

PIONEER JOURNAL OF JOHN PULSIPHER

1848

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John Pulsipher

You will preside over Branches of the Latter Day Saints that are organized in different parts of the Earth, & teach them the order of this holy calling & prepare them for gathering to Zion.--

Your Tongue will be unloosed as you stand before Kings & Priests & they shall be dismayed & confounded before you you will be enabled to escape dangers by sea & by land, in famine & in pestilence --- God will stand by you, nothing will hinder your progress while your faith is in exercise. (End of page 28)

Thousands, upon the Islands of the sea where you will be sent, will from time to time inquire at your hands for the counsels of God as received in Zion.

God will bless you with an increase of souls, & you will return to Zion from time to time with blessings upon your head & you will be crowned with great glory in the Kingdom of our God----Now I ask the Eternal Father in heaven that he will seal all these blessings upon your head & all these priveleges, & that you may be kept now in your youthful days & give your mind to study of knowledge of the things of the Kingdom of God, that you may be instrumental to effect all these purposes.

Now by the authority of the holy Priesthood conferred upon me, I seal these blessings upon your head in the name of Jesus Christ.

Amen

Rob S. Campbell

Scribe

1848

This winter Daniel Tyler, Geo. Hancock & a few of the Mormon Battalion returned from California Via-Salt Lake. It gave us great Joy to

to meet our old friends on their return from their Toilsome Mission which proved the salvation of the camps of Israel. We could not help shedding tears on hearing an account of their travels & suffering.

They have performed a work unparalleled in history. They made a road almost across the entire continent working their way over Deserts & Mountains south of the Salt Lake country by Sonora & New Mexico to South California-- all this was done on less than half rations, & when these failed the poor worn out oxen & musles were used. & when the teams failed the man had to push the wagons along or carry the baggage on their backs. (End of page 29)

This winter was spent far more agreeable than last, as the people had raised considerable to sustain themselves on so they had to haul but little from Missouri. "Camp of Israel Winter Quarters" is a respectable city for one its age. It numbered about 800 houses with Mill, stores, school houses & a big council house which answered for meetings. These houses were mostly built of logs. Dancing is very common -- most of the people attend Dancing Schools this winter. But I was not well enough to attend either schools or meetings.

When spring came, I began to recover so as to be able to help to continue our journey-- fixed wagons made boxes & yokes & etc. While Father & Chalres were doing the harder work-- We loaded the wagons putting in as much provision as we could haul tho the portion was too small having only 2 wagons it was impossible to take as much as we would need. So we had to go depending on faith for the balance.

There was no sale for property at this place so the entire inhabitanance of Winter Quarters had to leave the extensive farms & improvements without any reward as those who were not able to move to the West this

John Pulsipher

Spring had to move east across the Missouri River into Iowa, territory. This place being on Indian Land & the number of Peuple would be too small to be safe here. But by going into Iowa they could make homes on land already purchased by Government & be among friends. The Saints are scattered from Nauvoo to this place all along the road we made thro the wilderness of Iowa. Some 3 or 4 hundred miles. (End of page 30)

Our journeying to the Valley. All things being prepared as well as we could we yoked our teams & started, on the 20th of May. So we bid farewell to Winter Quarters where we have lived two Winters & one summer & done a vast sight of hard labor which we leave with joy because it is not where we want it.

Father, Mother, Brothers & Sisters were all along so we felt that we were at home altho we were on the move.

In one week we were at the Elk Horn River 30 miles. Our teams were awkward, having many wild steers in, hard to yoke & etc. we made short drives so as not to hurt them on the start. Uncle John Benbow said we commence so we can improve.

The brethren who arrived here ahead of us were ferrying their wagons across on a raft of logs that they had made so as to carry one wagon at a time. The raft was fastened to a tree way up the stream, having a long line of chains so it could swing across & back with ease -- a very handy ferry.

This river was about 8 rods wide & as many feet deep----

On the West bank of this River we all waited 'til Pres. B. Young & organized our co's. for crossing the plains.

While we were here our joyful camps were suddenly changed to mourning by the Death of Charley Beer, Step-son of Bro. John Neff a lively little Boy who accidentally fell into the River & was drowned. We all turned out & searched 'til the body was found. A coffin was made by Geo. Alger & others out of a solid log of wood like a trough & lid, hewn & smoothed up nice. The child was burried near the liberty Pole 27 of May 1848. (End of page 31) Our traveling company was organized by Pres. B. Young on the 31st of May.

