

## How frequently did crime occur on the trail? What kinds of crime?

Number of Diaries, Letters, Reminiscences Examined: 91

Accounts reporting at least one killing: 18

Accounts reporting multiple instances of killing: 5

Henry Allyn (1853): 2

E.W. Conyers (1852): 2

Polly Coon (1852): 3

Francis Sawyer (1852): 2

Abigail Jane Scott (1852): 3

Total number of murders reported [includes one suicide]: 24

Number of people executed: 10

Results of trials:

Conviction and execution: 10

Execution by hanging: 7

Execution by shooting: 1

Method of execution not specified: 2

Acquittal: 2

Defendant convicted and "bound over on good behavior": 1

Accused being held for trial; outcome not reported: 1

Total number of people dead by violence [including those whose killers were acquitted on grounds of self-defense as well as the one suicide reported.]: 36

Accounts of those who had direct evidence of killing: 5

[Two of these accounts were those reporting acquittals.]

Reports of seeing information about killings on grave markers: 6

Accounts of killing based on second hand and/or hearsay evidence: 11

Cause of killing (where known):

Drunkenness: 1

Fight: 1

Fighting over a woman: 1

Murdered for his money: 1

Relationship between killer and victim (where known)

Member of same party/wagon train: 7

Employer/employee or partner: 3

Traveling companion: 1

Member of family (brother-in-law): 1

Instances of theft or attempted theft reported: 7

Reports describing various types of physical confrontation: 5

[Robert L. Munkres, "Crime on the Oregon Trail: 1838-1864," *The Tombstone Epitaph*, March, 1995.]