

ISAAC PETTIJOHN

Diary

1847

Transcribed

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Missourie River
Caples Landing

Aprile the 30th [1847]

Arrived at this point this day 12 mi above St Joseph where we are crossing and intend strikeing west for Oregon. I have been four weeks on the road. have been favored with pleasant weather which made it pleasant traveling through the State of Mo which is almost a desert through the center of the State. The grass is rather short oweing to the dry Season but the emigrants are beginning to cross and we wish to be amongst the foremost

Amongst the emigrants are people from all parts of the world and of all grades but all about the same colour it being a kind of dirt color, but full of life and glee not in the least daunted at the long and wearisome journey which is just before them.

Isaac Pettijohn

[page 2]

May the first

May comes in cloudy and windy We have crossed the Missouri river this day all excepting part of our stock. our company now consists of twelve waggons from Schuyler and fulton Countys [IL] those from Fulton are Mr Morgan and Woodside

May the second

finished crossing our stock this day and drove about fifteen miles and came up with another company of about thirty waggons mostly from Missouri with whom we expect to travel to oregon. we are encamped for the knight at a small stream called Musquetoe but it is too cold for the vermin to sing.

May the third

the weather has been fine today the roads are dry and we raise a little dust with our fifty waggons includeing two buggys the country is beautiful to look upon lofty peaks or hills our road is a ridge with some steep ups and downs

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The grass is about six inches in length but rather thin. We crossed wolf river to day about ten Oclock and the Indian agency about two

we saw some indians today were a great curiosity to some of our company we are encamped 10 miles from the agency for the knight and formed a carell for the first time in doing which Mr Morgan unfortunately broke an axletree out of his wagon but I guess he will be rigged anew by morning

May the fourth

we left our encampment this morning about nine oclock with the stars and stripes waveing on the front traveled about 12 or 13 miles through the large prairie are encamped for the knight on

a branch of the Nemahaw, a death occurred in our company today a girl died suddenly in one of the hindmost waggons she was 10 or 12 years of age she belonged to a company that I don't like the looks of

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May the fifth

we completed our organization last night a young man whose name is Nathaniel Bowen who returned from Oregon last season was elected captain Pilot and camp master Richard Miller was elected guard master those are all the officers we have our road is a continual ridge it is very dry dusty and windy our faces were black and our eyes clogged with dirt when we stopped after traveling about 20 miles we turned to the right and struck timber

May the 6th

encamped on the Nemahaw it is cool windy and cloudy met some traders this evening from Ft Laramie

May the 7th

twelve miles travel through the cold and wind

May the 8th

it is pleasant weather to day upwards of 100 waggons in sight belonging to different companies traveled about 15 miles encamped on the waters of

[page 5]

blue river the land in this section is rich and beautiful timber scarce. May the eighth made about 12 miles to day crossed blue river a branch of the Kansas the roads are the finest in the world. some antelopes seen to day

May the ninth

traveled 20 miles or upwards this day came into the independence road. a company of 16 waggons were ahead of us which we overtook before night

May the 10th

traveled 20 miles to day through the dust turned to the left and encamped for the night found some Buffalo sign here some of the boys are out hunting for them

May the 11th

reached a stream called big sandy a branch of Kansas River. after traveling about 12 miles and pitched our tents one of our company Mr Woodside had a horse stolen from him last night. the land through this section is dry and rolling timber very scarce

[May 12

no entry]

May the 13th

arrived at a stream called the republican fork of blue river a distance of 14 miles from big sandy

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the republican fork is a beautiful stream near the size of crooked creek in ill. grass is yet short on account of the drouth the beds of the small streams are covered with dry sand

May the 14th

traveled up the republican fork about 15 ms. and broke down a waggon wheel on the way belonging to Mr Burch which gave the company in the rear a chance to pass us by morning we will be ready to start again

May the 15th

it was rather rainy this morning, but appeared to break off and we started on our journey but the rain commenced harder than ever the men all had a good ducking when we arrived at this place a distance of about six ms from our camp when we stopped for the knight, it still continues to rain this is the first rain worth nameing we have had since we left home I think it will be apt to settle the dust for a few days at least

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May the 16th

traveled about 15 ms to day encamped on a north branch of the republican fork the last camping before we reach Platt Rive[r] One of the guard fired his pistol last knight at something which he took for a pawnee slipping up to steal a horse we have seen no indians of or[for] almost two weeks. Mr Morgan capcised his waggon to day wife and children all in it. fortunately but little damage was done

May the 17th

traveled 18½ measured ms and about four unmeasured to day at last have reached Platt River at grand island its about 100 yds wide on this side of the island about 18 inches dep white with mud. the country level excepting a variety of high mounds in the prairie. this morning after we left our camp 2 or 3 ms Mr Morgan went back to look for a cow and found he supposes 100 wolves in our camp they set up a howl and made at him whereupon he put spurs to this horse and

