

Diary of James S. McClung, 1862 (Excerpts)

research
 Merrill matter/collec
 See Platte River Road Narrative
 Entry 1850

June 30Our travels is 18 miles today.

July Tuesday the first. We traveled several miles passed the bridge on the Platte whare the Old California road on the southside of the river used to cross over. Her was a stage station and a post office. From here we soon struck some sand bluffs, the worst I beleav on the whole rout but those are easily shuned by crossing the river on this bridge and going up on the south side some 7 miles and crossing back again on a another bridge whare the south road crosses. Now in this there is a good road and just as near after traveling some 4 miles, we again struck the bottom and took dinner Two hours after traveling a short distance we met a train of Mormon wagons. . . .

July the second. . . . Passed what is called the Poison Spring early in the morning a half mile from whare we struck the California Stage Line and lef Platte River takeing a drink and biding her fair well. From whare we struck Platte the 23 of May to here it is 548 miles. The river whare we first struck it was one mile wide Tonight we camped on a stage station near Mud Creek. Our travels today is 21 miles.

July Thursday the 3. Raised early and drove to whare we found grass. . . . Her we lay the foundation of an old stage station that was taken by the Indians, the horses was stolen and severl whites killed. At one oclock we again movded on, crossed a beautiful spring creek and camped. Traveling 15 miles today.

July the 4. . . . we traveled 7 miles and camped on Sweetwater close to indipendance rock.

Saturday the 5. . . . After traveling 8 miles in Sweetwater . . . we crossed over by runing the wagons across by hand on a old rotton pole bridge and swum our cattle at 20 cts tole a wagon. We passed the devil's gate. . . . From here we traveled one mile and camped . . . close to a stage station near a beautiful spring. . . . Our travels is 9 miles.

July Sunday the 6. Roads sandy This afternoon we passed a place whare a man named Young killed a person by the name of George Scott. . . . When we came up the grave had been opened by Pitman's train. The scene was a awful one. We dug the grave in a respectable manner and drove severl miles and camped on Sweetwater. . . . Our travels is something near 25 miles today.

July the 7. Drove on 4 miles to whare we found tolerable grass. . . . (They capture Young and conduct a trial) and we then traveled on expecting to deliver him into the hands of the soldiers. So towards night we camped near a company of 6 Ohio calvery. . . .

Tuesday the 8th. . . . (Young is executed and buried along the banks of the Sweetwater.) From here we traveled 12 miles & camped on Sweetwater and swum the cattle a cross the river. . . .

July the 9. A short distance from where we was camped we left the river. Passing through and round large sloughs of alkali water About the middle of the After noon which was warm I come to one of the prettyest Springs

FT Cooper - 14 June - 131 - 2 Sep - 64 days
 Ft Cooper - So. Pass - 131 - 13 31 - 13 days

Lander Road - South Alternate

I ever saw where the water raised out of the Surphes & soon lost its Self a gain in the Sand Among the Sage brush. . . . From here we traveled over some pretty Sandy bluffs to Sage Creek where we camped & drove the Cattle some 4 miles from Camp to grass! Over travels is 22 miles today.

July, Thursday the 10th. . . . Crossed the creek. On top of the hill we passed a grave. The inscription on the head reads as follows, "two persons named Megraw who was Brothernlaws was killed by the indians on the 28th of June, 1862. . . . About 2 O'clock we camped near Antelope Springs by the South Pass post office. . . . our travels is 7 miles.

July the 11th. . . . In traveling 6 miles we crossed Strawberry Creek. Here was a nice Spring and a good camping ground. We crossed over and traveled severl miles without seeing any more grass until we reached Willow Creek. . . . we drove one mile further & camped on Sweetwater by the side of a Snow bank a 11 feet deep. . . . Traveled 25 miles. . . .

July Sunday the 13. . . . in 6 miles we left the California road & took the Landers Cutoff. Here we left the stage and telegraph lines. . . . In leaving the main road we soon learned that the Landers Cutoff was new and had never been traveled a great deal. 2 miles from here we Stoped in a Slough close to where it entered the Sweetwater. . . . Then leaving the river for 12 miles the roads were rolling and sandy. . . . we are now at the summit of the Rocky Mountains, where the waters run towards the pacifick ocen. In traveling 20 miles today we camped on good grass close to Sweetwater.

July 15th. . . . we traveled 6 miles & camped a bout Middle of the fore noon

July Wenesday the 16. Traveling 3 miles we passed the head of Sweet water & 6 miles from here we crossed little Sandy having passed over the mountains For 9 miles from this stream we passed over high rocky peaks. . . . At this time crossed big Sandy which is like all other mountain Streams cool nuff to freeze aman to deth. . . . We camped on the banks of the Creek Our travels today is 18 miles.

