

## REPRINT DEPARTMENT

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George Wilkes: History of Oregon, Geographical, and Political.  
(New York, Colyer, 1845.)

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[The reprint of this rare work was begun in the first number of the Washington Historical Quarterly and was continued in portions of varying lengths until Chapter I. of Part II. was begun in Volume II., Number 4, July, 1908. For the sake of librarians and others who have kept the files, the work is here continued.—*Editor.*]

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"Hallo, strangers! bound for the encampment?" shouted a voice from the box.

"Yes; are we far away?"

"About three mile. You'll find a nice party there. We're only goin' back to Independence for some articles we forgot, and then we're with you! Good day."

In about an hour we arrived at the rendezvous, or encampment, as our roadside friends had called it. We found there already over three hundred people preparing for one of the most arduous trips ever undertaken in modern times. About fifty wagons were arranged in a huge semi-circle, in the center of which little groups were busying themselves in the usual occupations of life, while others were whiling away the hours in idle conversation. Here a smith was tinkering at a rivet, there a female bustled over her domestic pots and pans; in one quarter an artisan was engaged in mending a shaft or resetting a wagon top, while in another, a hardy huntsman was rubbing up his rifle. Numerous herds of cattle browsed about the plain, while the horses reaped their harvest of the generous herbage within the circle or their tether. All the concomitants of civilization were there, yet so intermixed with savage instances, as to startle the observer at the social hybrid. There was something in the unusual scene and its object, that challenged the reflection and led the mind off in its own despite, in search for the causes that induced it. Curiosity asked why a large body of human beings, possessed of a fair share of the comforts of life, should renounce, of their own accord, all the advantages of society, and submit to a voluntary banishment in a region of which they had only heard by rumor, and that was almost beyond the bounds of civil life? Why, with vast plains before them, offering the most bounteous fertility to the lightest summons of the husbandman; possessing a certain climate, and promising assured comfort; asking no purchase but those of the

ploughshare and the spade, they chose rather a toilsome pilgrimage and the uncertain perils of an almost unknown route, to seek the same advantages in the extremity of the continent? It certainly was not from misanthropy, for the very manner of the enterprise denied it; they were not flying from the persecutions of intolerance and bigotry; neither were they the victims of ill balanced laws, but they were obeying that restless impulse of ambition which Liberty implants and fosters, and which displays itself in a passion for experiment and adventure. This spirit, which has imparted to us energies that have astonished the world, and still puzzle the monarchies of Europe, has spread its effects from the Atlantic even thus far into the wilderness; it is now directing the movements of this enterprise, and stamps it as the first sign of the enlargement of the boundaries of Freedom to the western ocean. Liberty and enterprise are inseparable qualities, and were it not for the obstacle of inadequate means of travel, no corner of our country would be left unpeopled.

We were received on our entrance with a shout of welcome, and as we drove in a dozen busy hands were instantly lent to assist us in arranging the disposal of our articles. Our wagon was drawn to a proper spot, our horses were watered and staked, Mrs. Robbins was introduced to Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Harris; the little Robbinses received the overtures of the juvenile Bakers and Browns, and Jack followed suit by making most decided advances to a handsome terrier bitch, who was doing the amiable in a series of cavortings that would have been most delightful for any lover of natural philosophy to see.

As this was also my first visit to the rendezvous, I was received in like manner, and some acquaintances whom I had made a few days before in the town of Independence, came forward to welcome me and to show me the ins and outs of the encampment.

"H'ar you, sir! H'ar you!" was the greeting which, accompanied by hearty and earnest grasps of the hand, met me on all sides, and in the course of half an hour I had become acquainted with two thirds of the whole party. Among others, I was introduced to a fat old gentleman in a round jacket and very short pair of corduroys, responding to the name of McFarley, and who, by the way, aspired to the command of the enterprise. Another fat old gentleman named Dumberton was also introduced to me, who was McFarley's rival for the chieftainship. He had the advantage of the latter, however, in a face of aldermanic redness, and likewise in a long-tailed snuff colored coat.

