

Oregon Historical Society

"William Cornell's Description of the Route to Oregon" (Excerpts, 1852)

(matter for PR refs)

See Platte River Narrative

Entry # 1142

OHS Mss. 290

Wednesday June the 30 Day pleasant reached Platte river
traveled 13 miles road quite rough . . .

Thursday July 1st 1852 . . . traveled two miles to a new
Ferry in opposition the one 22 miles above charges reduced
to 3 dollars per wagon . . . all got over safe and traveled
about two miles up the North side of the North Platte. . .

Friday July the 2nd . . . traveled about 13 miles

Friday July the 3rd . . . today we traveled about 17 miles

Sunday July the 4th . . . as grass was scarce we traveled 16
miles for better range

Monday July the 5 . . . we passed the Willow springs traveled
about 16 miles

Tuesday July the 6th laid up today to let our cattle rest . . .
we laid up on a spring run four miles from the willow spring
left side of the road $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from here the rugged peaks of
the Rocky mountains are seen in various directions

Wednesday July the 7 . . . to day we passed the Alkalie Lakes
or ponds . . . we are now within a few rods of Independence
Rock put up for the night . . . Sweet water river is a beautiful
stream abut $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet deep and 60 feet wide About 6 miles above
Independence Rock it passes through a chasm 10 or 12 feet wide
for a $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile . . .

Thursday July the 8 . . . We traveled to day about 17 miles

Friday 9th . . . from top of a high hill we were able to see
a range of the mountains all covered with snow Large rocky
piles are heaped up on our right during our days travel probably
500 feet high traveled about 16 miles

Saturday July the 10. . . traveled the forenoon 8 miles and
laid for rest of the day . . .

Sunday July the 11/ . . . (Attends a sermon at a neighboring train.)

Monday July the 12/ As it was but 5 miles to where we had to
leave the river and travel 18 miles without water so we traveled
but the 5 and laid up the rest of the day . . .

(2)

Tuesday July the 13th/ To day we traveled the 18 miles to the river . . .

Wednesday July the 14/ . . . traveled about 13 miles . . .

Thursday 15/ . . . Found the rockiest traveling yet seen Traveled about 16 miles camped near a Blacksmith Shop on Snow creek snow is yet found on the banks of this creek . . .

Friday the 16/ Laid up today . . .

Saturday the 17/ . . . we pass abreast of Fremonts Peak to day Camped within a mile of the two flat mouns in the South Pass . . .

Sunday . . . Today I drank the water from a spring that runs into the Pacific Ocean No doubt the melted snow on the mountains sinks down and comes out and forms these spring called the Pacific Springs. Today we traveled about 19 miles camped on the west side of the Dry Sandy

Monday the 19 . . . We traveled today from Dry Sandy to Big Sandy 22 miles The road level and fine all except the crossing of the Little Sandy . . . camped on the bank of Big Sandy . . . small village of about 150 Snake Indians live here . . .

Tuesday July the 20th . . . In the evening we camped on Big Sandy in nine miles of Green rver after traveling 18 miles A fine Ferry here and plenty of Indians sontering around this Ferry Also some trading done here . . .

Wednesday 21 Traveled 13 miles camped near the river 4 miles above the Ferry crossed Green river safely today and found tolerable grass . . .

Thursday July the 22 laid up to day . . .

Friday July the 23 . . . passed up by the ferry on Green River McFinney Cutoff traveled 12 miles and laid up in the afternoon 5 miles above the ferry on the river . . .

Saturday the 24 . . . left Green river and traveled towards some snow topped Mountains Camped at 4 miles after crossing a branch or creek that runs towards Green river . . . Traveled about 16 miles to day

Sunday July the 25 We again found ourselves under the necessity of taking up our line of march having stoped last night where there was no water Traveled 14 miles over a very rough and difficult road Camped to the right of a Quaking aspen grove over a Bluff good grass and cold spring water . . .

Monday July 26th . . . Traveled about 6 miles to day over a high Mountain Camped at noon on Hams Fork of Green river . . .

Tuesday 27th Laid up to day . . .

Wednesday 28th . . . traveled 8 miles . . . We camped at the Quaking aspen spring

Thursday July the 29 . . . To day ascended and decended two of the ruggedest and most difficult mountains that we have passed . . . Camped on a little creek near Bear river after traveling 13 miles . . . dusty roads

Friday July the 30 . . . To day we reached Bear river . . . it rises between Green river and Salt Lake flows north where the road comes to it . . . the vally is walled in by very high mountains The road keeps down it about 80 miles . . . We traveled about 16 miles . . .

Saturday July the 31 . . . Traveled over a difficult high mountain to day and came to camp on Bear river At this time eleven hundred miles from St. Jo. Mo. We traveled today in circuitous route about 21 miles

Sunday August the 1st 1852 . . . Traveled about 12 miles and camped for the day . . .

Monday the 2nd . . . , traveled 17 miles Camped near the Bluffs on Bear river vally 1 mile after crossing Mud Creek . . . a good spring above the road or crossing

Tuesday August the 3 . . . We passed the Soda Springs today Among them the Steam Boat spring miles 14

Wednesday Aug the 4th To day we took the Oregon road leaving the California road to the right Passed 6 or 700 Indians going towards Bear river . . . Traveled about 16 miles to day

Thursday Aug the 5 . . . traveled about 15 miles crossed and camped and the West side of Trout creek . . .