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they after him two of them chased him near a[]mile when he rallied and shot one cut off his ear and left the diggins

May the 18th

rolled up the river about 16 ms encamped near the stream still opposite the island

May the 19th

traveled about 16 ms the weather cool and cloudy we[]are in what is called the stormy region but have escaped so far verry well

May the 20^{eth}

had a tremendous storm of rain and hail last knight One of the guard shot at an indian last knight he was crawling up to steal a horse pulling grass as he came so that the guard would take him for a calf he left in so great a hurry that he left his macosins. this morning about eight yoke of our oxen were missing the indians had drove them off we left about twelve men to hunt them and drove six ms and camped we will have to be more watchful of our

cattle or we will be left in the lurch

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May the 21

we got our cattle late last night traveled about 12 ms crossed plum creek encamped near the forks of the river Platt Ri[v]er is about one and a half ms in width 18 inches deep a strong muddy current. the banks are from 2 to 4 feet high the bottoms from 2 to five ms in width on both sides of the river the bluffs are perfect hills of dry fine sand cut into deep gullies in evry direction

May the 22

we traveled about 22 ms to day up the south fork. the south fork is near a mile wide has much the appearance of the main channel. to day for the first we saw buffaloes not by the dozen but by the thousand if not tens of thousands the buoys had a great frolick after them they outrun all our horses we got two or three amongst hands. The women complain of their vegetable fuel or buffalo chips they make a great smoke but wont cook. they are rather damp oweing to the late rains

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May 23 rd

rolled about 14 ms encamped at a stream called ash creek we can burn ash chips to knight

May the 24

we had a tremendous storm of rain and wind last night to day it has been verry cold and disagreeable. we traveled about 18 ms and encamped had no wood but buffaloe chips and them wet but few liveing buffaloes are seen here but lots of dead ones many of them are supposed to have starved to death last winter. This vally might with great propriety be called bone vally when I look around I can see the bones of the buffaloe shineing in evry direction.

we have passed the Pawnee country near 50 ms verry few of us got sight of one we are now in the Sioux country we traveled about 18 ms to day

May the 25 th

pleasant weather passed the lower crossing about noon traveled about 12 miles bad colds prevail

May the 26

rolled 20 ms up the river our cattle want no salt now days a kind of salt is pleanty on the ground

[page 11]

May the 27

we crossed the south fork to day at the upper crossing traveled about 15 ms

May the 28

this morning about half of our cattle were missing some of them were 20 ms down the river

when overtaken we got them about four o'clock in the evening and started across the ridge for the north fork 16 ms we got to the bluffs about 12 o'clock they were steep it was dark and rained some we stopped on the hill until

[May 29]

morning when we came on to this place called ash hollow May the 29

May the 30th

our company divided into three divisions yesterday. the division caused some hard feelings we fell in company with the bowens and burches in all 19 waggon and 2 buggies we traveled about 7 ms and camped. This morning we traveled on came to a large Sioux village this afternoon the celebrated chief Bull tail and seven of his sons are staying all night with us 20 ms to day through the sand

May the 31

hard drawing to day through the wet spongy lands traveled 20 ms to day

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June the first 1847

we passed a strange looking place this morning called solitary tower and passed chimney rock this evening traveled about 22 ms roads sometimes sandy sometimes wet

June the 2nd

arrived at Scotts bluffs this evening after traveling 22 ms the road leaves the river here for about 25 ms the country here wears a strange aspect every thing looks unnatural a trapper by the name of Scott was murdered here some 20 years ago. we found a company encamped here at the spring in the hills grass and water scarce so we concluded to go on to horse creek 12 ms where we arrived about 12 o'clock

June 3

rolled on this morning to the river again encamped near a spring which affords enough water to turn a mill

June 4

traveled about 15 ms to day encamped within 3 ms of Fort Larema a trader has stationed himself here for our accommodation. 100 Mormon wagons crossed the river here yesterday and have gone on ahead of us 2000 more are said to be on the way that's the way they come it

[page 13]

June the 5

crossed Laremas fork this morning and passed fort Larema and took across the ridges. do[to] day for the first time in my life I saw the clouds passing between me and the tops of the mountains we are in neighborhood of the black hills. the country is hilly and sandy grass rather poor still continues rain it is said that it never was known to rain here so late in the season encamped for the night at a fine spring 12 ms west of Fort Larema

[June] the 6

encamped on a stream called bitter cotton wood came up with the mormon train and talked with a son of Mr Vance from Mc donough Co Ills unlike us they had stopped to spend the sabbath. We can see the white snow on the top of Laremas peak traveled about 12 ms to day

[June 7

no entry]

June 8

traveled about 35 ms yesterday and today crossed a stream called big timber today encamped to knight at marble creek three companys here in speaking distance. This place is called the red butes it is very broken and hilly

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the clay is of a deep red colour

Our company split again this evening the Bowen crowd and ourselves have joined another company under the command of Capt Ipoer[?]

