noticed has come in rather gradually. But the biggest . . . was when the land began to raise up in value, when they built that Grand Targhee. That interested outside capital. Then the money men came in and they liked the valley, the quietness of it and the isolation. And they bought places all along next to the foothills at a fabulous price and then branched out . . . .

The Grand Targhee Ski Resort was a long time dream of many of the valley residents and was finally completed in 1969. From that point thousands of people have been attracted to the valley, at first a place to visit and ski, but these visits ultimately resulted in many permanent residents. A new type of settlement was beginning, very similar to

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TABLE 3

POPULATION AND AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS

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<th>TP</th>
<th>NF</th>
<th>PLF</th>
<th>AFS</th>
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*Compiled from the Population and Agriculture Census.*

**NOTE:**
- **Y**: Year
- **NF**: Number of Farms
- **TP**: Total Population
- **PLF**: Percent of Land in Farms
- **AFS**: Average Farm Size in Acres

FIGURE 21

VALLEY POPULATION

*Compiled from Population and Agriculture Census.*
FIGURE 22

VILLAGE POPULATION

DRIGGS

TETONIA

VICTOR

aCompiled from the Population Census.

FIGURE 23

NUMBER OF FARMS

aCompiled from the Agricultural Census.
most of the original settlement period. The people in both periods came for the available land in the valley, although it was obtained in different ways. Also locations were scattered over the basin where land was open for use, either for grazing, farming, or building. One of the most interesting comparisons, though, is in the community development. After proving up on the land the original settlers began to collect into the villages. This same process is now occurring among the people settling now. Several attempts are being made to start new towns, hoping to draw the newcomers to specific locations in townsites.

One of the major problems that is hindering the new towns from growing more rapidly, among other things, is that many lot owners live outside the valley, merely holding the land. Very similar to those earlier settlers who held large tracts of land, these people now also are hoping to make some profit on the land. Despite this, however, approximately nine new communities are being built at various locations.
in the valley. (See figure 25.) Plans have been drawn and transferred to the landscape for several of the communities.

One of the first towns to begin was Targhee Town located northeast of Driggs just across the Wyoming state line in Alta. Several hundred acres have been platted for a shopping center, motel, condominiums, parks, a gold course, and many single homesites. This new town is hoping for several hundred people to build there. At the present time all but four of the sixty-eight homesites have been sold, but only seven have buildings. No condominiums or other facilities exist.

Other new communities are attempting to begin as well. One of these, Teewinot, has eighty-four lots from one to six acres each. Roads have been graded, but are gravel at this point. Three cabins have been built with one under construction. Other communities include the Packsaddle Estates which has about eighty lots with seven houses completed, Teton Rancheros with forty lots, Teton View Estates with thirty-two lots, Teton Highland with fourteen lots, Grand Teton Estates, Murdock Acres with thirty-eight lots, and Gepon Acres with fifty-two lots.

These new towns will be noticeably different than the present Mormon villages. The "gentile" influence on settlement, since the beginning of the recreational settlement of the valley began, has made its mark on the landscape. Some increase of population has occurred as well. Though it is difficult to determine the exact increase in population since 1970, an indication is given by the number of new phones put in. Thirty-five new names were added to the 1974 book. This does not give an accurate number of increase, but shows some indication of new movement into the valley.
FIGURE 25.
Location of new settlements

T 3 N
Information from Teton County records

Mountainous area

Scale in miles
With these new communities and people moving to the valley, there is no doubt that further changes will occur on the landscape. Many areas which have not had significant change since the Indian occupancy will now be altered. Population of the valley will increase, new businesses will develop, and industries, especially those related to recreation will thrive as the settlement process continues in Teton Valley.
FIGURE 26 Community street and block patterns information from Teton County records.
FIGURE 27. Community street and block patterns
information from Teton County records
FIGURE 28. Floor plans for the central hall house. One and one-half story from Francavilla's "Mormon Houses."

FIGURE 29. The hay derrick commonly seen in Mormon dominated areas.
Chapter XII

SUMMARY

When examining the past geography of a particular spatial unit of the earth's surface such as Teton Valley, one quickly observes that there existed not one, but many geographies. Throughout time various stages of geographical development occurred, during which several occupancy groups had contact with the environment. It may also be observed that each group utilized the environment in different ways, each one with varying degrees of impact. Change in the environment depended on the use of that environment by man. Why did these various occupancy groups use Teton Valley? Why did the reasons for the use of the landscape change? These are some of the questions an historical geographer may answer as he reconstructs the past geographies of an area. He may then explain why the landscape is as it is today.

The valley which came to be known as Pierre's Hole and later as Teton Basin, is located in the Central Rockies. Original natural boundaries placed the blunt "V" shaped valley at the northeastern end of the Snake River Plain, jutting to the south in a bay-like recession. After many centuries of tectonic activities, the valley was eventually surrounded by mountains, only the north was open, and even it, became elevated as volcanic activity occurred.

In the valley, a river formed as it collected the water from the many streams that flowed from the ice and water formed canyons. Eventually the river itself cut its way out of the basin through the
silt covered lava beds which blocked the northern entrance. The floor of the valley, in the meantime, collected large deposits of alluvial sediments and developed an extensive swamp in the central portions. These rich conditions provided for the abundant growth of tall grass which gradually covered the level floor. Animals of all types were attracted to the area. Buffalo, elk, deer, bear, mountain sheep, moose, beaver, mink, muskrats, antelope, and many other varieties took advantage of the open spaces and the excellent feed that was available.

