

DIARY OF  
H..D. BARTON  
1865

Kept by H. D. Barton in crossing the plains in 1865  
from Wright Co., Iowa to California.



Kept by H. D. Barton

Apr 30 65

Started for Cal in the afternoon and went 10 ms fine day

May 1st monday

Started again in the morning horses run away and broke buggy rainy all day

Tue May 2 nd

Prepared wagons and started agan camped at rather cold and rainy fore noon

Wed 3d May

Nothing remarkable drove about 24 ms

Th 4th May

Crossed the Des moines, got lost sloughed down broke strecher whipple tree, etc. camped on the coon

Friday May 5th

Got along fine with a little rain and no hay for our horses at night.

Sat May 6th

Fine weather got along fine came across a good many emigrants for Oregon. camped on middle coon

Sun May 7th fine weather rather windy and dusty and no hay at night

Mon May 8th Traveled about 22 miles and camped cloudy all day

Tu May 9th

Traveled about 24 miles and stopped at Council bluffs

Wed May 10th

Stayed in the same place all day buying things and making pereparations to cross the plaines

Th May 11th Crossed the Missouri and camped just after out side of Omaha

Fri May 12th

Left Omaha and came in sight of the platte for the first time traveled about



24 miles and camped on the Elk Horn

Sat 13th May Struck tents about 7 oclock saw the first sod houses and had a little snow in the fore noon and a cold rain in the after noon traveled about 17 miles and camped near the platte at the albion house where we got plenty of hay for our horses for 20 cents a head.

Sun May 14th

The morning cold and cloudy and foggy the first Indians made their appearance after noon rather warm but still cloudy traveled about 13 miles and camped on shell creek found knife etc

Mon May 15th

Had quite a hard shower about day light and changeable all day traveled about 19 miles and camped near the mouth of Loup fork past large train

Fri May 16th

Hard Thunder shower during the night and the morning broke clear and it was changeable all day ferried loup fork in the fore noon about 19 miles and camped beside silver creek

Wed M 17

Morning cloudy and a little rain and quite windy fell in with a train of 5 wagons for California saw the first antelope traveled about 20 miles and camped at warm slough

Th M 18

Fine morning traveled along the platte past lone tree traveled about 33 miles camped beside the platte

Fri M 19

Nothing remarkable except a wind saw mill jack rabbit etc. traveled about 25 ms and camped on wood river.

Sat M 20

Left wood river and crossed the prairie to the platte opposite Ft Kearney

Sun M 21



Remained in camp all day nothing remarkable except a large train left for the West

Mon M 22

We had duple guards the night before fine morning we took a hunt chased a buffaloe had a fine time saw the first cactus like wise the prairie dogs. was joined by some more emmigrants

Tu M 23 Was joined by a large train moved four miles further up the river to organize and get better grass

Wed 24

Remained in the same place I wrote letter for the first time had a verry hard thunder shower with hail and wind that blew over wagons and tents we organized into a train Elected Mr Shaw Captain.

Th 25

Struck tents and moved up the river about 20 miles and was ordered to halt by government authority.

Fri M 26

Moved about 5 miles to get better grass and corral

Sat M 27 Stayed in the same place all day nothing remarkable hapened

Sun M 28

Moved about 5 miles to get more grass James Shot an Antelope

Mon M 29 Started between 7 and 8 oclock traveled about 15 miles and camped near the platte

Fri M 30

Moved again to near the sand bluff and camped

Wed M 31

Started and was overtaken by part of the escorr which ordered a halt till the rest came up with us just crossed the sand hills and camped

Th June 1st Moved a short ways to get more grass and wated for the escort camped at Skunk Creek very windy. all day.



Fri J 2 Remained in the same place nothing remarkable except Indians reported seen Sales lost a horse still and very hot all day

Sat J 3

Moved a short ways for grass heavy wind before day break preparations for a very hard thunder storm which did not come hot and still in after noon

Sun J 4

Traveled about 5 miles and camped at Pawnee Springs fine waither

Mon J 5

Remained in the same place till one oclock to bury a child that died this morning then started and traveled about six miles and was stoped by the orders of the comander at Ft Cottonwood hot weather rather windy and sultry

Tu J 6. Had quite a hard thunder shower in the after part of the night sent back some men to see about the escort but returned with out any word from them the train then started and went up the river about 18 miles crossing same bad creek broke my watch crystal at deep mnd creek camped below and on the opposite sid of the river from Ofallens Bluffs

Wed J 7

Considerable of rain fell during the night but we started in the rain which continued to rain steady all day with out intermission till five oclock. P. M. we traveled about 12 miles first we crossed a wide creek which run into our wagon boxes we then ascended some high sand bluffs we reached and passed over the summit at just five minutes before ten oclock we then decended to a low swampy bottom in places the ground would shake under our horses feet camped beside the platt good grass

Th J 8

Still raining got a wagon tung broke during the night by a horse getting tangled in its lariat and falling on it we remained in the same place on account of the rain which continued till about 3 oclock