July the 17. . . . After traveling Some 9 miles we came to a large Slough it was a nice camping place and tolerable grass. We stoped . . . then traveling on to East reenriver. Passing over dry creeks we found no Suituable place Camp until we reached there which took us till nine O'clock after night. . . . Our travels today is 25. . . .

(Two days are spent at a difficult ford.)

July Sunday 20. . . . In sixe miles we came to the west fork of the Green River. . . . we moved up the river some 2 miles. . . .

July Tues 22. . . . In leaving the river we crossed severl Alkalie sloughs The road graduly turning to the left we drove a bout a quarter of a mile from the river near the bluffs and took diner. . . . Traveled 2.6 miles today.

July 23. . . . passed the grave of Matan Moarn that was killed here by the Indian the 18th of this month. The dead was from Miss. bound for Salmon river mines here. I wish to state that we are now in Washington Territory. We crossed the line at

the head of Sweetwater on Wednesday the 16th. After traveling several miles this morning we passed (a) company of wagons. . . . We are now on the Bear River and constantly passing over streams that concentrate together and makes a considerable river on the old California road which is called in crossing. Some of the streams today were deep and tolerable swift. . . . We traveled 13 miles today and camped on a beautiful creek. . . .

Friday 25th. (The company's cattle stampede twice). . . . So we then moved forward this unfortunate camp crossing deep creeks which is all bank full. . . . We traveled 10 and camped on bear river mountains.

July 26. The road passing over the bear river mountains through come as pretty fine lumber as ever lay out of dorres. . . . After traveling 13 miles we camped at the foot of the mountain on one fork of the bear river. . . .

[Some?] July the 28. . . . We crossed 15 creeks from 1 to 2 feet deep that is deep up by the Snow. . . . After traveling [Save] Seven miles we passed a grave by the side of the road. . . . From here we traveled one mile & camped in the mountains. . . . Retired for the night having traveled 8 miles.

Thursday the 29. . . . Last night the boys over took us with 4 head of cattle which found some 10 miles from camp. . . . We traveled several miles and camped. . . . Traveling some 10 miles today, roads bad. . . .

Thus. 30. . . . We traveled some 10 miles. . . .

July Saturday 31. . . . We crossed a spring some 2 miles from where we started. . . . In 8 miles from here we came to Salt creek. . . . After traveling 12 miles we camped on a creek in the edge of the timber

Friday August the first, we again took up our line of march. & in passing over those mountains I gazed for a moment. . . . After traveling some 15 miles we camped on a beautiful mountain creek.

August the 2. . . . Early this morning we passed the grave of Captain Q.W. Geane, died July the 18 in 1859, Age 50 years and 2 months, at the foot of the bear river mountains. . . . a fine level road before us. . . . Our travels was 8 miles today.

August Monday the 4. We again traveled on After traveling one or two miles we passed round a lake of water covered several hundred acres of ground. Passed the grave of Alvin Gerrington. During the day we passed several nice streams, & traveling 25 miles we camped.

August the 5. . . . In the afternoon we struck the Old Oregon road. . . . & traveled 3 miles further & camped on a small creek. . . . Our travels is 25 miles today.

August Wednesday the 6 About 10 o'clock we passed opposite fort hall which is some 6 miles from the road to our right. The Fort is vacanated At 5 o'clock we camped on a small creek, having traveled 18 miles. Here is some Frenchman that had Squass for wives, had a traveling post. . . . Here was a road turned to the right which they told us led to Salmon river mines. . . .

August thursday the 7. Traveled to Portneff river. Here was some more mormons that had a ferry. They had taken the government bridge a way and built a dam, some 75 yards below the ferry, with it; & dammed the water up & charged one dollar & a half a wagon to ferry us across. . . we afterwards found the dam 50 yards above the ferry; it was a good foarding. We remained here till morning, having traveled 12 miles today.

August the 8, roads still dusty and level. After traveling 7 miles from Portneff we Struck a large bottom. Here we stoped . . . near a small lake. . . . 2 miles from here we crossed a clear creek that was 2 rods wide & 2 feet deep. We traveled 10 miles from here and camped having traveled 19 miles today.