The environment described above, also attracted another creature; man, the American Indian. Though Indian contact with Pierre's Hole was spread over hundreds of years, their impact on the environment was minimal. Rather than change the landscape the Indians learned to exist with their surroundings. The several tribes which used the valley, such as the Blackfeet, Bannack, Shoshoni or Snake, came for various reasons. The major purpose was to obtain food, however, during the hunts for food little was done to alter the landscape but occasional burning to attract game and construction of crude shelters. Some trampling of the grass by frightened buffalo herds was also probable. Other marks on the landscape were in the form of trails. The second reason for Indian entrance into Pierre's Hole was merely to reach some other destination. Several trails may be found that were once used by passing Indians, a major one being the Bannack Trail which follows Fox Creek. Further contact came as they associated with the white trappers and traders in their annual rendezvous which were held in 1829 and 1832 in Pierre's Hole.
White contact began with explorers who just happened on to the area. Their use of the valley was similar to that of the Indian, but to a much smaller extent. Few explorers stayed long enough to change very much and had little to do with the valley, as their major purpose was to reach some other point and record what they saw as they passed. The use of the animals for food, foliage for shelter, and the grass for their animals, was all the explorers needed.

The explorers, however, opened the way for the trappers and traders. During this sequence more of the natural feed was used and some of the animals were driven or taken from the area, such as the buffalo, beaver, and antelope. Human contact became more frequent and occasionally several hundred people were in the valley at one time. Two rendezvous, for example, were held in Pierre's Hole, which drew hundreds of Indians, trappers, and traders to the basin.

Valuable to us today, though, are the journals and diaries of the men who entered the valley and wrote about what they saw. Many described the prairie hills and the difficult swamp, while others were concerned with the harsh weather and still others wrote about the geology and landforms. Many aspects of the basin as it existed in the 1800's were described by the trappers and others who entered.

Up to the 1880's all visitors to the basin were temporary. They had no intention of staying very long. Their livelihood depended on how well they treated the environment; they had no reason to change it any more than was necessary. Up until the above date, the valley remained nearly the same as it had been for centuries. Though the Indians used it for food and the mountain men used it for a gathering place,
little change could be detected in the overall landscape as the valley was used by these individuals.

During the 1800's, however, the natural boundaries of the valley were overlaid by man-made political boundaries and several surveys were made. This situation gave Pierre's Hole a place in the minds of men and on the maps of the surveyors. The Federal land laws also played an important role and the area was opened up for homesteading. The calmness of the secluded mountain valley was about to be disrupted by scores of settlers searching for a new life.

By 1882, the furs and the trappers, as well as the major Indian contact were gone. There was no reason to enter the valley for food or for furs, new reasons were necessary. These new reasons were supplied by the land laws and the available land of the valley.

In 1882 the first permanent agricultural settlers entered the valley of Pierre's Hole. For the first few decades of settlement those who entered did so to raise stock. The excellent natural meadows provided plenty of feed to support as many head of stock as they wished to bring. With this first wave of cattlemen the valley began its first real change in centuries. Homes, fences, and other man-made structures had to be built while the machinery began to cut the tall grasses. Out of necessity small gardens were planted which eventually led to larger fields of various crops. Others began to enter the valley for reasons other than raising stock. After it was discovered that certain agricultural crops could withstand the harsh climate, many came and started to till the soil and turn the sod to make many acres of cultivated ground productive. Once the farms were developed irrigation ditches and canals began to line the valley floor.
Large numbers of settlers came from Utah, and being Mormons, began to leave their unique imprint on the landscape. Many homes were built along with farm buildings and other structures. The available land of Pierre's Hole, by now Teton Valley, was nearly completely claimed. As more settlers came other ways of achieving success had to be found. Small businesses were established and finally people began to collect into various communities out of which resulted the villages.

Agricultural and industrial development became more rapid. Many acres of rich land were cultivated and changed from their original state. Several sites were completely changed as mines and quarries developed. Factories and mills were built, as were school and churches. A number of townsites were dedicated, some failed, but three nucleated villages emerged, being Driggs, Tetonia, and Victor. The coming of the railroad brought more growth, people, a better method of transportation, and by 1940 the valley had reached its peak.

As the 1940's passed, however, population and growth opportunities dwindled. Limited agricultural space and a small population lessened the demand for further development and aided in the downhill trend in many industries, town populations, and businesses. But by the late 1960's a need for new development and growth was recognized. A major possibility was to turn to recreational opportunities. Eventually a ski hill was built which began to draw many into the valley once again. New towns began, homesites were built on, both providing the need for more enterprises. The change was now rapid. A once untouched landscape was now scattered with the evidence of man's presence.
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Interviews


THE SETTLEMENT OF TETON VALLEY,
IDAHOWYOMING

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ABSTRACT

Teton Valley, throughout many centuries, has attracted several occupance groups, each interacting with the environment in various ways for various reasons. Indian and explorer contact did little to alter the surroundings. More frequent contact came, however, as trappers and traders visited the valley to trap beaver and meet in rendezvous.

The end of intensified fur trapping slowed contact with the basin. Government personnel, a painter, a few squawmen and horse thieves were the only inhabitants because Indians, remoteness, and harsh climatic conditions kept others out until 1882 when permanent agricultural settlers entered the valley. Hundreds of people followed, many of whom were Mormons from Utah. During this sequence major changes took place. Unique Mormon settlement patterns developed. Increase in agricultural and industrial productivity and population continued until the 1940's, but as enterprises failed people moved out. In the late 1960's the need for a new drawing force was recognized. A ski resort was built, attracting people to the valley to take advantage of the newly created recreational facilities, towns, and businesses.

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