

REPRINT DEPARTMENT

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

[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.*]

All heavy articles, therefore, should be left behind, with the exception of the most necessary cooking utensils, and these should be of tin, or of the lightest materials. If you are heavily loaded, let the quantity of sugar and coffee be small, as milk is preferable as a beverage for health, and because, as I have said before, it travels for itself. You should provide yourself with a water keg, and you should likewise have a tin can made after the fashion of a powder cannister, to hold your milk. A few tin cups, (abjure all crockery,) tin plates, tin saucers, a butcher's knife, a shovel, and a pair of pot-hooks, will go very far toward completing your culinary arrangements, and a small grindstone joined to their company, to keep them in edge, will also lend a valuable assistance to this department. There are many other articles apparently trifling in their nature, which must not be overlooked, and these the good sense of the emigrant must suggest for himself. Such are cord, bits of linen, leather, &c. Rifles, fowling pieces, pistols, powder, shot, ball, lump lead, and all the accompanying articles of destructive warfare upon game, are, I hardly need say, of the first importance. Man's inheritance of destructiveness must be borne with him to this region as well as to every other. The double inducement to carry articles of inherent usefulness, is their wonderful advance in value—thus, a rifle worth *twenty dollars* in the States, enhances to the worth of *fifty dollars* in Oregon, and fowling pieces increase in price in proportion.

The clothing you take, should be of the same description used in the middle states, and enough should be laid in to last a year. Care should be taken that, amongst the rest of your wardrobe, a half dozen or a dozen pair of strong shoes should not be forgotten.

These directions will suffice to give the emigrant a notion of his wants, and of the means he will require to procure them. What I have omitted,

will be supplied hereafter in the course of this narrative, and the remainder left unmentioned will be suggested as I said before by the intelligence of the emigrant himself.

On the 20th of May we moved to Big Spring in obedience to the previous resolution, and found upon our arrival there, a large accession to our party. Our number was now found to amount to near five hundred souls, men, women and children, of which 263 were men able to bear arms.

Here was an enterprise of moment indeed! The greatest confidence appeared to prevail throughout the whole party, and self-reliance and determination were stamped on every countenance. Every now and then, as some rough looking backwoodsman would swagger past, armed to the teeth with pistol and bowie knife, or squads of his companions skirr on horseback over the surrounding plains, rifle in hand, and blade in belt. an apprehension would start upon the mind of the difficulties to be found in harmonizing the incongruous elements, and of subduing them into one reasonable, order loving mass.

With the gathering of the grand council came the climacteric of McFarley's and Dumberton's struggle.

After the meeting had assembled, and the temporary officers of it had been appointed, came the proposals of organization. The ripening of the proceedings to this stage showed that the fat gentlemen were not the only aspirants emulous of supreme distinction. The strange assemblage was gathered from various sections of the country; they were agitated with various views, and naturally separated into various cliques. Most of them had their favorite plans already cut and dried, and their nominees were all ready to wear the chieftain's mantle. A stormy session was the consequence, and it was evident that the question of commandership would not be decided this day. In the middle of the uproar of the first hour, Dumberton, who had given his hair an extra intellectual rush from the front, and aranged the snuff colored garments in a style of superlative finish, managed to obtain the ear of the assemblage. After having waved the crowd into profound silence, he commenced a eulogium upon the character of Washington: made patriotic allusions to the revolution and the late war, touched on the battle of New Orleans, apostrophised the American eagle, and then wound up his introduction with a very meaning sentiment levelled with great force and earnestness at the "iron arm of despotism." Imagining that he had fairly taken captive the admiration of his audience, Mr. Dumberton, of Big Pigeon, came to the point of his address, and gravely proposed that the emigration should adopt the *criminal* laws of Missouri and Tennessee for its future government.

No sooner had the speaker delivered himself of his proposition, than McFarley, who had been chafing like a stung bull for the last half hour, sprang up, and remarked that since the gentleman from Big Pigeon had found out we had robbers and thieves among us, he, (McFarley) would move that a penitentiary be engaged to travel in company if his proposal should pass.

Mr. Dumberton replied with a savage irony intended to annihilate his opponent, that "the gentleman who had suggested the last resolution, would doubtless find himself *taken in* if it did." Mr. McFarley denounced Mr. Dumberton as a demagogue, whereupon Mr. Dumberton appealed to the Genius of Liberty for the purity of his intentions in a most beautiful apostrophe.

But the Genius of Liberty not responding to the call of the gentleman from Big Pigeon in time, some fiery spirits interfered, and shifted the dispute to new questions and characters, extinguishing in a moment the hopes and pretensions of the Big Pigeon and its opposing faction.

