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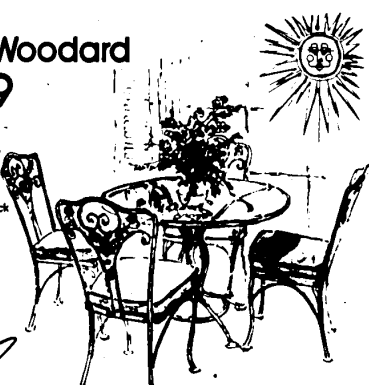
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Wagons Ho: Pioneer spirit abounds

by CORINNE ABATT

A pretty, slim, Farmington Hills grand-
mother, Mrs. Gwen Gringer, recently
rode with the bicentennial wagon train for
five days as it lumbered across the south-
ern end of the state.Bill again from her experiences, the
energetic lady, a regular trail rider, says,
"I feel the wagon train project is one of
the most significant and interesting of all
the bicentennial projects."The minute she heard of the event, she
knew it was one of those things she had to
do. Two granddaughters from Novi, Leah
and Erica Brown, agreed to ride with her.
Since only two horses can be transported
at a time, the granddaughters took turns—
one went the first half of the week and the
other, the second half.Mrs. Gringer, horse trailer hooked to
her camper, met the Great Lakes wagon
train contingent at Three Rivers. At that
point the group numbered about eight
wagons and 80 riders.Later when Mrs. Gringer drove to visit
with wagon train friends in Petersburg,
she grew to 41 wagons and more than 100
riders.Mrs. GRINGER rode five days and
the train went eight to 10 miles a day. She
recalls the day the Great Lakes group and
the national train met near Union."We waited all day in the rain for national
train. We were up on a hill and when national
came, all these wagons in a long line, we
all stood and cheered. Never in my life-
time will I have another experience like
that."This is what she wanted for her grand-
daughters and since Leah is 11 and Erica,
13, the only thing to do was to accompany
them.She discovered that the same plan that
trail riders use was followed by the wagon

GWEN GRINGER

train riders drove their campers and
equipment and supplies to the destination
point before the day's ride began and were
shuttled back to the departure area.
Usually the host communities provided
for camping in school yards, sometimes
had a fire going and a buffet or picnic sup-
per ready."We would pull the wagons into a great
big circle and have an evening program
with the local community."School candidates
speak, June 3 and 10The five candidates for seats on the
Farmington School Board will speak at
candidates' nights, June 3 and 10.The Farmington Democratic Club's candi-
dates' night will be at 8:30 p.m. June 3
in the Farmington Community Center, Farm-
ington Road north of Ten Mile.School board candidates William Corbin,
Lawrence Lichtman, H. Bud Pickett,
Helen Prudner and Dr. Mervyn Ross have
been invited to attend.Walk for Farmington
begins 9 a.m., June 5Protected by wood stocks and fortified by
snacks and water given to them along the
15-mile route, about 1,000 residents will
walk for Farmington June 5.The hike, sponsored by the Farmington
Area Jaycees, will begin at the Board of
Education Building parking lot on Shaw-
naw at 9 a.m. Registration begins at 8
a.m.The walk will end at the board of educa-
tion office with awards and ice cream
treats from Farrell's.Walkers are advised to wear heavy wool
socks and sturdy, comfortable shoes. Par-
ents should make sure that their children
carry identification. A child won't be al-
lowed to walk if a parent or guardian
hasn't signed approval on the walk's sponsor
sheet.The sponsor sheet is available at
schools, the Farmington Library, chamber
at commerce office, YMCA office and the
FAAC (Ragline) office.Walkers are supported by pledges from
friends and neighbors for each mile com-
pleted.Farmington
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Henry M. Hagan, Jr. Philip H. PowerHOME DELIVERY SERVICE:
Newsstand 4¢ per copy, 25¢
Carrier monthly, \$1.00Some of the wagons were sponsored by
businesses or community groups, but with
the exception of the official state wagon,
the rest were on their own.While she knew some of the horse people
who were nicknamed saddlebags on the
train, she knew the thrill for Mrs. Gringer
was meeting riders from all parts of the
country."Many of them planned to ride for a few
days, but I'd it so well that they made
arrangements to ride longer."She speaks of meeting two local riders,
Judy Franklin and Carolyn Moore, both on
the Oakland Community College faculty."Judy has her own Arabian stallion and
I know she'll be going back to ride for
several more weekends."The talk of the courage of the man to
the wheelchair pulled by a pony. He joined
the wagon train in California and plans to
complete the final mile to Valley Forge.Mrs. Gringer, who says she has been
riding "as long as I can remember," was
particularly pleased with the perform-
ances of her horses."Others had registered or show horses.
We just had our pleasure horses and they
did remarkably well."Trucks of hay were brought in for the
horses each evening and grain was avail-
able for those who didn't bring their own."I WAS just fascinated by the whole
thing, that's why I went."She will join the Michigan Trail Riders
on the hiking and riding trail across the
northern part of the lower peninsula thisweek. After that she may see her friends
on the wagon train again.While her husband Robert is completely
sympathetic to her trail riding, she says
he's rather to be seated in front of the the-
ater organ in their country home on Hal-
stead Road than in a saddle.Although the 178 wagon train is going in
the opposite direction of the originals and
the cars, motorcycles and tandem trucks
tip by, a couple of things are still the
same.Mrs. Gringer and other riders seemed
it. Those who join up have the same pas-
sion spirit and love of adventure that
started their forebears rolling West.SAVE during our
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SALE

SATURDAY, June 5, 1976, at 10 a.m. precisely
SUNDAY, June 6, 1976, at 1 p.m. precisely
MONDAY, June 7, 1976, at 10 a.m. precisely
TUESDAY, June 8, 1976, at 10 a.m. precisely
WEDNESDAY, June 9, 1976, at 10 a.m. precisely

EXHIBITION

THURSDAY, June 3, 1976, 2 p.m. to 8 p.m.
FRIDAY, June 4, 1976, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.There will be an admission charge of \$2.00 per person for the exhibition
or purchase of catalogue admits two persons.
Admission to auction by catalogue only (each catalogue admits two persons).
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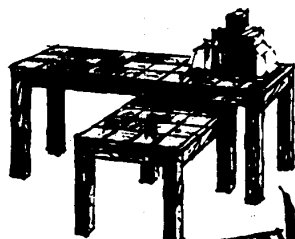
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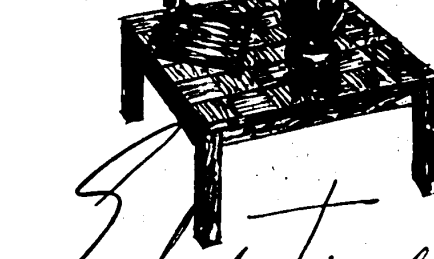
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