met a company of treappers and traders this evening

[June 9

no entry]

June 10

30 ms from marble creek crossed Mike head creek yesterday crossed deer creek and struck the north fork of platt Riv to day we are amongst the buffaloe deer and antelopes again some mountain eers with us killed three black bears to day.

seven or eight of our teams took a fright this evening at some loose horses and ran with all vengeance they made quite a lumbering two waggons were turnd bottom upwards the women and children badly scared but fortunately little damage was done

June the 11

we stopped to day on the river 112 ms from Ft Larema and about 10 ms below the regular crossing and commenced crossing over in a boat or

[page 15]

rather a waggon body made in the form of a boat. Snow is pleanty about here on the hills some was brought into camp for us to taste for a rarity

[June 12]

we got all across the river on on[sic] the twelfth

[June 13]

and started on our journey again on the 13th

June 14

we are encamped to night at the willow springs fine water and grass game is plenty
tomorrow we expect to strike sweet water and leave these sandy hills

June 15

we struck sweet water this evening at independence rock the river was on the rise we
passed the rock and crossed over and had not an opportunity of writing our names on the rock.
hundreds if not thousands of names were written upon it. it stands in the valley near the bank of
the river [it] is about 100 feet high and covers about 25 acres of land snow on the
mountains or hills near by

June 16

20 ms up sweet water this evening it is a small stream about 30 yds wide we passed a place
called Develgate this morning where the river runs through a ledge of rocks 200 feet high almost
forming a bridge

[page 16]

[June 17

no entry

June 18

no entry]

June 19

we still are wending our way up Sweet water to day we have a fine view of a spur of rocky
mountains called wind river mountains but little can be seen but a tremendous pile of snow
they are sometimes hid from our view by the clouds buffaloes and antelopes in abundance

June 20 eth

we traveled about 20 ms to day over the rocky hills truly may this be called the great
american desert wild sage is the principal thing that can grow here and it is fit for nothing but
to burn and little worth for that. grass is tolerable good in spots. To day we found piles of snow
by the road side

we had quite a frolick this evening six buffaloes came running close by our camp some started
at them on horses and some on foot we succeeded in killing five of them got what meat we
wanted but left the greater part for the wolves. they are about the last buffaloes we expect to see

One of our men that has been back helping Mr woodsides while they were sick came up with us
this evening he brings melancholy news two of the family are dead a young man and woman
calomel

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is thought to have been the principal cause of their death

June 21

in Oregon to night at the pacific springs the waters flow into the colerado of the west I cant
see much change in the country if it don't improve I shant fancy it much I am thinking. we left
sweet water to day at noon

June the 22

here we are to day strange as it is at the springs all concluded to lay to one day being the first since we crossed the Missouri River. plenty of grass water and sage and in sight of the snow capt Mountains they look sublime the country is nothing poor and sandy roads fine the pass is much like the roads over which we have traveled. it is not a narrow defile as generally supposed through the Mountain. Millers co passed us to day

[June 23
no entry]

June the 24 th

we staid at little sandy last night being about 25 ms from the springs came about 12 ms to day and are at big sandy it is a muddy stream about 2½ feet deep and forty yards wide current strong. The next strean[sic] is green river some of the company are complaining of being unwell

[page 18]
[June 25
no entry]

June 26
no entry

June 27
no entry]

June 28

to day we are on the west side of green river we got across without trouble excepting with our cattle they refused to take [to the] water we tried every thing we could think of but with poor success, but we finally succeeded in driveing them all across this morning. Green river is over 100 yds wide about six feet deep the current is very rapid another company are crossing below us on a[]raft they row across and tow up their raft with Oxen it is hard labor but the only chance

[June 29
no entry]

June the 30 eth

we left green River yesterday morning traveled about 24 miles and struck a stream called blacks fork and camped to day we have traveled up it 18 ms crossing it twice it is deep fording Captain Spoer became offended yesterday and left the croud all of his company staying with us. The weather is warm and dry and our waggon tires are getting loose we see rain almost evry day but it is on the snowy mountains the knights are cool sometimes frosty don't look much like harvest weather

[July 1

no entry

July 2
no entry

July 3
no entry]

[page 19]
July the 4 th

to day we are on a stream called big muddy but we have followed up it until it is quite small. we got to Bridgers fort on the first where we sold one of our wagons for fifty cents in cash and bought another for fifteen dollars put our lumber into it and rolled on.

there is two routs along here the one by bridger fort is farthest but the best camps. two companys of men have passed east on the other rout going to the States we missed an opportunity of sending letters we met three men from Oregon to day

they report a hard winter and deep snow in Oregon last winter. grain rather scarce. Captain Spoer after takeing a shirt[?] joined our company again we hope to make a decent man of him by the time we reach Oregon we had a fine rain the third which is verry uncommon in this region

July the fifth
on Bear River to knight at a tremendous spring. the roads have been rough to day we locked [wheels] for about a mile and a half at one stretch

