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Deadlines for submitted material:

Articles: Friday by 5 P.M.
Ads: Monday by Noon

Focus welcomes freelance submissions. Manuscripts and photographs can be returned if accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope.

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1999 The Portland Observer

Movin' Out West

Many black men and women left their home towns to move out West, filled with the spirit of adventure. The early settlers came by covered wagon or horse, braving the harsh conditions for survival. Please join us as we explore what African Americans endured during these great migrations and their significant role of opening up the West. We will look at the history of the trailblazers that traveled in unchartered territories; ambitious black pioneering women; Buffalo soldiers who served at the end of the Civil War and Black rodeo cowboys.

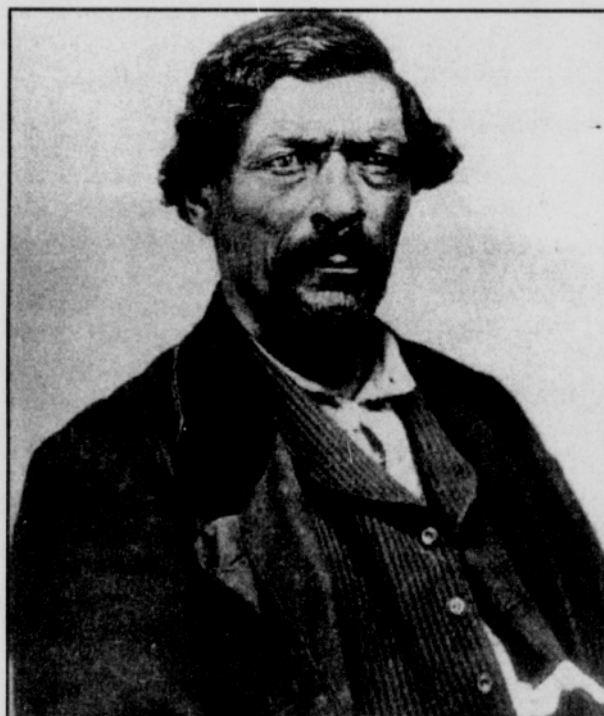
Black Trailblazers of the Old West

BY MARK LITTLE FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

As far back as the late 1600's, free African Americans were among the early explorers to the West, including the Pacific Northwest region and Canada. They moved westward, many for the thrill of exploration and adventure as mountain men, trappers, traders and scouts.

The early move to the West began with the government sponsored

expedition by Lewis and Clark. Under contract with Thomas Jefferson, their duty was to map out the Pacific Northwest as part of the Manifest Destiny, expanding the American territory westward. A multi-racial party of 30 people was organized consisting of Clark's black slave



James Beckwourth was a trapper and marksman. In 1844, he led a wagon train of new settlers through the Sierra Nevada mountain range. Along the way, he discovered a passage that became an overland wagon route to the upper Sacramento Valley. This pass is named after him.

named York, Sacajawea and military men.

York was instrumental in bringing the group through the unchar-

tered wilderness. His good relations with Native American tribes allowed them to solicit their help as guides through Indian Territory. They ad-

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