

Source of Trail Excerpt:

James G. Willie Emigrating Company, Journal 1856 May-Nov., 16-53.

Tuesday 1st July

This morning the Company of the Thornton Ship signed receipts of passage from New York to Iowa City. A child died today.

We are getting ready for the plains and are getting 17 lbs. of luggage ready to cross the plains with as it is not possible to take more. We still continue busy making tents and all doing what they can to further our movement.

Wednesday 2nd July

This morning it is pouring with rain accompanied by thunder and lightning. Sister Mary Lewis, wife of Joseph Lewis was delivered of a son at 3 a.m. of the Bristol Branch in the midst of thunder and lightning. The tents not being done we had a good soaking. It is very hot today.

Thursday July 3rd

We had plenty of rain again last night with thunder & lightning. The tents are not yet done although Prest. Willie is unceasing in his exertions to keep the sisters to their work. Nothing of importance, but all have plenty to do guarding, making tents, etc.

Friday July 4th

This day being the day of Celebration for the Independence of the United States we suspended generally from work and held a meeting with the American Flag flying when many of the Brethren spoke and Elder Ferguson delivered an oration. Many strangers were present and appeared much pleased, and all passed off well.

Saturday July 5th

This morning Lars Julius Larsen was born, the son of Peter and Ann K. Larsen. Also died this morning, Sarah Ann, daughter of Sister Ann Cooper in the Camp late of the Cambridgeshire Conference, England. It is very warm today.

Sunday, July 6th.

It is very hot, the tents are not yet finished. We attended meeting this day, held two meetings in the Camp today & many strangers were present. A good feeling prevails among the Saints, and very little discontent manifest.

Monday, July 7th.

This morning, Mary Ledingham died, daughter of William & Catherine Ledingham, late of Leith, Scotland, aged 22 months.

Tuesday, July 8th.

The tents are now finished, and all are pretty comfortably provided for. Most of the company are now engaged washing clothes, while others are making the hand-carts, fitting up waggons, &c.

Wednesday, July 9th.

A company of Saints arrived that came in the Horizon from Liverpool numbering some 800 souls came up this evening in the midst of a terrible storm, and we as well as the other Companies accommodated them the best in our power. A sister of the Company died this morning.

July 10th

Selecting the cattle this morning for our Camp; also mules, waggons, &c. All are pretty well with plenty to do preparing to move. Weather very warm.

Friday, July 11th

Saints generally busy and feel well about their departure, and are making all exertion possible to get ready. Nothing of importance occurred this day, the health and spirits of the company good.

Saturday July 12th

Sister [Elizabeth] Bailey who was out of her mind was baptized by President Willie. All are busy getting their 17 lbs. weighed up this morning. A brother fell down in a fit but after being administered to soon recovered. We have about finished weighing up the luggage this day. Quite a number complaining of diarrhea. There was a meeting held this evening when President Willie was appointed to preside over the 4th Division of the P[erpetual] E[migrating] F[und] Hand-Cart Company. Elders [Millen] Atwood, [Levi] Savage, [William] Woodward & [John] Chislett were appointed to preside over hundreds of the said Company. And much good counsel was given by President Spencer.

Sunday, July 13th

A child died last night between 8 & 9 p.m., the daughter of Hannah Louiza Richins on the camping ground. Sister [Elizabeth] Ingra was baptized this morning. We had two meetings in the Camp today where some good doctrine was preached. Elder Willie also called a meeting of the Captains of Hundreds & proposed that Elders [William] Ledingham and [Edward] Griffiths be appointed Captain of the Guard & Commissary. The vote was carried unanimously & after some good instruction from President Willie we were dismissed.

Monday July 14th

The Captains of Hundreds and all hands are busy carrying out the instructions of Prest. Willie given last night, namely of weighing all luggage to be paid for the valley & taking an Inventory of all surplus property with valuation of same—All are in first rate spirits and more for the hand carts than the waggons.