Father Z. Pulsipher unanimously chosen capt. of the hundred. John Benbow Capt. of 1st 50 & Wm. Burgess, Jr. Capt. of 1st 10. This was the 10 that we were in & as I drove Fathers first wagon I was the first to break the track & try the bad places, wind & c.

When we started I was so weak I could hardly walk a mile, but as we moved on my strength returned to me so I was able to drive a team all the way & do my share of herding & guarding & act as sergeant of the guard--as that office was put upon me.

The first co. of this years Emigration started on to the plains from the Elk Horn River on the 1st of June Elder Lorenzo Sno Captain of 100.

Our Co. the 2nd for this year started on the 2nd of June & so on a co. Each day as soon as a 100 wagons are on the ground they are organized & started until about (100) Eight hundred wagons were on the track which was about the number that crost the Plains this year.

A very Pretty Country along here, a beautiful forest of timber along the Elk Horn River. On leaving the stream we pass over a rich level piece of land one days journey to the Big Platt River. This a wide shallow stream running from the Rocky Mountains nearly an East course to the Missouri River. Stayed over Sunday 4th of June on a level Plane 50 miles

from Winter Quarter, had meeting. Bro. Snows co. in sight.

We travel on the north side of the river over as smooth pretty a country as need be only timber rather scarce. The river flats are from 1 to 5 miles wide & covered with grass. (End of page 32)

Sunday, June 11 we stayed on the East bank of the Loup Fork of Flatt had meeting & council. Near here are the mines of the old Paunee village which had been destroyed by the Sioux.

The Loup fork is a wide shallow stream coming in from the north. This stream we forded by doubling teams & winding up & down following sand bars & etc. for about a mile in water 2 or 3 ft. deep.

We got all our wagons over safe without accident. I was in water nearly all day wading across & back first to find a ford & mark it, so we could get our wagons over without wetting our loads. This required great caution as the channel was continually changing the bed of the river is a bed of moving sand so when a wagon was once in it had to be kept going or it would go down.

Father waded the River several times & said it done him good -- cured his lame knee of the rheumatism.

On the West bank of this stream we waited a week for the companies behind to come up--had a general meeting on Sunday the 18th of June. Pres. young felt first rate. After meeting we started on the first hundred also in its place.

As we moved out of this camp it looked like leaving a mighty city.

The country we travel over is very pretty warm rich soil -- plenty of grass -- This week we were passing along by Grand Island in Flatt River which is 80 miles long & well timbered with cottonwood & willow.

Sunday 25th June we had meeting & rested on the bank of Flat above Grand Island & 240 miles from Winter Quarters, rested here 3 days when our friends in the rear come in sight we started on Wednesday morning & traveled 4 days this week. (End of page 33)

The country being so hard & smooth that we made other tracks & traveled 2 or 4 wagons abreast so all the co's. could travel in close order & be more safe from Indians depredations. We had no trouble from them however -- We were well armed & they knew we were always ready so they made no disturbance-- tho large numbers of them have come to our camps at different times. But we always treated them well & gave them plenty to eat.

Buffalo abounds along the Platt River in such vast numbers that it is impossible for mortal man to number them -- The first day or two that we came among them they were in small gangs & now & then an old straggling bull -- but as we traveled on the whole country seemed black with them. Sometimes our way seemed entirely blockaded with them but as we approached they would open to the right & left so we could pass thro. Thousands of them sometimes would run towards the river, plunge down the bank into the water, tumbel over each other pile up, but all would come out right on the other side of the River & continue the race. Sometimes we would see the Plain black with them for ten miles in width & would pass by us for hours at that speed & then we could see neither end of the herd.

We killed what we needed for meat always dividing the meat equally among the different families of the co. so that none was wasted.

We were very careful to keep our cattle from getting into the Buffalo herds, & being run off with them. (End of page 34)

Some co's. lost many of their cattle in that way, for when they fall

John Pulsipher

into a running herd they run with them & are gone forever.

How easy the Indians can live in this country, yet as plenty as meat is they are careful to save all they kill & not allow any part to be wasted. This is a lesson that many who profess to be civilized would do well to learn.

Along here is a great pasture not fenced & no timber to fence with entirely destitute of timber for hundreds of miles. Not a tree or bush looks like the land desolation of olden times. The soil is good & well covered with grass.

Saturday morning 15, July came up with Bro. Snow's Co. & camped opposite Chimney Rock, stayed Saturday & Sunday. Monday the 17, was my birthday which makes me 21 years old, & we are half way from Winter Quarters to the valley of Salt Lake.