Fri J 9



Sat Je 17 Started 7 oclock roads verry sandy weather cold and verry windy traveled about 23 miles and camped in sight of Ft Laramie came to the first wild Sage

Sun Je 18

Struck tents at 7 oclock and moved up to Ft Laramie and stoped till 1 oclock we then started up the north side of the river and got about six miles and was stoped by the soldiers to wait for the other trains. Shaw was appointed Captain over the trains till we got through the black hills

Mon 19 Moved a short ways to get across

Tu. Je 20 Started about 9 oclock had some verry rough road through the black hills traveled about 13 miles and camped by the platte no grass fine weather

Wed Je 21 Started at break of day to find grass traveled about 14 miles and came to a fine spring with good grass and we stoped the rest of the day fine weather Campbell supersedes Chane

Th Je 22 Started at 7 oclock fine weather road verry rough traveled about 17 miles and camped beside the platte a woman died

Fri Je 23 Burried the woman and started had good road fore noon after noon rough and verry hard hill to descend traveled about 15 miles and by the platte poor grass some trouble about keeping the train together.

Sat Je 24 Started about 4 oclock traveled about 4 miles and stoped to feed started again traveled about 12 miles further and stoped by the platte

Sun June 25 Moved up the river about 5 miles to good grass opposite a military post and layed over the rest of the day.

Mon June 26 Started at 7 oclock had some hilly and sandy road passed bozemans cut off to the Idaho gold mines traveled about 15 miles camped by the platte hot weather

Tue June 27 Started about 7 oclock passed the lower platte bridge about noon saw some nice stone coal beds traveled about 15 miles and came to the upper bridge hot weather

Wed June 28 We had quite a hard hail storm in the morning and a steady rain till



about 2 ocloc we then started and moved up the river about 7 miles and camped at the red bute

Th June 29 Struck tents at half past six we here left the platte and traveled through the bluff and went about 18 miles without water the weather was verry hot several teams gave out we camped at a place known as alkali swamps having made about 21 miles

Fri June 30th Started at about 7 oclock traveled about 10 miles and struck the sweet water some Indian sign along the road we came to the sweet water bridge where some soldier were stationed one mile this side we came to Independence Rock this is a huge rock about six rod wide and ten rod long it is rounding over the top the highest point is to the north west we next came to the Devils Gap this is where the sweet water rushes through a narrow gap in the rocks about four hundred feet high we camped a short way above this place having made about 20 miles train broke up here

Sat July the 1st.

Started about 8 oclock traveled along the sweet water road rather sandy grass good weather hot  
traveled 20 miles

Sun July 2 Started about 7 oclock traveled up the sweet water high rocky bluffs on either side came to a military post a little after noon had some verry sandy road.

Came in sight of snowy range weather hot traveled about 18 miles

Mon July 3- Fine morning a good many antelope along the road. I took a gun and started out to try and kill one but the gun would not go off. I tried to get it off by pricking powder into the tube till I got considerable distance behind the trains when I struck the road I felt that the train to which I belonged had took another road I struck across to find it I struck the road a little after noon ahead of the train I did not know the train had turned back so I went ahead to try and find the river but the road did not strike it the



sun was about an hour high when I left the road and struck north to find the other road about dark I came to the river which I tried to cross in doing so I got wet to my shoulders I could not find the other road so I layed out by strawberry creek all night with out a coat the weather rather cold some wind and rain storms the train I learned traveled about 25 miles.

Tu July 4 I rose from among the sage brush a little before sunrise continued north soon found the road and found also that I was ahead of the train so I struck east traveled about 12 miles and came to a military post I stoped there got some breakfast and waited till the trains came up most of the trains went on to south pass but ours stoped at the post the rest of the day some wind and rain storms.

Wed July 5 Started about 7 oclock weather good except some wind and rain storms these are a cloud that is formed in the mountains and comes along close to the ground this looks verry dark while approaching but passes over very fast with considerable wind and a few large drops of rain we traveled about 18 miles and camped by a creek near south pass station.

Th July 6 Struck tents about 7 oclock and mowd to the station here we found the rest of our train that had gone ahead they had been prospecting the new gold mines near there they thought they payed poorly so we moved along crossed the simit of the rocky mountain and camped at pacific springs here by looking north we could see Freemont Peak some more of those wind storms passed Bozemans cutoff

Fri July 7 Morning cold started about 8 oclock had a verry hard rain storm with with [sic] a hard wind traveled about 27 miles and camped on little sandy

Sat July 8 Morning cold and cloudy started about 7 oclock had a little cold rain traveled about 25 miles and came to big sandy here we camped for the night.

Sun July 9 Here I was taken sick and could not note the particulars no more than we ferried Green river and camped a short distance. below good weather.

Mon Jyly 10



Morning clear and warm moved along to hams fork about 18 miles and camped here the Oregon road turns off

Tue July 11 Fine morning this morning the Oregon teams that we had been traveling with left us we remained in camp all day to was &c

Wed July 12 Started again traveled up mud creek passed some high clay bluff that were perfectly bare had some trouble about finding grass traveled till after dark traveled about 30 miles and camped by a spring.

