

[FREE] Women in Waiting in the Westward Movement: Life on the Home Frontier

Women in Waiting in the Westward Movement: Life on the Home Frontier

Linda Peavy, Ursula Smith

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Linda Peavy, Ursula Smith : Women in Waiting in the Westward Movement: Life on the Home Frontier before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Women in Waiting in the Westward Movement: Life on the Home Frontier:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Very good book- topic rarely handled, written wellBy C. BradenNO ONE EVER TOLD ME about this. Women in the pioneer days whose husbands took off for gold or adventure and left poor Mom and kiddies at home trying to live on no money and no help. Personal stories here abound, some with letters saying "be home soon" and never come back or stay gone for 10 years, some who leave and never even write, some who come back only to leave again, some who come back and fetch you and leave you in a mining camp full of drunks and losers, some who dropped you on the prairie 200 miles from another soul, some women who refused to wait and climbed aboard anything that moved to go meet up with a happy or very unhappy hubby...worth reading, a non spoken about issue in the age of exploration and land and gold speculation2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Unjtold story of the Westward ExpansionBy Lynn MooneyThis book told a story told no where else. Women and families left while their husbands went West to California mostly to search for gold. Mail took years to come back and forth.This is a great book.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy mary schwenkeGood book

During the last half of the nineteenth century, thousands of men went west in search of gold, land, or adventure-

leaving their wives to handle family, farm, and business affairs on their own. The experiences of these westering men have long been a part of the lore of the American frontier, but the stories of their wives have rarely been told. Ten years of research into public and private documents-including letters of couples separated during the westward movement-has enabled Linda Peavy and Ursula Smith to tell the forgotten stories of "women in waiting." Though these wives were left more or less in limbo by the departure of their adventuring husbands, they were hardly women in waiting in any other sense. Children had to be fed, clothed, housed, and educated; farms and businesses had to be managed; creditors had to be paid or pacified and, in some cases, hard-earned butter-and-egg money had to be sent west in response to letters from broke and disillusioned husbands. This raises some unsettling questions: How does the idea of an "allowance" from home square with our long-standing image of the frontiersman as rugged individualist? To what extent was the westward movement supported by the paid and unpaid labor of women back east? And how do we measure the heroics of husbands out west against the heroics of wives back home?

From Publishers Weekly "I don't think we can live this way much longer and I hope you will not ask me to." When Emma Stratton Christie wrote these words in June of 1884, she and her five sons, aged seven months to nine years, were living in a tiny granary on her brother's Minnesota farm while her husband David was searching for the perfect homestead in the Montana Territory. He had already been absent for more than two years, with an occasional visit home, and it would be another year before the family was reunited in Montana--in a one-room cabin with a lean-to kitchen. Emma Christie was far from alone in her plight. Beginning with the California Gold Rush of 1849, tens of thousands of men left their families in search of gold, land or adventure, leaving their wives, sometimes for years at a time, to manage families and businesses on their own. Some women rose to the occasion, discovering a flair for business, while others waited in poverty, holding off debtors while trying to feed large families. Without detracting from the very real hardships and dangers endured by westering men, independent scholars Linda Peavy and Ursula Smith (*The Gold Rush Widows of Little Falls*) relate the experiences of more than 50 women, focusing on the stories of six, whose correspondence and diaries have survived in archives. The loneliness and fears of these all-but-abandoned women speak eloquently over the years. Copyright 1994 Cahners Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal This book fills a void in Western American history by providing details about 19th-century frontier women's experiences. Peavy and Smith (*The Gold Rush Widows of Little Falls*, Minnesota Historical Society, 1990) present a mesmerizing look at the frustrations and hardships faced by women left in charge of the home front and by their husbands, who went to look for gold, land, and adventure in the West. Relying on censuses, newspapers, letters, and photographs, along with journals, diaries, business records, and genealogies, the authors have interwoven six personal histories along with the experiences of 50 families that were separated during the rush for gold in the last century. The correspondence between these wives and husbands provide an insightful view into their daily lives. Recommended for Western Americana collections. Vicki L. Toy Smith, Univ. of Nevada, Reno Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. From the Back Cover During the last half of the nineteenth century, thousands of men went west in search of gold, land, or adventure - leaving their wives to handle family, farm, and business affairs on their own. The experiences of these westering men have long been a part of the lore of the American frontier, but the stories of their wives have rarely been told. Ten years of research into public and private documents - including letters of couples separated during the westward movement - has enabled Linda Peavy and Ursula Smith to tell the forgotten stories of "women in waiting." Though these wives were left more or less in limbo by the departure of their adventuring husbands, they were hardly women in waiting in any other sense. Children had to be fed, clothed, housed, and educated; farms and businesses had to be managed; creditors had to be paid or pacified - and, in some cases, hard-earned butter-and-egg money had to be sent west in response to letters from broke and disillusioned husbands. This raises some unsettling questions: How does the idea of an "allowance" from home square with our long-standing image of the frontiersman as rugged individualist? To what extent was the westward movement supported by the paid and unpaid labor of women back east? And how do we measure the heroics of husbands out west against the heroics of wives back home? Based on the experiences of more than fifty women - from Abiah Hiller, whose business sense equaled or excelled her husband's, to Emma Christie, who knew virtually nothing about the matters she was called upon to manage - *Women in Waiting in the Westward Movement* offers a rare glimpse into life on the home frontier and provides new insights into fairly common, though poorly documented, aspect of the history of the settling of the American West.