After some deliberation of a more quiet and sensible character, the council resulted in adopting a set of resolutions as its guiding principles, and postponing for the time the election of a commander and his aids, leaving the chief direction temporarily in the hands of Captain John Grant, who was employed as our pilot for the route. An adjournment then took place with the understanding that we should start finally and altogether on the morning of the 22d, and halt at the Kansas river, for a final organization in the election of the commander and other officers.

As the resolutions adopted are interesting in a philosophical point of view, presenting as they do the spectacle of a free body of people, voluntarily assuming regulations and restrictions for the common benefit and safety of all—and as they are calculated to be of service to future companies of emigrants, I will here insert them.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE OREGON EMIGRATING SOCIETY.

Resolved—Whereas we deem it necessary for the government of all societies, either civil or military, to adopt certain rules and regulations for their government, for the purpose of keeping good order, and promoting civil and military discipline; therefore, in order to insure union and safety, we adopt the following rules and regulations for the government of said company.

Rule 1st.—Every male person of the age of sixteen or upwards shall be considered a legal voter in all the affairs regulating the company.

Rule 2d.—There shall be nine men elected by a majority of the company, who shall form a council, whose duty it shall be to settle all dis-

putes arising between individuals, and to try, and pass sentence on all persons for any act of which they may be guilty, which is subversive of good order and military discipline. They shall take especial cognizance of sentinels and members of the guard who may be guilty of neglect of duty, or of sleeping on their posts. Such persons shall be tried and sentence passed on them at discretion of council. A majority of two thirds of the council shall decide all questions that may come before them, subject to the approval or disapproval of the captain. If the captain disapprove of the decision of the council, he shall state to them his reasons, when they shall again pass upon the question, and if the decision is again made by the same majority, it shall be final.

Rule 3d.—There shall be a Captain elected, who shall have supreme military command of the company. It shall be the duty of the Captain to maintain good order and strict discipline, and as far as practicable, to enforce all rules and regulations adopted by the company. Any man who shall be guilty of disobeying orders, shall be tried and sentenced at the discretion of the council, which may extend to expulsion from the company. The Captain shall appoint the requisite number of duty sergeant, one of whom shall take charge of every guard, and who shall hold their offices at the pleasure of the Captain.

Rule 4th.—These shall be an orderly sergeant elected by the company, whose duty it shall be to keep a regular roll, arranged in alphabetical order, of every person subject to guard duty in the company, and shall make out his guard details by commencing at the top of the roll and proceeding to the bottom—thus giving every man an equal turn of guard duty. He shall also give the member of every guard notice when he is detailed for duty. He shall also parade every guard, call the roll and inspect the time of mounting. He shall also visit the guard at least once every night, and see that they are doing strict military duty, and may at any time give them the necessary instructions respecting their duty, and shall regularly make report to the Captain every morning, and be considered second in command.

Rule 5th.—The Captain, orderly sergeant, and members of the council, shall hold their offices at the pleasure of the company, and it shall be the duty of the council, upon the application of one third or more of the company, to order a new election, for either captain, orderly sergeant, or new member, or members of the council; or for all or any of them as the case may be.

Rule 6th.—The election for officers shall not take place until the company meet at Kansas river.

Rule 7th.—No family shall be allowed to take more than three loose

cattle to every male member of the age of sixteen or upwards."

I hardly need state that many of these remarkable regulations remained as from their very nature they needs must, a dead letter. The convocation, however, had performed the chief business they were called to accomplish, and each man at the adjournment, sought his quarters with the conviction that he had taken part in a proceeding but little short in points of dignity and grand importance to the declaration of independence itself.

It was grey dusk when the council of Elm Grove broke up, and the ceremony of supper to which I hastened with a right good will, led me into the night. When my meal was over, I paid a visit to the tent of John Robbins, and after passing an hour with his family, strolled out to take a view of the camp. Elm Grove is a spot situated in the plain of a vast prairie, and receives its distinction and its name from two beautiful elm trees that stand as solitary (?) land marks upon its surface. Though this was the first time I recognised the term of "grove" as applicable to but two trees, I felt willing from their extreme beauty to allow them any prerogative of definition they pleased to arrogate. The night, the scene, the stars, the air, were beautiful. The moon shed her silvery beams upon the white sheets of sixty wagons, whose arrangement marked the parallelogramic boundaries of our camp. A thousand head of cattle grazed upon the surrounding plain, fifty camp fires sent up their enlivening beams of comfort and good cheer, the cheerful sentinel whistled a lively air as he swaggered up and down his post, the sound of the violin, the flute, the flageolet, the accordion; the rich notes of manly voices, some in love ditties and some in patriotic strains, conjoined to lend romance and excitement to the scene. All was mirth, joy, and contentment, "save where some infant raised its fretful pipe," or where some party of infatuated gamblers were cursing the treacheries of a game of chance.