This latter gentleman, immediately on taking my hand, informed me that he came from "East Tennessee, at a place high up on Big Pidgeon, near Kit Bullard's mill"; and then feeling convinced that it was quite un-

necessary to take any further measure to secure my profound respect, threw his head on one side, and waited for his communication to produce its effect.

Dumberton, or the Captain, as he was called, had the advantage of McFarley in several other points. I have already mentioned the superior contrast of the snuff-colored coat with the round jacket, and I might also have alluded to the substantial claims of a pantaloons of the same color in opposition to the meek pretensions of the corduroys; but the great superiority of the Captain laid chiefly in a profuse shock of stiff gray hair, which, being contrasted with the rich crimson of his countenance, and further set off by the white of his neck cloth, rendered his appearance imposing to a degree. Besides, his *home department* had a most superlative curve, while McFarley's, on the other hand, was a sudden projection, which looked as if he had just bolted the hump of a buffalo, and from its absolute abruptness, conveyed no idea of dignity at all. McFarley made up for these natural disadvantages, however, by industry, perseverance, and superior tact, which being opposed to the Captain's natural gifts, about balanced the material of the struggle.

The last of these remarkable gentlemen running one of the sleeves of his snuff-colored coat through my arm, fairly took me prisoner, and turned me off in the direction of a neighboring cluster of trees, for the purpose of securing my influence in his own favor, and in opposition to his opponent. It is impossible to describe McFarley's face, at this attempt of the other to make capital at his expense; suffice it, it outblushed his rival's, and his teeth were set in fierce determination. He was not long at a loss for an expedient to interrupt the Captain's design, for he bribed a boy to tell me "my horse had run a spike in his foot, and that Mr. Robbins wanted to see me at once." This was a great relief to me, as it was a comfort to Mr. McFarley, for fat man the first had just commenced some disparaging reflections upon fat man the second, that I could not have listened to without compromising the neutrality of my position.

I had four men who had linked their interests with mine, and who had put themselves under my special direction. They were still at Independence, and I did not expect them till the afternoon of the following day, when they were to bring along our common team, cattle, wagons and "fixin's." For want, therefore, of anything to do, I lent a hand to Robbins, in getting up his tent, and setting his things to rights. The remainder of the day was spent in making acquaintances, and projecting arrangements for future guidance, a precaution which I considered by no means unnecessary, now that I had discovered that the struggles of selfishness were likely in a greater or less degree, to agitate our little community. I should

not omit to mention here, that I was also introduced this afternoon to Mr. Peter H. Burnet, who was subsequently made captain of the expedition.

After the evening had set in, I laid down in the wagon of an acquaintance, and overcome with fatigue, soon fell asleep. An hour could not have elapsed, however, before I started wide awake. While I lay endeavoring to recover my disturbed repose, I had a chance to hear how my neighbors were disposing of their time. In one direction the sound of a violin rasped the air; in another, a little farther off, the mellow warble of a flute stole softly on the night; while hard by my ear, a harmonious voice poured forth a measure of reproach to the

“False hearted Jane Louisa.”

Unable to sleep, and desirous of taking a share in the enjoyment, I arose and went forth, and approaching the tent from which the last pathetic strain had issued, peeped into its centre. It was filled with a motley group, who appeared to have given themselves up to the last degree of merriment. In the rear, on a huge trunk, which was used as a table, sat two bottles, and a corpulent little jug, all of them, doubtless, contributions from different members of the company. On the right hand of this imposing platform, sat McFarley, and on the left, honest John Robbins, with dog Jack between his legs, who was looking, if possible, graver than ever. Behind, and mounted on a high seat, made by a trunk turned endwise, with a flask in his hand, and his hat cocked gaily into an extreme angle, sat the ruling spirit of the party. He was one of those peculiar geniuses whom Nature by the gift of a rich fund of humor and invincible gaiety marks for a practical philanthropist. In his own way, Jim Wayne was the source of more real pleasure and enjoyment, by his inimitable drolleries, during the long journey which followed, than any dozen other causes put together. His songs were sung by the whole camp; his stories were told over and over, for the edification and amusement of every sub-circle, and wherever he went, his presence of itself, appeared to possess galvanic power, which operated immediately in distending the muscles of every face.

