



So Rugged and Mountainous: Blazing the Trails to Oregon and California, 1812–1848 (Overland West Series)

Will Bagley

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The story of America's westward migration is a powerful blend of fact and fable. Over the course of three decades, almost a million eager fortune-hunters, pioneers, and visionaries transformed the face of a continent—and displaced its previous inhabitants. The people who made the long and perilous journey over the Oregon and California trails drove this swift and astonishing change. In this magisterial volume, Will Bagley tells why and how this massive emigration began.

While many previous authors have told parts of this story, Bagley has recast it in its entirety for modern readers. Drawing on research he conducted for the National Park Service's Long Distance Trails Office, he has woven a wealth of primary sources—personal letters and journals, government documents, newspaper reports, and folk accounts—into a compelling narrative that reinterprets the first years of overland migration.

Illustrated with photographs and historical maps, *So Rugged and Mountainous* is the first of a projected four-volume history, *Overland West: The Story of the Oregon and California Trails*. This sweeping series describes how the “Road across the Plains” transformed the American West and became an enduring part of its legacy. And by showing that overland emigration would not have been possible without the cooperation of Native peoples and tribes, it places American Indians at the center of trail history, not on its margins.

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