Tuesday July 15th

We finished weighing the luggage today. Sister Eliza Hurren was delivered of a daughter about 6 a.m. yesterday; also Franklin Richins was born this day to John and Charlotte Richins of the Cheltenham Conference, & Richard Godfrey of Worcester Conference was joined in matrimony to Ann Herbert of the same Branch by Bishop Tyler.

We started out a short distance this day and encamped for the night, all in first rate spirits.

Friday 10th. The company rolled on as usual. After travelling a few miles we came up with several U.S. soldiers who had been to get firewood for their fort. We called at a trading post & obtained 37 Buffalo robes for the use of the Handcart Company, which had been engaged by Bro. F. D. Richards. Travelled about 6 miles & nooned. Rolled on again & forded the Platte river and camped on its banks. Travelled about 12 miles thro' the day.

Saturday 11th. Travelled about 12¼ miles & camped; the road was hilly. Several of our cows gave out that were hauling wagons; one died on the road or was killed by wolves.

Sunday 12th. Alfred Peacock & George (William) Edwick left our company & returned towards Fort Laramie. The company rolled on, passed a mineral lake & spring, passed thro' a "Rock Avenue" & nooned at the Alkali swamps & springs. Rolled on & camped at a clear stream of water, travelled about 13¾ miles. A cow was killed that was not fit to travel. The night was cold.

Monday 13th. The camp rolled on, passed the "Willow Springs", ascended "Prospect Hill", & nooned at a "Bad Slough". Rolled on to "Greasewood Creek" & camped for the night. Travelled about 13 miles. Paul Jacobsen, from Lolland, Denmark, aged 55 died this evening.

Tuesday 14th. Weather splendid. Road sandy. Rolled on to the Saleratus Lake & nooned. Travelled on, & the Handcarts with the people crossed the Sweetwater River on a bridge. The teams & wagons forded the stream. Camped about a mile west of "Independence Rock". Came about 13 miles. The people gathered considerable Saleratus from a lake on the left of the road east of "Independence Rock" of a superior quality.

Wednesday 15th. Early this morning, Caroline Reeder, from Linstead, Suffolk, England, aged 17 years, died. The camp rolled on, passed "Devils Gate" & nooned after travelling about 6 miles. The camp rolled on & we camped on the banks of the Sweetwater after making about 16 miles travel thro' the day. Many of the company are sick & have to ride in the wagons. One beef heifer & one poor cow were killed this evening for the camp. Last evening a council & a meeting were held to take into consideration our provisions & the time it was considered we should have to make it last before we could depend upon supplies. It was unanimously agreed to reduce the rations of flour one fourth—the men then would get 10½ ozs. per day; women, & large children 9 ozs. per day; children 6 ozs. per day; & infants 3 ozs. per day each.

Thursday 16th. Early this morning sister Ella, wife of Olof Wicklund was delivered of a son. George Curtis, from Norton, Gloucestershire, England, aged 64 years died; Lars Julius Larsen, who was born July 5th, 1856 in camp at Iowa City died. John Roberts from Bristol, Somersetshire, England, aged 42 years died. The camp rolled on, roads hilly & sandy, nooned after travelling about 5 miles; rolled on & camped on the banks of the Sweetwater. Many of our company are failing in health. Feed for the cattle scarce. Came about 11 miles.

Fri. 17th. William Philpot, aged 51 years, from Southampton, Hampshire, England died this morning about 2 o'clock. Camp rolled on in the morning, roads good, forded the Sweetwater & nooned, after travelling over 7 miles. Bro. Findlay found an ox able to work. A calf gave out & was killed by wolves. The company rolled on again, forded the Sweetwater twice between the mountains & travelled on a piece & camped; willows plenty for fuel; Travelled about 13 miles thro' the day.

Saturday 18th Rolled on in the morning & nooned on the Sweetwater. Forded the Sweetwater after dinner & camped on its banks. Travelled about [blank space] miles. A cow & calf was butchered for the company. James Henderson from Nixwood, Lanarkshire, Scotland died in the evening, aged 27 years.