[page 20]
today we met Benjamin Burch from Oregon he has come out to meet his father who is close behind

[July 6
no entry]

July the 7 th
the road took an excursion through the hills to day we encountered some frightful places the waggons got along safe but the cart tongue broke down we fetched it on to camp

we met a company of men from Oregon to day amongst them was Mr Littlejohn his wife and two children he has been in Oregon eight years as a Missionary he is returning to the states I sent back a letter by him we are on Bear River again to knight

[July 8
no entry]

July the ninth
we are encamped to knight on the waters of the columbia on a stream called portneth we left

Bear River to day it is a valley from Bear river to this place althau it is a mountainous region Yesterday we passed the famous Soda Springs the first one is near the road side close the bank of a small creek and about forty yards from bear river the water

[page 21]

comes blubbering up out of the earth is cool and has the taste of soda or some thing else= I cant tell what. many such springs are close but the water is warm about two miles below we came to the steam Boat springs it is on the bank of Bear river close to the waters edge it Bursts up through a rock frothing and foaming occasionally flies several feet high the water is about blood warm and has a strong smell of sulpher. the valley below the springs is rough and rocky. the rock[s] are porous but very hard takeing it all together it is a strange looking place.

Grass is good here. good land in the valley some pine and ceder on the hills

Our cattle and horses are all sick to knight I suppose the water which they drank at noon sickened them

[July 10

no entry

July 11

no entry

July 12

no entry]

July the 13th

we passed fort hall yesterday in the evening being 17 days a head of any emigrants that ever passed this place. Ft hall is a tradeing post belonging to the Hudsons Bay Co it is built of unburnt Brick it

[page 22]

contains some comefortable dwellings they keep flour to sell to emigrants at \$20 per hundred in cash but if the emigrants wish to sell flour they will give eight dollars per hundred in skins. we struck Snake river a short distance above the fort

we crossed Portneth this morning it is 75 yards wide and deep fording we have had some trouble to day with the slues we wheeld about once and took the back track for about a mile. the company were compeld to wheel about and take our track. we have warm weather and hungry swarms of musketoos. the knights are rather cool for them or we could hardly live amongst them.

currants are pleanty along here they are of an excellent quality red and black

July the 14th

we met a company of returning soldiers to day from California about 75 in number General Carney and captain Fremont were of the number they were anxious to buy provisions but we were afraid to sell

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they report peace in California were anxious to obtain newspapers which were verry scarce

we are encamped to knight 2 ms below the american falls on Lewis or Snake river the river is over 100 yards wide at the falls. it is not properly a fall but a pitch down of about 30 feet amongst the rocks it makes quite a roaring and tumbling. this is a desert place, the grass is verry poor

[July 15

no entry

July 16

no entry]

July 17

we crossed cassia creek yesterday where the California trail turns off one company took it it being where the new rout to Oregon leaves the old Burches and Davidsons took it but we chose to travel the old track we had rocks in abundance to drive over in the afternoon it appeard like our waggons would mash to pieces but they stood it bravely we staid last knight at the big marsh crossed goose creek to day where we saw some rich land to knight we are on the river again. the grass is bare[?]

[page 24]

[July 18

no entry]

July the 19th

we have been traveling down rocky creek to day rocky by name and rocky by nature. it runs through a deep chasm in the rock which we crossed to day it is over 100 feet deep the rocks perpendicular in most places as much as 5 or 6 rods wide in some places with a little strip of grass near the water but it is not so bad as it might be after all for it affords lots of the finest currents that ever I saw on which we feast in this lonely desert. I suppose that about this time our friends in Illinois are eating Blackberry pies and takeing care of their wheat how different their case and ours what a curiosity a field of wheat or corn would be in this barren desert where but little grows excepting wild sage and a shrub called grease wood which is good for nothing on earth, the sage answers for fuel

[July 20

no entry]

July 21

on sammon falls creek to day. 6 ms from the sammon falls where we expect to be to knight there we expect to get pleanty of sammon

[page 25]

at this time I am in sight of some singular springs they pour out of a clift near 100 feet high the water some resembles gleass or ice and snow on a steep hill side I would think that they all

afford as much water as runs in cedar creek when it is in a good stage for grinding

the weather is hot— and dusty roads

[July 22
no entry

July 23
no entry

July 24
no entry]

July the 25 th

we arrived at the upper crossing on the 23rd we had a fatiguing trip from the salmon falls to the ford it was two days travel bad roads and no grass we encamped on the hills one knight and packed water from the river it was over a mile and up the worst hill that you ever saw the people and cattle both suffer for water on this part of the road

when we arrived at the river we found it too deep for fording and had it to ferry which we did in our wagon beds. two other companies were crossing at the same time it looked somewhat like a steam boat landing the river was about 300 yards wide