1848

This the day that gave me birth
In eighteen twenty seven
From distant worlds I came to Earth
Far from my native heaven

Twenty & one long years have past
To grief & sorrow given
And now to crown my woes at last
We're to the mountains driven

'Tis not for crimes that we have done
That by our foes we're driven
But to the world we are unknown (End of page 35)
And our reward's in heaven

What troubled scenes may yet ensue
To strew our paths with sorrow
'til not for us to know its true
For we know not of tomorrow

John Pulsipher

One thing is sure, this life at best
Is like the troubled ocean
We almost wish ourselves at rest
From all its dire commotion

But let its troubled bosom heave
Its surges beat around me
To truth, eternal truth I'll cleave
It's waves can never drown me.

We have suffered & endured such a continuation of persecution & cruel treatment from those who boast of civilization, that we now choose to make our home in the Desert among Savages rather than try to live in the garden of the world surrounded by Christian neighbors. The Lord Almighty is preparing a scourge for this nation. The blood of the Saints is crying from the ground for vengeance on that wicked nation.

The nation have rejected all our petitions & would not redress our wrongs so our case is appealed to the great Judge of all the Earth & he will not be dead to our cries, so we are anxious to gather out from among the wicken & leave them to be dealt with in the manner the Lord may choose.

We are glad the mountain valies are so far off as they are, long & tedious is our journey to get there-- but there we hope to rest from those wicked persecutions that we have endured as long as I can remember.

This is the reason we are so happy in our toiling & traveling to sustain ourselves & work our way into the unexplored regions of North America. (End of page 36)

We now find some very sandy road our poor teams have all they can do to get thro the long stretches of deep sand, the country begins to look more barren & dreary.

Friday 21 July last night we had a heavy shower of rain & hail & this forenoon we traveled thro hail one foot deep on the ground 12 hours after the storm.

Today we forded the North Branch of Platt at Ft. Laramie. This is a pretty River clear water swift curreant & rocky Bottom Raised the wagon boxed-6 inches on blocks of wood & crossed in safety.

Ft. Laramie is a small fort & barracks occupied by a few U. S. Troops to protect the frontiers against the Indians. It is built of adobies sun dried brick--& is the first house we have seen since we left our Winter Quarters more than 500 miles Distant.

Here we go into the "Black Hills" & have a rugged hilly country the balance of the way. Very barren with now & then a stunted scrubby cedar or pine tree some wild sage & plenty of Rock.

Sunday, 23rd had no meeting, traveled all day because we could find no feed fit to stop on passed the Warm Springs today 536 miles from Winter Quarters. It being the first natural curiosity of the kind I ever saw We traveled only about 50 miles this week found some feed & rested the teams 3 days.

Sunday, 30 July started this morning from Branch of Labonte River traveled 18 miles & monday 7 miles to Box Elder Creek turned off the road found good feed & wild currants-- stayed 2 days.

The Co's. generally divided up into tens 20's & etc. to get over this desert country.

Sunday, Aug. 6th we crossed the upper ford of Platt Traveled 15 mile & camped at the Mineral Springs.

Sunday 13th rested on the Sweet Water 16 miles above the "Devils Gate." (End of page 37)

The "Devils Gate" is a gap thro a small Mountain, where the sweet

water River runs between perpendicular rocks 400 ft. high.

John Alger & chas. Pulsipher went out a hunting Sunday Aug 13 -- found some scattering Buffalo & killed 3 large ones & John came to camp for help to bring the meat in John Heward unloaded & furnished a wagon & we hitched up 3 yoke of our best cattle & James P. Terry & myself started a little before sundown & spent nearly all night traveling over hills. Hollows & mountains covered with rocks & sage & not a track to follow Chas. stayed to guard the meat from the wolves & keep a fire so we could find the place. But as it was about half a dozen miles from camp & among such rugged hills we had a long & tedious hunt to find it in a dark night--but we accomplished the job. We were glad to find Chas. & he was equally as glad to see us as he had gave up all hopes of our coming tonight & the wolves were determined to have some meat. The buffalo's lay a quarter or half a mile apart--so you can judge he had to be busy to keep up his fires--& had very small sage for fuel. He did not need to go hungry for he could roast beef but was suffering for water but we had come in the wagon & we were happy mortals sure.

Dressed our Beef by firelight-- loaded it into the wagon & drove for camp. We drove over some awful rough places had it been daylight I presume we would never dared to drove a wagon over without working a road--but the darkness had the danger & we passed over safe. Were in camp before day--divided the meat to all & were ready to travel on Monday morning. (End of page 38)

We saw no more Buffalo--The country is too barren to suit them-- We have all we can do to get our cattle thro this desolate region, as there is a great amount of mineral water, alkali & etc.-- When an animal got alkali'd we gave it a pound or two of fat Pork. Sure cure if given in season.