Sunday 19th Rolled on in the morning, weather very cold. Ann Rowley died this morning, aged 2 yrs. Some of the children were crying with cold. Passed "Ice Springs"; just after we were passed the "springs" a snow storm came on, which lasted for about half an hour. The company rolled on again, & were soon met by Cyrus H. Wheelock & Joseph A. Young & two other brethren from the

Valley, bringing us the information that supplies were near at hand, the camp halted, a meeting was called. Bro. Wheelock informed us of the liberality of the Saints in the Valley, of Bro. Brigham Young's kindheartedness in speaking in behalf of the Handcart companies now on the Plains, & of himself fitting up ten teams & wagons & supplying them with flour, &c., & others in proportion, During the day Eliza Smith, from Eldersfield, Worcestershire, England, aged 40 years died; also John Kockles, from Norwich, Norfolk, England, died; also, Daniel Osborn, from Norwich, Norfolk, England died; also Rasmus Hansen, from Falster, Denmark, died. Travelled thro' the day about 16 miles; camped at dark on the banks of the Sweetwater. The teams mistook the road & did not get into camp till about 10 p.m. Monday 20th This morning there was about 4 inches of snow on the ground. Anna F. Tait from Glasgow, Scotland, aged 31 years died; Capt. Willie & Joseph Elder left camp to meet the "Relief Train" that had been sent from the Valley. Our provisions were all issued last night & that was hard bread.

Tuesday 21st. John Linford from Graveley, Cambridgeshire, England, aged 49 years died; also, Richard Hardwick, from Moorhen's Cross, Herefordshire, England, aged 63 years; also Mary Ann Perkins, from Norwich, Norfolk, England, aged 62 years died; also Sophia Larsen from Lolland, Denmark, aged 11 years. Many children were crying for bread and the camp generally were destitute of food. A beef heifer was killed for the camp. Capt. Willie, Capt. Grant, W. H. Kimball & others with 14 wagons with horse & mule teams arrived in camp with flour, onions & some clothing for the camp, this made the Saints feel well.

Wednesday 22nd. Camp rolled out. W.H. Kimball & others with 6 wagons went on to the Valley with us. G.D. Grant & others went on towards "Independence Rock" to meet Martin's Handcart Company. Travelled 11 miles & camped on the Sweetwater. Roads good considering the snow on the ground. Eliza Philpot from Southampton, Hampshire, England, died, aged 36; also John James from Whitbourne, Herefordshire, England, aged 61.

Thurs. 23rd. Ascended a steep hill, travelled about 16 miles & camped on the Sweetwater. Crossed several creeks on the road, several men were near frozen thro the day; 2 teams loaded w/ sick did not get to camp till very late. James Gibbs from Leith, East Lothian, Scotland, aged 67 died; also Chesterton J. Gilman from Yarmouth, Suffolk, England, aged 66 yrs. died.

Friday, 24th. Reddin N. Allred & others with 6 wagons came to camp this morning to assist the Handcart Company on our journey to the Valley. It was concluded to stay in camp today & bury the dead as there were 13 persons to inter. William James, from Pershore, Worcestershire, England, aged 46 died; Elizabeth Bailey, from Leigh, Worcestershire, England, aged 52 died; James Kirkwood from Glasgow, Scotland, aged 11 died Samuel Gadd, from Orwell, Cambridgeshire, England, aged 10 died; Lars Wendin [Venden], from Copenhagen, Denmark, aged 60 died; Anne Olsen, from Seeland, Denmark, aged 46 died; Ella Nilson, from Jutland, Denmark, aged 22 years, died; Jens Nilson, from Lolland, Denmark, aged 6 years died; Bodil Mortinsen from Lolland, Denmark, aged 9 years, died; Nils Anderson from Seeland, Denmark, aged 41 years died; Ole Madsen from Seeland, Denmark, aged 41 years died; Many of the Saints have their feet & hands frozen from the severity of the weather.