“Gentlemen!” said Wayne, at the conclusion of his ditty, with an air of impressive solemnity, “it is my painful duty to communicate to you my apprehension that we have an individual among us of the most suspicious character; an individual who, so far from entering into our proceedings with that degree of hilarity and good-fellowship which are the guarantees of honest intentions, has preserved a *dogged* silence, and has moreover given more than one indication that he is incapable of appreciating the sentiment of our enlightened proceedings; in short, gentlemen, he is a creature, as a man may say, without a soul. Gentlemen,” continued

the speaker, after the buzz of surprise and rapid scrutiny which swept the circle from man to man, upon this startling communication, was over, "gentlemen, the nature of our enterprise, the peculiarity of our situation, demands our utmost care, and I appeal to your intelligences, if an individual be found in this company, guilty of the demeanor I have charged him with, shall be not forthwith summoned before this bar, arraigned for examination, and, if necessary, I will add, for punishment?"

"Yes, yes, where is he? Who is he?" shouted a dozen voices, while some of the bronzed faces around frowned stern resentment.

Wayne turned, and after looking fixedly at John Robbins for several moments, as if it pained him to perform his duty, at length broke the silence. "John Robbins, I command you to produce the body of an individual now in your possession, commonly know as dog Jack, that he may answer to the charge now about to be preferred against him."

At this conclusion, the whole company broke into a general peal of laughter, in which John Robbins, who was relieved from his temporary uneasiness, heartily joined.

"McFarley, arraign the culprit," cried Wayne, in a stern tone, which though apparently intended to check the levity of the group, only elicited another burst of merriment.

Jack was lifted on the box by his master, and McFarley, who acted as clerk of the court, made him face the Judge, setting him on his haunches, and holding up his fore paws for the purpose of accomplishing a respectful attitude.

The President then addressed the offender at length, and with much dignity and force. Jack, while this was going on, never once altered the solemnity of his demeanor. The only departure from his usual stoicism, was an occasional glance which he now and then stole over his shoulder at McFarley, who was holding him. At length the President finished his address, and wound up by saying, that "as mercy was the divinest attribute of dogs as well as men, he would forgive him for this first offence, and allow him an opportunity to retrieve his character, by making him an honorary member of the association." Saying which, he baptized the animal on the end of the nose, with some of the contents of the flask in his hand, "to learn him," as he said, "to be a jolly good fellow."

Jack had stood everything quietly, until this, but no sooner did the alcoholic nauseate touch his nostrils, than he gave a sudden twist, followed by a spring which swept off the jug, carried McFarley to the ground, and nearly upset me, as he flashed past where I stood.

A long, loud, and continuous roar followed this conclusion of the prank, and under cover of it, I drew off to my quarters again.

This may be considered as a specimen of the evening enjoyments of the pilgrimage (barring the drinking); and I have been thus particular with the events of the first night, even at the expense of being charged with frivolity, that the reader may have a correct idea of all the variations and phases of the life that is led in the journey over the prairies. Many and many a time, even in the short period I have spent in this region, have I turned back to luxuriate upon the delights of that adventure.

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## CHAPTER II.