We made about 70 miles this week which brot us to the upper ford of Sweet Water where we spent Sunday Aug. 20th. This is a pretty little River of good water. Small willows is the principal wood that grows along this stream. This is 789 miles from Winter Quarters. Another days journey took us over the South pass to the Pacific Springs where we found a large flat of wet springy land & stopped 5 days on the best of feed & rested our poor foot-sore cattle.

The "South Pass" is the dividing Ridge between the waters of the Atlantic & pacific Oceans & is a high open country. We could look 'til eyes were tired & scarce see any end to the dreary wasted of the everlasting Sage Plains, with here & there an Isolate flat topped mountain to fill up the space between the Mighty ranges of both craggy barriers that hold supreme Domimion over this unexplored region.

It was here we had the first sight of snow in summer. It was on the high Mountains in the Northwest & seemed to have lain secure thro' the heat of Day days fairly exposed to the sun.

While we were here some teams arrived from the Valley-- John Armstrong & others to meet their friends. They gave a good report of the Settlement in the Valley.

I took a tramp one day with P. Alger & W. Burgess hunting, had a long walk saw some wild antelope & one deer but killed none ascended a high mountain had a grand view of the country for hundreds of miles, -- away to where the Mountains are lost in the clouds. (End of page 39) Another days journey brot us to the head of a stream called "Dry Sandy" & it was rightly named for our animals had to do without water. We dug in the sand & found some dirty water that we could use rather than suffer. This is the most Barren waste that we have past over yet. Mineral land, no grass, or not enough to fill a bushel in 5 miles &

1845

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There was no sale for property at this place so the entire inhabitation of Winter Quarters had to leave the extensive farms & improvements without any reward as those who were not able to move to the West this Spring had to move east across the Missouri River into Iowa Territory. This place being on Indian land & the number of people would be too small to be safe here. But by going into Iowa they could make homes on land already purchased by Government & be among friends. The Saints are scattered from Nauvoo to this place all along the road we made thro the wilderness of Iowa. Some 3 or 4 hundred miles. (End of page 30)

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The river was about 8 rods wide & as many feet deep-----

At the West End of this River we all parted ^{on 7th} till Pres. B. Young arrived & we were to go on for crossing the Plains.

1843

While we were here our joyful camp was suddenly changed to mourning by the Death of Charley Beer, Step-son of Bro. John Keff a lively little Boy who accidentally fell into the River & was drowned. We all turned out & searched ^{and} until the body was found. A coffin was made by Geo. Alger & others out of a solid log of wood like a trough & lid, Horn & smoothed up nice. The child was buried near the liberty Pole 27 of May 1843. (End of page 31) Our Traveling company was organized by Pres. B. Young on the 31st of May.

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1873

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We saw no more Buffalo—The country is too barren to suit them—we have all we can do to get our cattle thro' this desolate region, as there is a great amount of mineral water, alkali & etc.—When an animal got alkali'd we gave it a pound or two of fat Pork. Sure cure if given in season.

We made about 70 miles this week which ^{brought} us to the upper ford of Sweet Water where we spent Sunday Aug. 20th. This is a pretty little River of good water. Small willows is the principal weed that grows along this stream. This is 789 mile from Winter Quarters. Another days journey took us over the South Pass to the Pacific Springs where we found a large flat of wet spring land & ^{and} stopped 5 days on the best of feed & rested our poor foot-sore cattle.

The "South Pass" is the dividing Ridge between the waters of the Atlantic & Pacific Oceans & is a high open country. We could look 'til eyes were tired & ^{and} scarce see any end to the dreary wastes of the everlasting Sage Plains, with here & there an Isolate flat topped mountain to fill up the space between the Mighty ranges of both craggy barriers that hold supreme Dominion over this unexplored region.

It was here we had the first sight of snow in summer. It was on the high Mountains in the Northwest & seemed to have lain secure thro' the heat of Day days fairly exposed to the sun.

While we were here some teams arrived from the Valley—John Armstrong & ^{and} others to meet their friends. They gave a good report of the Settlement in the Valley.

I took a tramp one day with P. Alger & W. Burgess hunting, had a long walk saw some wild antelope & one deer but killed none ascended a high mountain had a grand view of the country for hundreds of miles,—away to where the Mountains are lost in the clouds. (End of page 39) Another days journey ^{brought} us to the head of a stream called "Dry Sandy" & it was rightly named for our animals had to do without water. We dug in the sand & found some dirty water that we could use rather than suffer. This is the most Barren waste that we have past over yet. Mineral land, no grass, or not enough to fill a bushel in 5 miles & ^{and} not a tree or even a willow big enough for a whip stock for several days journey.