Saturday 25th. Rolled from camp in the morning. Thomas Gurdlestone from Great Melton, Norwich, aged 62 years died. William Groves, from Cranmoor, Somersetshire, England, aged 22 years died; Crossed the Sweetwater for the last time. Travelled about 15 miles & camped on the Sweetwater. Some brethren were stationed at this post on the river with supplies of flour & onions. John Walters [Watters] from Bristol, Somerset, England, aged [blank space] [65,] William Smith from Eldersfield, Worcestershire, England, aged 48 years died.

Sunday 26th. Morning fine & pleasant. Samuel Wit from Bristol, Somerset, England, aged [blank space] [66] years died; Mary Roberts from Eldersfield, Worcestershire, England, aged 44 years died. The camp rolled on, crossed the "South Pass" & Pacific Creek; travelled down Pacific creek & camped after travelling about 14 miles. Good place to camp for sagewood.

Monday 27th. Rolled out of camp, roads good, crossed Dry Sandy Creek, passed the Oregon Road, crossed Little Sandy & camped on its banks. Travelled about 18 miles. The health of the camp improves slowly.

Tuesday 28th. Travelled about 8 miles, crossed Big Sandy creek, travelled down its banks about 3 miles & camped. Weather fine. Saints improving in health.

Wednesday 29th. Anders Jensen, from Copenhagen, Denmark, aged 49 years died this morning. Rolled from camp & travelled about 15 miles. Camped on Big Sandy after crossing it. Kersten Knutesen, from Seeland, Denmark, aged [blank space] [60] years died in the evening.

Thursday, 30th[.] Rolled from Big Sandy to Green River, 11 miles, forded the river and camped on its banks. Many persons were sick & it was late before they were in camp. Bros. Atwood, Woodward & Christiansen staid behind the main body of the camp to urge on the sick & see that none were left behind. Mary Gurdlestone, from Great Melton, Norfolk, England, aged 59 years died in the morning. Joseph Osborn from Bath, Somersetshire, England, aged 43 years died in the evening. A large fire was kindled in the evening, a meeting was held & several of the Brethren addressed the audience.

Friday 31st[.] Left Green River, met with wagons from Fort Supply, & the Valley to assist us on our journey; 7 wagons were from the former place & 3 from the latter. Crossed Hams Fork & camped on its banks; travelled 18 miles. Bro. Savage with the ox & cow teams did not get to camp this evening.

Saturday Nov. 1st[.] Rolled out of camp, met several teams to assist our company on to the Valley. Drove 15 miles and camped. Daniel

Osborn, from Norwich, Norfolk, England, aged 35 years died in the evening. A snow storm came on after we camped but did not last long.

Sunday 2nd. Camp rolled out. Ephraim Hanks passed our camp this morning, bringing news from the Valley of many teams being on the road, & that he was going on to the rear companies to meet them. Bros. Willie, Woodward, & Christiansen staid behind to bring up the sick. This morning we had not teams enough to haul the feeble that were left behind. After a short time several teams came on from the Valley & picked up the sick. The brethren that staid behind were late into camp. The company camped about half a mile west of Fort Bridger, travelled about 15 miles. James Cole of Fort Supply married Lucy Ward of the 4th Handcart Company at Fort Bridger in the evening. Bro. Willie' s feet were in such a bad condition from frost that he was unable to walk to the Camp; a wagon was sent for him. Peter Madsen, from Jutland, Denmark, aged 49 years died in the evening.

#### November

Monday 3rd. Several wagons came into our camp from the Valley to assist us on our journey this morning. We rolled out of camp about 11 a.m., passed Gilbert & Gerrish' s merchant train going on slowly to the Valley. Crossed the "Basin Rim", forded Muddy Creek & camped on its banks. Some 10 (ten) ox teams with wagons were camped alongside us & were on their way to meet the rear companies. A meeting was held in the evening, the brethren from the Valley attended. It was considered advisable to send on an express to the Valley & report the condition of things in the mountains in regard to the companies on the plains. W. H. Kimball said he would go as the express & he appointed Bro. Gould captain of the horse-teams & Bro. Wm. Hyde, captains of the ox-teams; travelled about 12 miles. Night cold.