Th July 13 Here I was too sick to tell what was going on worth note any more than we struck the telegraph road and camped near a Station

Fri July 14

Cold morning and rainy by times all day road had crossed the bear mountains traveled about 18 miles and camped on bear river

Sat July 15 Fine Morning started about 8 oclock 16 moved a short ways and layed over layed over 16th also.

Mon July 17 Traveled down echo Canyon and came to Weber river and camped came to settlement no grass

Tue July 18 Started at day light traveled to feed stoped for dinner traveled to an opening in the mountains and camped.

Wed July 19 Traveled to a place in the mountains known as silver Canyon and camped

Th July 20 Started and traveled into Salt Lake City 12 miles and layed over the rest of the day

Fri July 21 Left the city early in the morning traveled all day and camped in sight of the city hot weather stoped by a hot <sup>water</sup> spring.

Sat July 22

Fine morning traveled along near utah lake crossed the Jordan river traveled 15 miles without water and camped at camp Floyd poor grass 5 miles over

Sun July 23 Hot morning got a late start on account of haveing to go so far after our horses among the mountains where we had driven them the night before



traveled about 20 miles and camped by a creek good feed for horses had a morman take supper with us I stood gaurd.

Mon July 24 Fine morning started in good season traveled 21 miles had verry little water considerable of wind in the afternoon and a little rain camped at government springs

Tue July 25 Layed by all day to recruit our stock

Wed July 26 Moved about 12 miles and camped at a spring in the mountains by the side of a desert 45 miles across fine shade tree

Th July 27 Layed by and cut grass and made preparations to start across the desert at 3 oclock in the afternoon calculating to cross in the night so we shoved out and traveled all night the road was good the desart is composed of clay and salt when it rains the salt rises to the surface and crystalizes thus in the day when the sun shines it creates an intense heat.

Fri July 28 We were moving when morning came at 9 oclock we came to fish spring the water here was so salt that we started again at 4 oclock to cross another desert 25 miles across we reached willow springs at one oclock in the night

Sat July 29 Hot morning we layed by all day got three horses in the evening I wrote four letters other emmigrants came up this after noon 30

Sun July 30 Started early traveled 25 miles got into the state of Nevada camped at deep end of our horses stoped behind in the mountains hot day

Mon July 31 Layed by all day to recruit teams good morning Indians around beging

Tu August 1st Traveled 8 miles and layed by the rest of the day and cut grass to and prepare to cross a desert and mountain

Started at 10 oclock traveled 25 miles and came to antelope springs hot weather road dusty no grass except what we brought along the previous night was so cold that ice was formed over 1/4 inch thick



spring 4 mile east of here the water is quite bad

13 Traveled about 20 miles weather hot no water along the road I was quite sick awhile from the effects of the water we camped at dry creek good water and grass took a passenger for Austin.

14 Here we left the stage road and took a cut off had some hard hills to descend rough road all day water plenty weather hot traveled about 18 miles and camped at a spring just west of Simpsons Park poor grass

15 Started quite early traveled 5 miles came to the town of Austin this is a place where some silver mines have been discovered and some mills have been built there is about a dozen mills here was the first Chinees I ever saw James stoped here to get work after buying a few things we Started and traveled about 12 miles farther and camped on Rees river got grass of some ranchers

Wed Aug 16th This morning we sold the old black horse for five dollar weather rather cloudy and some rain Traveled up the river about 18 miles this river heads in the mountains and sinks in a desert camped at five oclock good grass

17 This morning we left the river struck through the mountains fine weather came to a little town called Ione where there were some silver mines one quartz mill we camped here poor grass

18 Had some trouble to find horses started about 8 oclock traveled about 17 miles cloudy weather got wagon cover tore passed through a little town called Ellsworth also a mining town we camped at a spring by the side of a desert at dark we pulled up and started into the desert and traveled till one oclock and stoped the desert is 22 miles wide

19 Started at day light got into hot Spring valley about 8 oclock had quite a hard thunder shower just after we stoped good grass water where we camped quite bad one south of here is verry hot said to be 160 degrees hot

20 Started to cross the desert crossed a desert of salt and sand perfectly bare came to a well about 3 oclock stoped there about an hour and moved on about 5 miles here some of our horses gave out we stoped here till after 11



the father of the forests which has fallen down is estimated to have been 450 feet high the mother of the forest is 327 feet high 78 feet in cir. the bark is peeled off 116 feet one tree is cut down that has a ball room on the stump which is 32 feet across we reached a little town called murfees camp after night trouble in a kanyon

6 here we got some nice fruit we had to ferry the Stanslaus river reached Columbia just before dark

Mon Sept. 18 Worked half day used 12 inches water did not clean up the riffle

Tu Employed 12 inches of water all day cleaned the riffle got about \$13

Wed 12 inches of water cleaned the riffle got about \$5

Th 12 inches water got about \$3

Fri 12 inches water got about \$1

Sat 12 inches of water fore noon