I passed by the tent of Big Pigeon, and overheard a fierce discussion on the new application of the veto power, as bestowed upon the Captain of the Company, and heard Dumberton denounce it, as "an absurd innovation upon a conservative system, and a most gross violation of a cardinal principle of political jurisprudence." Mr. Dumberton owned a circle of most ardent admirers, who if they did not exactly understand the meaning of all he said, (a matter that would have puzzled the gentleman from the vicinity of Kit Bullard's mill himself,) were most devotedly resolved to firmly believe every thing that fell from his lips, to be sound doctrine. There are in all societies classes of people, who would rather adhere and sacrifice to principles they do not understand, than abide by prop-

sitions, however good, that they do. There is something to hope from a mystery which confounds the senses, but a proposition that any one can understand is altogether beneath the notice of an aspiring imagination.

CHAPTER III.

The Start—Crossing of the Walpalusia—Visit of Pottawattomies—Crossing of the Kansas—Sinking of the Raft—New Recruits—Catholic Missionaries—Election of Officers—Crossing of Big Sandy—An Indian Visit—Crossing of the Blue—A Thunder Storm—Novel Race After Blankets—Meeting With the Osages and Kansas—Green and the Kaw—More Rain—New Organization and New Election—Friends in the Desert—The Dead Pawnee—Buffalo—Chase of an Antelope.

Early on the morning of the 22d, the signal was given for preparation, and the camp was soon in one universal babel of excitement. Our arrangements, however, were not all completed until after midday, when the teams being all hitched, the cattle herded, the tents struck and stowed, and the wagons all ready to take their places in the line, assigned them for the route, the bugle, (blown by Jim Wayne, who galloped up and down, as an aide-de-camp to the temporary commander,) sounded its last signal of departure, and away we streamed to the distance of two miles over the undulating billows of the prairie, at last fairly embarked for the region of our future home. The country we passed through this day, was one succession of gently undulating swells, clothed with a verdure that evinced the rich fertility of the soil. After a journey unmarked by any incidents, except the delays arising out of the confusion of a first start, we encamped about an hour before sunset; having accomplished but a distance of three miles. On the following day we succeeded no better, only making in all, four miles. Our cattle gave us a great deal of trouble, as they had heretofore been allowed unrestricted liberty in wandering over the plains, and had not yet been broken into the regularity of an onward march. We encamped this evening on the banks of a beautiful little river, called the Wapalusia, a tributary of the Kansas. It was but about twenty yards wide; its clear pellucid waters rolled over a pebbly bottom, and its abrupt banks were studded with the cotton wood, and ash, which on some portions of its course, intermingled their foliage across the stream.

As soon as we had fallen into our regular disposition for the night, and staked our horses, several of us turned out with nets and fishing-tackle, to sweep and to tickle the stream. But though we were successful in fur-

nishing ourselves with some amusement, we were not so successful in the object of our endeavors—being only fortunate enough to secure a few trout, most of which fell to the share of the female department of the expedition.

On the morning of the 24th, we made preparations for crossing the stream, but in consequence of the steepness of its banks, were obliged to let our wagons down with ropes, and to draw them up in the same way. This was the first proof we had, of the advantages possessed by the vehicles with falling tongues, for they were easily lifted out of danger, while the others ran against the bottom in their descent, and one of them was snapped off. Our cattle plunged into the water without any hesitation, and all crossing without difficulty, we were in a short time, regularly following our onward movement. We might have avoided all the delay and trouble of this crossing, if we had searched a hundred yards farther up the stream, for there we would have found a practicable ford.

While crossing, we received a flying visit from three Potawattomie Indians. They were out on a hunt, and were mounted on superb horses arrayed in saddles, bridles and martingales. They stopped but a moment to gaze at us, and then scoured away at top speed towards the south.

On the forenoon of the 26th, we arrived at the borders of the Kansas river, and finding it too high to ford, were obliged to come to a dead halt, and to devote the rest of the day to devising means to overcome the unexpected obstruction. Here, however, the unfortunate differences which arise out of the vanity of opinion, prevented the adoption of any practical measure, and the debate went over till the next day. On the following morning, 27th, a committee of three, received the delegated opinions of the whole, and were directed to make arrangements for crossing the river. Content with the compromise, the rest of us who chose, went to work at fishing for a fresh dinner.

(To be continued.)