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where we crossed the current strong but in some places it don't look to be over fifty but the way it pitches and roars is a sight

we are 4 ms from the river to knight we have fine water wood and grass

[July 26
no entry]

July 27

we are encamped for the knight on a spring branch that breaks out of the mountains we have water quite convenient the stream running under one corner of our tent. we are about 39 ms from the crossing of Snake river. we begin to feel like we were near our journey's end only about 500 ms to go yet

we passed some hot Springs to day which were quite a curiosity. the water was clear not quite boiling but plenty hot for scalding hogs. a person could soon take a sweat by placing themselves over the spring. they would be a great convenience for a steam Doctor

[July 28
no entry

July 29
no entry]

July the 30th

we struck a small rive yesterday evening after a travel

[page 27]

of about 25 ms Boyce river is about 100 yards wide and two feet deep the water is perfectly trans parent. we traveled down it to day about 12 ms. this evening we went into the water to bathe when I discovered a fine lot of eels and commenced catching them in my hands but found them too slippery for my grip we then got forked sticks and jabbed on them and held them on the bottom while another took a knife and cut them in two in this way we caught several which were about 2 2/c [2½ ?] fe[e]t in length. we thought we were ***ing a farer[?] business when an old fisherman Spoiled our fun by telling us that they were a filthy reptile called Lamper[lamphry] eels. at this we quit the business and put for the camp

[July 31

no entry]

August the first

crossed Boyce river to day and to knight are within a few milles of Ft Boyce. we met two brave fellows to day on their way for the States. the weather is cool. we had a light shower of rain this evening

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there is some timber along here the water and grass is fine. the indians here are called diggers they are of the Snake tribe a poor ragged looking gang we have obtained from them a few sammon which is the only thing they have for trade- we got no sammon until we struck this river we were two soon for them at the falls

[Aug 2

no entry]

Aug the 3 rd

we have finished crossing snake river the second time today at Boice or Bobzer[?] it is a trading post of the Hudsons Bay Co it is in charge of an english man who appears to be quite a gentleman. the Indiens here are called shoshones or diggers they were of great service to us in crossing our stock and were glad to take any kind of clothing for pay Two or three men and women who are natives of the Sandwich Islands are here they are better looking than the Indien about the same complection but their hair is somewhat curly

[Aug 4

no entry]

Aug 5

no entry]

[page 29]

August the 6 th

to knight we are on a mountain stream called burnt river the road winds along the stream at the foot of the mountains. we reached Malheur on the fourth yesterday we traveled about 20

ms and Stopt on a spring branch this morning we struck this stream and have traveled up it about 8 ms crossing the stream twice we expect to cross it a number of times before leaveing it

[Aug 7
no entry]

Aug the eighth

we are to knigh[t] on a branch of burnt Rive[r] we left the main branch to day. the road has been rather bad for two days past. it ran first in the river then took a winding course through the hills then back again to the river The country has taken a change for the better there is some grass on the Mountains and plenty in the small valleys. some timber grows in patches along the stream such as bitter cotton wood alder willow and such like

[page 30]

The mountains are high but we have seen no snow for several days

[Aug 9
no entry]

Aug 10
no entry]

August the 11th

we reached Powder river yesterday we found the aecoater[water?] about knee deep and wide according[ly]. this is the first place that I have seen since we left the borders of Mo that looks like a white man could live. Powder river valley where we crossed it is six or eight miles in width and verry fertile in places affording an abundance of fine grass the mountains near by are lined with groves of pine timber. patches of snow are seen near the tops of the mountains we are now in the blue Mts

[Aug 12
no entry]

Aug the 13th

we are to knight on the bank of a stream called grand round. we crossed some lofty hills to day left grand round this morning grand round is a beautiful valley large enough for two county of common size verry fertile a mill stream running through it the surrounding mountains [page 31]

are coverd with lofty Pines and Firs we found here some Indians of the kiause tribe. they are well dressed for indians and have a fine herd of horses. they also tell us[?] that they have cattle at Dr Whitmans. In the morning we have to climb the principal ridge of the blue Mountains

[Aug 14
no entry]

Aug the 15th

we are still in the Mountains but across the principal hills the water here runs to the west. we have come through some heavy groves of timber. sometimes we have to stop and cut it out of the road we being the first company we often peel the tall straight timber with our waggon wheels. the soil on these Mts is generally good

[Aug 16
no entry]

Aug the 17 th

we are now in the valley of the great columbia on a stream called ummiatila which we struck yesterday we are in and amongst the Cayos villages they are the first Indians that ever I have seen in all my rambles who had vegetables for sale. they have corn peas wheat and potatoes which

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they will swap for clothing. shirts are the most current. some of them speak english quite well

the face of the country here or[is] quite undulating smooth prairie the soil good but the grass is eaten up by the horses of which the Indians have thousands they also have some cattle all fat as Flaunders

The atmosphere is rather smoky which obstructs the delightful view we otherwise would have of Mt Hood which is about 150 ms distant