Sunday Aug. 27, traveled 15 miles to little Sandy, some water, no wood, some grass. This is almost a level Plain, some sandy. These waters run to the South west to Green River & that to the Colorado which empties into the Gulf of California on the Pacific Coast. Monday 28th met a train of teams from the valley in care of Ira Eldredge going to help the hind ^{teams} ~~cars~~. This was timely assistance, their teams were fine & fat quite different from our poor skeletons that limp & stagger as they go. (some of them)

Our course which has been nearly West so far— is now changed nearly to a Southwest for nearly 100 miles & then West again. We follow down the "Big Sandy" for a couple of days. This stream where we first came to it was about 6 rods wide & 18 inches deep & before we left it, it was dry, all sunk in the sand. This we find is common many of these mountain streams sink & sometimes rise again.

The next water was Green River a beautiful River, clear water stony bottom, swift current, about 16 rods wide 2½ ft. deep at the ford at low water. Earlier in the season it has to be ferried. We hauled our seine a few times & ^{and} got a few very nice fish along this River is a streak of cottonwood timber. (End of page 40)

1848,

We stayed 2 nights at this place. Oh it was such a treat to camp in a cottonwood forest. A few of the ~~Co.~~ ^{best} to stay longer S. H. Earl, J. Mills John & Uncle Sam Alger & a few others said they would stay longer. Father Pul-sipher the captain & the majority of the Co. ~~that~~ the best way was to start in the morning & be moving along—~~did so~~—

We crossed the River & went 5 miles & camped in the woods again near where the road leaves the River. Tonight was rain—River rose & muddy. The Boys were sorry they stopped, they had some difficulty in crossing & were behind upwards of 100 miles.

Sunday Sept. 3rd past Bates Trading Post a french Mountaineer owns 2 or 3 log cabins & etc. Traps, hunts & trades with Indians. A cold day, sand wet good traveling cattle walk very easy Chas. sick a few days with Mountain fever. The next water we cross is Man's Fork a small River from the North west. We cross this at its junction with Blacks Fork a small River from the South west which we follow up near 50 miles. In Blacks Fork we caught a fine lot of Fish, supplied the whole Co. that were now with us. These waters run into Green River.

The country continues a dreary, barren, Desert covered only with a stunted growth of sage which seems to grow without moisture only as it is wet by the snows of winter or fall & spring rain & endures the heat & drought of summer while the ground for half the year is hot, parched & dusty—If it was not for some little grassy flats by the creeks I don't know how we could get our animals over this country. Wednesday night Sept. 6, we stayed at Ft. Bridger 918 miles from Winter Quarters. Here is a pretty location for a high altitude good soil & good grass & plenty of it. (End of page 41)

Ft. Bridger is a wooden Fort about 4 rds. square inside made of log houses joining & the Property & trading Post of the Celebrated mountaineer ^{John} Bridger.

Blacks Fork here runs in 7 channels Beautiful clear cold water & runs very rapid thro' a pretty grassy flat a mile or two in width & several miles in length. Plenty of willows here & up the creek, a few miles is cottonwood & still further is pine balsam & spruce in great abundance. These mountain men get wives from the Indians tribe that they live among & they live very much like Indians, Sometimes live many years without tasting bread lived entirely on ~~meat~~ ^{meat}. Some of them get quite rich buying furs & horses of Indians & selling in other markets. But the poor Indian don't get much for his work—They don't know the worth of Furs nor the worth of the goods they receive in payment—so they are awfully cheated.

Thursday Sept. 7th we traveled a new road, camped at a little spring creek 12 miles, a few large cottonwood trees & plenty of cedars—all the men of camp turned out & worked a few hours making a road down a mountain that we have just descended.

Next day we crossed a creek called "Muddy" a branch of Blacks fork. Had an up hill road for nearly two days & crossed over a mountain, the dividing ridge between the waters of Green River & those that run into the great Basin—Salt Lake Country. This ridge is said to be the highest land the road passes over between the Atlantic & the Valley, it is a mighty mountain, very steep on the West side for a mile or two. The road passes thro' a notch, between high Peaks—but the altitude is 7700 ft. (End of page 42)

Saturday Sept. 9th we camped at Sulphur Creek near the oil Spring, a rough hilly country which abounds in minerals & mineral water, stone, coal & etc.

Sunday the 10th we arrived at Bear River at one o'clock such a beautiful