Friday Aug the 6 . . . Ascended a mountain again On stopping at noon found plenty of berries . . . near the first spring that runs to Snake river and Columbia . . . passed a very rough Mountain . . . came to camp on a creek that leads to Snake river . . . Traveled about 16 miles today over quite a rough road

Saturday Aug the 7 . . . To day we reached the vally of the Snake or Lewis river . . . We traveled about 18 miles to day over a tolerable level road but considerable heavy some and came to camp on the second creek in this vally

Sunday Aug the 8 . . . Our company thought best to move a little to day and passed Fort Hall . . . we have traveled about 9 miles and come to camp on the bank of Ponacles creek a considerable stream . . .

Monday Aug the 9 To day we forded Ponacles creek and river upon the latter we had to raise our wagon beds a few inches a ferry just the below the ford charge 1 dollar per wagon . . . Traveled 12 miles

Tuesday Aug the 10 . . . We took down the vally in order to save traveling back to the road but after . . . nearly 3 miles found ourselves headed by deep sloughs and to return loosing 5 miles travel so that our travel to day amounted to about 10 miles headway proper Camped at the foot of the Bluff where the road comes to the vally the second time after crossing Poacles river . . .

Wednesday Aug the 11 . . . We passed the American falls today We traveled to day about 18 miles and came to camp about 1½ miles below the Rock Creek . . .

Thursday Aug the 12 . . . traveled about 12 miles come to camp on Raft river with a number of trains around us

Friday the 13th We laid up to day on Raft Creek . . .

Saturday 14 . . . we traveled over a very rocky road to day we traveled 16 miles to day . . . we come to camp near the head of a large grassy marsh on a muddy creek 15 miles from Raft creek

Sunday Aug the 15 . . . We traveled 17 miles and came to camp on Goose Creeke . . .

Monday Aug the 16 . . . We traveled over a barren country and part of the road very rocky traveled 13 miles come to camp on the river

Tuesday Aug the 17th . . . found some grass at 2½ miles . . . Traveled 5 miles over a rough road to Cut Creek and went up it 5 miles to camp . . .

Wednesday 18 moved 5 miles further up the creek to lay up to recruit our cattle . . .

Thursday Aug the 19 . . . traveled about 12 miles in a circuitous route and came to camp on Rock creek near the mountain . . .

Friday the 20th . . . We traveled about 15 miles to day and came to camp soon after crossing Rock creek . . .

Saturday 21 . . . Traveled about 16 miles over a somewhat rough and very dusty road and came to camp on the bank of the river 17 miles below the crossing of rock creek The river here is walled in by rocky and almost perpendicular banks near 1000 feet high . . .

Sunday 22 . . . We traveled about 9½ miles a circuitous rout and came to camp again on the bank of the river at dark and drove our cattle down a precipitous bank to water and grass . . .

Monday Aug the 23 . . . We traveled 16 miles over a dusty rough and crooked road and came to camp on Snake river near the mouth of . . .

Tuesday the 24th To day after traveling 5 miles near Salmons falls we came to a ferry and crossed with the expectation of getting better grass . . . We came to camp one miles after crossing (?) a large spring the water that comes from it is a small river

Wednesday Aug 25 This morning we traveled 6 miles to Silver Creek . . . we came to camp on Silver Creek calculating to travel in the evening after grazing and resting our cattle . . .

Thursday Aug the 26 Last night we traveled about 9 miles by moon light crossed Roaring river and came to camp four miles after crossing After a long warm drive of 13 miles through dust we came to a small creek of warm water We went down this creek about 5 miles and came to camp having come about 18 miles . . .

Friday Aug the 27 To day we laid up done chores . . .

Saturday Aug the 28 . . . we traveled over a very hilly road about 16 miles and came to camp on a creek near some high Bluffs . . .

Sunday Aug the 29 . . . we traveled about 15 miles and came to camp on Grave creek here we found nine graves of recent internment

Monday the 30 . . . traveled 6 miles by sunset having the intention of going eight miles further to camp at a spring . . .

Tuesday Aug the 31 We traveled last night about 8 miles and came to camp at a spring near a lone Mountain Two miles above thsi some hot spring water boiling or scalding hot . . . We traveled about 16 miles and came to camp on Indian creek . . .

Wednesday Sept the 1st . . . (No mention of travel)

Thursday Sept the 2nd . . . We traveled over the Grassy hills to day about 14 miles we left the road about 1½ miles to the right of a dry creek to a spring near some quaken aspen . . .

Friday Sept the 3 . . . traveled 15 miles and came to camp on Boisse river . . .

Saturday Sept the 4 . . . (Cornell stays behind the group to attend a sick man.)

Sunday Sept the 2 . . . We traveled on a good road and came to camp on the river again at 16 miles

Monday Sept the 6 . . . We traveled about 14 miles and camped near the river

Tuesday the 7th Today we crossed Boisse . . . traveled 16 miles and came to camp 6 miles below the crossing . . .

Wednesday Sept the 8 to day we traveled about 16 miles crossed Snake river paid 3 dollars per wagon ferriage . . . camped on the bank of the river . . .

Thursday the 9 . . . we traveled 18 miles over a very dusty road and camped on the Malhuer river . . .