[Aug 18
no entry]

Hail Columbia Aug the 19

this evening we are on the banks of the great Columbia it is a beautiful stream it appears to be about the width of the Ohio but the current is more deep and strong current

August the 20 eth

we have hot weather and sand[sand?] sand sand and tired oxen grass is verry scarce. Mr Dhircery[?] came up with us last knight with the Oregon mail. there is plenty of Indians here of the Walla walla tribe

[page 33]

they are anxious for trade the common solutation is heap of sammon swap shirt sammon. they get quite a number of swaps for we are all bored of fish they also swap horses for cattle a cow is worth a good pony. I got a horse to day two years old for a blanket

[Aug 21
no entry]

Aug 22
no entry]

Aug the 23 rd

Sand and hot weather this region is entirely destitute of timber excepting here and there a willow large enough for a walking stick. We find a little drift wood which answers for fuel

[Aug 24
no entry

Aug 25
no entry

Aug 26
no entry]

Aug the 27th
we are this evening at the Dalls so called of the Columbia we crossed John Days river on the 24 a rapid little stream

On the 26 th we crossed Dechutes or fatle[?] river we ferried it on canoes with the help of the Indians and paid the ferriage in shirts

there is a fall near the mouth of the river of about 25 feet

a fracas occurd at this place near the mission this week between a company

[page 34]

of packers and the Indians in which a man by the name of Shepherd and an Indian chief were killed.

here we take leave of the rolling roaring foaming dashing splashing rumbling tumbling smooth gentle Columbia

[Aug 28
no entry

Aug 29
no entry

Aug 30
no entry]

Last day of August

we arrived this day at Mr Barlows station here Mr Bs road commences running across the cascade Mts. to oregon city Mr B is from Fulton Co Ills and was the first man who ever crossed those hills with a team he has bestowed considerable labor on the road and has a charter which runs out this season we have him to pay \$5 per waggon and 10 cts a head for stock

we now have a fine view of Mt hood some 50 or 60 ms distant it reaches almost to the

heavens is of a whitish color resembles a hay stack in shape but large

Sept the first

we took thee Mts this morning and have had it to day rough and tumble over rocks logs

[page 35]

stumps and against trees up hill and down through a dense forest of lofty pines fir and ceder crossing several rapid steams we drove about 16 ms to day one waggon haveing capcised on the way a smal branch of a tree took hold of my waggon cover and ripd it from stem to stern so we take it

[Sept 2

no entry

Sept 3

no entry

Sept 4

no entry

Sept 5

no entry]

Sept the 6 th

at last we have reached the edge of the settlement about 16 ms from Oregon city. we have had it rough and tumble the last few days over stumps stones rocks logs roots and evry thing immagineable. the Mts are coverd with timber which is from one to eight feet in diameter some of which is more than 200 feet high and so thick that you could scarcely ride through it, to day I saw 3 or 4 large trees standing on an old log. The streams stand mostly on end or nearly so some clear some muddy and are generally filled with round rocks from the size of a flour barrel to that of a piece of chalk. we saw several waggons on the road which had been

[page 36]

left by emegrants last season but the snow had plaid smack with their wheels tongues axletrees in fact every thing but the hubs were broke to pieces snow is not so light a substance as you might think. We passed within a few miles of Mt hood but got to see it but once by reason of the timber. I saw the clouds bursting against its many sides a mile below the summit.

we have met quite a number of persons at different times from the city and settlement some come to hear the news some to meet their friends and others to see and be seen

[end]

ISAAC PETTIJOHN

Diary [of Eastbound trip]

1848

Transcribed

July 2000

by
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May the first 1848

Homewards bound on the west side of the Willimatt R from Oregon City about 120 ms on tomorrow we start on our Journey being about 35 in number besides three small children it being 12 months from the day I crossed the Missouri Riv[er] and started for Oregon

[May 2
no entry]

May the 3rd
in Umqua valley to knight at Scotts farm

we crossed the Calapooah Mt to day where we found mud Stumps hills and rocks we also had quite a storm of snow whil in the Mts The little valley here is very fertile and well supplied with water and timber

[page 2]
[May 4
no entry]

May the 5th
staid in camp yesterday on account of rain have traveld near 16 ms to day The valleys are small and rich the Clover knee high in many places. The hills are coverd with black oak and fir the Soil good

[May 6
no entry]

May 7th
we are encamped for the knight on the south fork of the Umqua Riv crossed the north fork yesterday in a canoe with the help of the Indians for which we gave them some shirts the forks are each near 100 yds in width and interrupted with numerous falls The country along here is broken but rich and well coverd with excellent grass Deer are plenty. Also plums and grape vines being the first that I have seen in Oregon

[page 3]
[May 8
no entry]

May the 9th
Yesterday we were engaged the greater part of the day in building a raft on which we crossed the south fork of the Umqua. when all were across we packed up and started but after going half a mile we found to our great disappointment that the road crossed back again to the same side here we forded and found ourselves safe landed on the same side from which we started and

near the same place through a noted place called the Canon it is a mountain pass where two streams head together it is walled in on either side by the Umpqua mountain it is a narrow pass and is almost choked up with perpendicular rocks and large timber. the distance is about 12 ms

[page 4]

I undertook to count the crossings of the first stream but stopped at about half way my number being fifty others found the whole number to be 95. the last stream we crossed but seldom.