*Arrival of My Camp Equipages—Outfit for Emigrants—Grand Council at Elm Grove—Struggle of Ambition—Result of the Council—Regulations for Future Government—Evening Scene in the Prairies.*

On the following day my men, wagons, and cattle arrived, and we were all kept pretty busy in making arrangements. McFarley and Dumberton both interrupted me frequently to secure my aid to their intrigues, but I resolutely put them off on the plea of pressing business of my own. A meeting was held in the latter part of the day, which resulted in appointing a committee to return to Independence, and make inquiries of Doctor Whitman, missionary, who had an establishment on the Wallawalla, respecting the practicabilities of the road, and an adjournment was made to the 20th, to Elm Grove, at a little distance off, for the purpose of making final arrangements for the regular government of the expedition. Meanwhile, new recruits kept pouring in, and at the appointed time, nearly all the emigrants were at the designated place.

As all the preparations which the wants of our journey were now complete, I will here furnish a description of them for the benefit of the future emigrant (for whom these notes are specially written), adding to them such other directions as the experience of the actual journey has taught me are useful and necessary.

The proper outfit for emigrants is a matter of first importance, as on it depends not only the ease, the comfort, but even in a great degree, the success of the journey.

The wagons for the trip should be two horse wagons with plain Yankee beds. The running gear should be made of the best materials, and it should also be of the most excellent workmanship. The wagons should have falling tongues, as they have a decided advantage over any other kind for this trip. You frequently are obliged to pass across hollows, having very steep, but short banks, where, it will be perceived, falling tongues are by far the most preferable. The wagon sheets, instead of being painted, should merely be doubled, as painting is apt to make them break, and the

bows should be well made and strong. It is best to have sideboards, and to have the upper edge of the wagon body bevelled outwards, so that the water running from the sheet may, when it strikes the body, be shed down the side. It is well also to have the bottom of the bed bevelled in the same way, to preclude any possibility of the approach of water to the inside. With your wagon thus prepared, you are as secure as though you were in a house. Tents and wagon sheets are best made of heavy brown cotton drilling, and the latter, if securely fastened, will, like the former, last well all the way. You should take along with you for repairs, a few extra iron bolts, lynch pins, skanes, paint bands for the axles, a cold chisel, a few pounds of assorted wrought nails, several papers of tacks, a lot of hoop iron, and a punch for making holes in it; a few chisels, a handsaw, a drawing knife, a couple of axes, and indeed a general assortment of tools, not forgetting an auger, as they may all be needed on the way in repairing. All the light tools a man has, if they do not weigh too much, should be brought along. When you reach the mountains, if your wagons are not made of seasoned timber, the tires becomes loose; but this defect is very easily repaired with the assistance of the hoop iron you have brought along. You first take the nails out of the tire, and then drive the hoop iron between it and the felloes; the punch is then inserted to make holes in the sheet iron, and the nails following, and being driven home, all will be found as tight as ever. If your wagons are even ordinarily good this will not happen at all, and you will not perhaps have occasion to make a repair of any consequence during the whole trip. Any vehicle that can perform a journey from Kentucky to Missouri, will stand the trip well. In proof of this, there are many wagons now in use in Oregon which were brought through last year, though they were in quite ordinary condition when they started from the States. Beware of heavy vehicles; they break down your teams, and light ones answer every purpose to much better advantage. The latter will carry every thing you want, and as there are no obstacles on the road in the way of logs or stumps, or even rocks, until you get more than half way (when your load is very much reduced), there is but little danger of accident. You meet with no stumps on the road, until you came to the Burnt river, and there they are very few, and you encounter no rocks until you get among the tail of the Black hills, and these are not formidable in their character, and only last for a short distance. From this point you meet with no more obstructions worth speaking of, until you reach the Great Soda Spring on Bear river, which is situated in the intricacies of the mountain passes. Experience has proved, however, that the difficulties there, are readily overcome. If an individual should have several wagons, some good and some indifferent, he might start with all; the latter would go to the mountains, where the loads being re-

duced one half, their burdens might be transferred entirely to the strong ones, and the former could roll through empty. It is not necessary to bring along extra axle trees, as you seldom break one, though you should take with you a few pieces of well seasoned hickory, to be used for wedges and for other little useful purposes.