August Saturday the 9. After traveling 6 miles this morning we struck the Snake river. . . . After traveling one mile down the river we came to the American falls. . . . Some 2 miles from here we stopped to take dinner and graze on the banks of a little brook when 2 men come running up on horse back, said their train, which was some 3 miles ahead, was attacked by an overwhelming number of Indians and their our assistance needed immediately. We moved forward. . . . (They find the Smart and Adams trains have been attacked, but arrive too late to assist.) . . . we took care of the distressed people and from the unfortunate camp we started. But before traveling far we found two wagons that had been upset and partly robbed. . . . we traveled half a mile farther and over took another train (that had been attacked). . . . Here we camped for the night to bury the dead.

August- Sunday the 11th. (Captain Kennedy leads a party in pursuit of the stolen stock and encounters a party of "several hundred Indians on horse back.")

August the 11th- We all hucked up and rolled out. Their was something over 200 wagons, Kenneday's train in the lead. Traveled 2 miles and crossed Fall Creek, traveled up a canyon near a half mile and struck high rolling ground and the roads were dusty. To wards night we camped on Raft River . . . having traveled 13 miles today. . . .

Tuesday the 12th- (They bury a member of the train who has died from wounds received in the attack "near Raft River.") At this place the road forked, the left hand road leading to California. . . . We traveled 20 miles from Raft River with out water to a small creek and camped. . . .

Tuesday the 4th After having traveled 7 miles down the creek was camped on, we crossed it near the Snake River. We traveled 17 miles today. . . .

August the 15th- We soon crossed goos Creek. . . . For 3 miles from here the road run near Snake River where the road was very rough. We traveled 20 miles today and camped on a small creek. . . .

August Saturday the 16th- . . . roads pretty good. In seven miles we found tollerable grass but no water. . . . traveled 3 miles farther. . . .

August Monday the 18th- We again traveled on leaving Antelope Creek. We found the roads rough. We traveled 12 miles be four we came to water and

grass. Seven miles from here we camped on Cannon Creek . . . plenty of water but unhandy as it is to pack up a very steep bluff. Our travels is 19 miles today.

Tuesday the 19th Aug.- . . . To day we traveled close to the river. . . . We Traveled Some 21 miles & camped on Snake river bout dark. . . .

August the 20. . . . This morning we rolled on. . . stoped to take diner on a Small creek. . . . we traveled 5 miles and camped on Snake river oposite Salmon falls, having traveled 15 miles. . . .

August Thursday 21. . . . Bout 10 O,clock we traveled on and found Some tremendius Sand bluffs. We traveled 18 miles with out water or grass and camped . . . on a high bluff 3 quarters of a mile from the river. . . .

August Monday the 24. . . . Traveled Seven miles & took diner and grazed We traveled eight miles from here and camped having traveled 15 miles today. . . .

Tuesday 25. We left camp at Sunrise following up a cannon 3 quarters of a mile to whare we Struck high rolling ground and traveled ten miles & camped. . . .

August Wednesday the 26. Started a bout Sunrise & traveled 5 miles near the river and the road very rocky. . . . From here we traveled 7 miles to whare we camped on the river. . . . having traveled 12 miles. . . .

August 28. We came to Kyser Creek. . . . Here we lay by from Friday noon till Wednesday the 3 of September. . . .

So wednesday the third of September we mooved on . . . & traveled 12 miles over Sandy ridges and on level road. . . . An hour by Sun we camped on Snake river. . . .

Septemeber Thursday the 4. Some of the boys swam over the iseland & drove back the cattle & we again moved on. For 6 miles we traveled near the river We left the river here and traveled 6 miles and camped on Rock Creek two hours by Sun having traveled 12 miles. . . .

Friday the 5th. . . . traveled Some 8 miles & came to a Small creek where one day there has been a volcano. . . . Here we drive a steep Bluff a quarter miles long where we had to double teams. We traveled 8 miles & camped Our travels today is 16 miles.

September Saturday the 6th. We raised early and drove 6 miles & came to Snake river This is very trying on our teams but we drove 7 miles further & came to a Small creek. Here . . . we camped having traveled 13 miles.

Sunday the 7. . . . In one mile we passed a beautiful Spring near the road. After traveling 9 miles, we left the River & Saw it no more for 4 miles at which time we came to it again and camped 2 hours by Sun. . . . Our travels today is 14 miles. . . .

Monday the 8th. . . . We . . . rolled over the barren Sand ridges . . . leaving the river in places for Several miles. After traveling some 12 miles we camped on the river two hours by Sun. . . .

September Tuesday the 9th. We traveled till 11 o, clock at which time we came to a low place near the river which had been over flowed. . . . As we left the river the other trains came in sight. After traveling 6 miles we passed bend of Snake river. We traveled some 2 miles to whare we left the river for some time & traveled to the Oyke (Owyhee) river & camped . . . having traveled 18 mile.