I have frequently passed over mts but this is the first that I have went through and I find it easier to go over two than through one— We are to [] knight on the waters of Rogue River Our course from Oregon City is south—

[May 10
no entry]

May 11th

We are this evening on the banks of Rogues R it is a rapid stream 100 yards in width two deep to ford and too swift to raft consequently we are engaged in making a canoe. I find this Rogue River valley to be all mountains or nearly so there

[page 5]

is a few good spots but I think it would be wrong to take it from the Indians We are about 30 ms from the Canon

[May 12
no entry]

May 13th

encamped for the knight in a valley on Rogues Riv which appears to be from 12 to 15 ms in length and half as wide the Soil is good and timber plenty.

The Scenery is sublime a [] lofty snowy peak is in full view Called Rouges River Mountain I believe we are near 300 ms south from Oregon City

The road here enclines more to the east

[May 14
no entry]

May 15th

we reached Klamet River to day and succeeded in fording it. I think this part of Oregon of but little worth haveing nothing to recommend it save timber

[page 6]

It is inhabited by wild tribes of Indians who we seldom see but of whom we are verry watchful as they hear [have] a bad name

May 16th

on the borders of Clamet lake it is said to be 300[!] ms in circuit spreading out in arms in evry direction. it is surrounded on all sides by bald knobs which gives it a dreary appearance To day we emerged from the timber and met our old acquaintances Greasewood Sage and Worm wood. we also encounter alternately dust and mud

May 17th

we left the lake to day and have traveld about 25 ms and are encamped for the knight on the banks of the far famed Sacramento it is rather a cultur[?] looking stream about 60 yards in [page 7] width running through a sandy plain which produces little else than sage

we have had quite a shower of rain to day

[May 18
no entry

May 19
no entry]

May 20^{eth}

we are encamped for the knight on a stream called Canon creek the head and tail of which I know nothing of but know it to be an ugly little stream as our animals have mired down in it frequently during the day when not in mud we are on rock over which it is difficult tracing the waggon tracks

Last night we had quite a fine snow about three inches deep. it was quite interesting to me as I was on guard The weather is cool and disagreeable and the roads verry bad and the country fit for nothing

[page 8]

May 21

after a ride of 12 ms this morning we reached Goose lake it is near 60 ms in length and 10 or 12 in width There is quite an extensive valley here of good land and timber on the mts in abundance

We are at the foot of the Sirre Nevada or snowy range which we ascend tomorrow

May 22nd

summit valley from the lake 10 ms a nice little valley near the top of the mountain about 5 ms in length and 5 in width

[May 23
no entry

May 24
no entry]

May 25th

Salt valley from the summit 60 ms

we crossed the Summit on the 23rd and entered the great basin of California the waters all sink in the sand we have found some hot springs since entering the basin some of which were frightful looking holes of

[page 9]

boiling water which a person at first feels timid in approaching

the roads are rough and stony we frequently find lakes the beds of which are mostly dry next we find a canon or narrow defile through the Mts with perpendicular rocks on either side hundreds of feet high take it by and large it is [t]he last[?] place that I have seen in my travels

Black rock

May 26th

Cold winds and dust the sore mouth begins to come the dust is something like ashes and covered with a poisonous substance resembling Saleratus or salt hot springs in abundance all the water we use to drink is hot as water can be made or nearly so

[page 10]

[May 27

no entry]

May 28

Ogdens or Marys River from Black rock 60 ms almost without grass or water

Marys river is 25 yards in width and [blot] deep and muddy we travel up it 200 ms

[May 29

no entry

May 30

no entry

May 31

no entry

June 1

no entry

June 2

no entry

June 3

no entry

June 4
no entry

June 5
no entry]

June 6
this day we arrived at the upper crossing of Ogdens River and effected a crossing on a raft made of Small willows which we drew back and forth with ropes

The valley of this river is from 10 to 20 ms in width the greater part of which is barren a narrow Strip of grass is found near the Stream. The only timber is small willow Sometimes it rains and sometimes it snows. the surrounding mountains are like the Dutchmans cow Sometimes white and sometimes black. When we left our encampment on the 3rd inst [page 11]

one of our company remained behind when about 4 miles from camp [blot] heavy[?] and Shepherd [blot- went?] back to look for h[er? blot]ut found him not we halted at 15 ms and 5 of us returned to take a general hunt myself in the number, we took his trail from the camp and followed it until next morning he had taken the back track at the end of 40 ms we found our horses tired and ourselves hungry as we had no provisions with us so after a short consultation we concluded to abandon him to his fate which doubtless will be death by the savages he is a man aged almost 40 yrs Said that he was a native of Louisiana. The presumption is that he is either partially deranged or a great [word missing]