TEAMS.—The best teams for this trip are ox-teams. The oxen should be from three to five years old, well set and compactly built, though they should not be too heavy, as their feet will not bear the wear and hardships of the route as well as those of lighter animals. This, though well to be observed as a general rule, is not imperative upon the emigrant, as we had with us in this trip several very large oxen, of seven and eight years of age, which endured the continued labor of the task very well, though not so well as the younger and lighter ones. Young cows make just as good teams as any other, as previous to your reaching Fort Hall on the west of the mountains, it is merely the continuance of travel, and not the hardship of the draught that challenges the physical powers of your cattle. To make cows serve all the purposes of oxen, therefore, you have only to hitch a double number and you will go along as comfortably and as easily, as with the best oxen in the world; besides, cows in addition to furnishing you with a nutritious beverage, night and morning, stand the trip better than the male members of their species. Either of the above, however, are better for the emigrant's purpose than mules. They are, moreover, more easily managed—they are not so subject to be lost or broken down on the way—they cost less at the start, and they are worth four times as much when you arrive at the end of your journey.

Those who come to this country with oxen, will be in love with them long before they get here. Their patient, gentle, persevering good will, are each a claim upon your warm attachment. They will plunge through the heaviest mud, dive into thickets, climb mountains, however great their previous labor, without the slightest refusal, and in their frugal habits are content with the reward of almost any provender—willows alone satisfying their humble appetites for days together.

I would most strongly urge emigrants to bring all the cattle they can procure; and horses among the rest, as with proper care, the latter will stand the journey as well as mules. If a person setting out would invest five hundred dollars in young heifers, and drive them here, they would be worth five thousand dollars to him on his arrival; and by pursuing the enterprise in the way of stock raising, if he did not wish to sell, he could in a short time make a fortune. Milch cows are exceedingly useful on the road, as they give an abundance of milk all the way, with the exception of the latter part of it, where, in consequence of the frequent interruptions of the previously rich herbage, the supply somewhat decreases. This edible

is of great value to the traveller, as when thickened, it effects a great saving of flour, and its rich and delicious qualities afford a fine and nourishing food for your children. Its other advantage is, that the giver of it gathers it from day to day, and relieves you of any trouble of carriage, by bearing it herself.

We found that yearlings, nay even suckling calves, stood the trip well, but the objection to the latter is, that they get all the milk of the mother.

PROVISIONS.—As this is the most important branch of preparation, it is necessary that we should bestow a careful attention upon it. Every one thinks he must eat, and so settled is the notion, that it would amount to little short of a separation of soul and body to be persuaded to the contrary.

One hundred and fifty pounds of flour, and fifty pounds of bacon, must be allowed to each person, and this must be taken as a fundamental rule—a *protective provision* as the lawyers say, which must not be overlooked or departed from. Besides the above, as much rice, corn meal, parched corn meal, and raw corn, peas, dried fruit, sugar, tea, coffee, and such necessary articles of food, as you can find room for, should by all means be brought along. Flour and parched corn meal will keep sweet the whole way, but corn meal only lasts to the mountains. The parched meal is most excellent in making soup—a few beef cattle or fat calves should be taken to kill on the way, as before you fall in with the buffalo, you will need fresh meat. Peas will be found to be very useful also, and your dried fruits by being brought out occasionally, will supply with their delicacy and nourishing qualities, many of the deprivations of absence from a settled home.

The loading, in short, should consist mostly of provisions. Emigrants should not burden themselves with much furniture or many beds. It is folly to lug these articles two thousand miles over mountains and rivers, through a mere prejudice of habit and notion. A few light trunks should be brought to pack clothes in, as they will be found to be better than any other article for the same purpose; boxes are too heavy in an expedition where every pound tells in every hour of draught.

(To be continued)