[June 7
no entry

June 8
no entry

June 9
no entry]

[page 12]

June 10th

we left the head waters [of] Marys River on the seventh passed hot spring valley on the eighth and Struck this stream on the ninth which is goose creek and expect to sleep on Cajaux creek to knight

our rate of travel is about 30 ms per day

Our company now consists of twelve men and the children as follows first mess McKinny Job Poe Hill and myself second Jones Johnson Mr Morgan Shewy[?] Shepherd Shin and M^elarin

[June 11

no entry]

June 12

at noon and again at the forks of the road we hail the old road as a long absent friend I passed this place on the 16 th of July last

[page 13]

[June 13

no entry

June 14

no entry]

June 15th

20 ms east of Ft hall at which place we arrived on the 13.th

we delayd one day at the fort to look round and Swap horses as they keep a great number there for that purpose

[June 16

no entry

June 17

no entry]

Sunday [June] 18th

on Bear river we drank of the soda fountain on the 16th and spent a few hours in viewing the curiosities one of the greatest of which was the poisenuous gass pipe at the mouth of which lay heaps of insects and birds

[June 19

no entry

June 20

no entry

June 21

no entry]

June 22nd

at green River we crossed yesterday with the assistance of the mormon brethren . they are here for the

[page 14]

purpose of ferrying the emigrants

they give a good account of the Salt Lake country where they are Setled. They have 2000 acres

of wheat Sown which looks fine three saw mills in operation and one flouring Mill and two others under way

It is 12 O'clock and we are about to ente[r] the dry stretch which is 40 mls without grass or water

[June 23
no entry]

Pacific Springs June 24 th

arrived here this day it being a year and a day from the time I left here we met one waggon and 5 or 6 men yesterday from the States they report a great emigration this season. we expect to meet them tomorrow

[page 15]

Here we bid farewell to Oregon and her lofty peaks her valleys green and deserts wide and dusty I[sic] your boiling Springs and cooling rills your Snow capt Mountains Your Grassy hills Your timber tall and Strait your Rivers Small and River Great your cooling Springs and boiling hot your Soda founts your Steam boat Springs and poisenous Caverns Your dismal plains shund by beasts of prey where human feet will never tread Your lakes of salt and Saleratus Shall I ever see you more

[page 16]

[June 24
no entry]

June 25th

on the waters of Sweet water. We met to day 43 waggons bound for Oregon and California

June 26

met 79 waggons this day

June 27

met 24 waggons saws some Buffaloes to day and gave them a chase but caught none but succeeded in takeing a large Bear of the brown Species

June 28

we met 42 waggons this day. grass is verry poor on Sweet water

June 29

[T]his day we passed the rock independence and left Sweet water. we met to day 12 waggons

June 30^{eth}

we are to knight at the crossing of North Platt we have met to day

[page 17]

eighty four waggons

July the first

crossed North Platt to day with thee assistance of the brethren met 11 waggons

July the 2nd

met 47 waggons to day mostly for California

[July 3

no entry

July 4

no entry]

Ft Laramie July the 5th

arrived this day in Spite of wind and weather

we encountered a tremendous storm to day of wind rain hail

[July 6

no entry

July 7

no entry

July 8

no entry

July 9

no entry]

Ash Holloe July 10th

this day we met the Brethren or saw them 350 waggons Strong they travel up the north side of Platt River and we down the south Some of the buoys crossed over and got a small supply of corn meal from them

[page 18]

The north fork at this place is near three quarters of a mile in width with an average depth of ten inches

We meet frequent bands of indians on the move up stream they have all of their large dogs harnassed they hall well

[July 11

no entry

July 12

no entry]

July 13th

on South Platt near the forks in the heart of hunters paradise

To chace the Buffaloe on horseback is fine sport

July 14 th

nothing is seen but the Buffaloe they are in vast herds which no man can number it is with the greatest difficulty that we can prevent our horses from running away with them. we have to keep shooting at them of knights to prevent being walked over

[page 19]

[July 15

no entry

July 16

no entry

July 17

no entry

July 18

no entry]

July 19th

40 ms below Fort Chiles on Platt River we arrived at Ft Chiles on the 17th where we felt ourselves at home. here we obtained a full supply of provisions which were getting scarce Ft Chiles is a new place just on the way it is to be built of unburnt brick

there is 500 men stationd here at this time

We meet frequent trains of waggons hauling supplies and lumber from Ft Carney We travel the new rout down platt

[July 20

no entry

July 21

no entry

July 22

no entry

July 23

no entry

July 24

no entry]

July the 25th
State of MO we crossed the river to day at Fort Carney

[end of transcription– diary continues]