Tuesday 4th. W. H. Kimball & Bro. Thomas went on to the Valley this morning. Camp rolled on to Bear River, forded the stream and camped on its banks. Bro. Blair with 3 ox wagons was camped on the opposite bank of the river. Met several teams during the day going to relieve the rear companies. Potatoes, onions & clothing was distributed among the different Hundreds in the evening. Franklin B. Woolley came on from A.O. Smoot' s train informing the company that President B. Young had sent word that some freight still lying at "Fort Bridger" was to be brought in this season & that some teams and men of our company were needed to go on to "Bridger". Several teams & men were selected for the trip.

Friday 5th [Wednesday 5th.] Rolled on in the morning & crossed Yellow Creek, ascended a steep hill & then go down Echo Canyon [Canyon] & camped; travelled about 23 miles & camped. Peter Madsen, from Copenhagen, Denmark, aged 66 years died during the day; Susannah Osborn from Norwich, Norfolk, England, aged 33 years died this day. A snow storm came on this evening. The people are much exposed to cold from lying on the cold ground.

Nov. 6th. Archibald McPhiel, from Greenock, Argyshire, Scotland, died about 2 a.m. aged 40 years. Much snow on the ground this morning & still more falling. Go down Echo Canyon, roads very bad at the crossing of streams; forded Weber River & camped on its banks. It snowed most of the day. The camping ground presented a most dismal appearance, as we rolled on to it there being much snow on the ground & it being late at night. Rasmus P. Hansen, from Lan [blank space] Denmark, aged 16 years, died this evening.

Friday 7th. The camp rolled on, crossed a steep hill & came into East Canyon; crossed East Canyon Creek several times & camped in a cottonwood grove; good place to camp for wood. Maria S. Jorgen [Maren Sophie Jorgensen] from Lango, Denmark, aged 8 years died; Theophilus Cox, from Bristol, Somersetshire, England, aged 25 years died; William Empey from Eaton Bray, Bedfordshire, England, aged 9 years died. During the night day we passed some teams going to relieve the rear companies.

Saturday 8th Travelled up the Canyon about 3 miles, & then ascended the Big Mountain, which was difficult for teams to gain the top; go down the mountain & camp about a mile from the Little Mountain. Bro. Blair left us early this morning for the Valley. We travelled about 13 miles during the day. W.H. Kimball came to camp this evening; also , a load of provisions for the camp. W.H. Kimball & W. Woodward took an account of persons who had made engagements where they were going to stay in the mountains.

Sunday 9th[.] Early this morning. The people were busy preparing to enter the Valley. Rhoda R. Oakey from Eldersfield, Worcestershire, England, aged 11 years died this morning. The teams after some difficulty ascended the Little Mountain & rolled down Emigration Canyon . Several of the wagons passed Captain Smoot' s Church train in the Canyon. The wagons formed in order on the bench at the mouth of the Canyon & rolled on to the City. Captain Smoot' s train went ahead. F.D. Richards, S.W. Richards & many others came to meet us on the Bench & went ahead of us into the City. As soon as the company arrived in the City of Great Salt Lake, the Bishops of the different wards took every person that was not provided for a home & put them into comfortable quarters. Hundreds of persons were round the wagons on our way thro' the city welcoming the company safely home.

#### Appendix.

After the loss of many of our oxen, west of Fort Kearney, we hunted for them some four days & then sent two young men back on the road towards Missouri River to see if they could find them. As our oxen were gone & we still had some cows, we yoked many of them up, lighted the loads that were in the wagons by putting some 6000 lbs. of flour on our handcarts & rolled on towards the Valley, Bro. F.D. Richards & company, & the two young men we sent to hunt our cattle overtook us at North Bluff Fork of the Platte, but brought us no information of our cattle.

After we left Fort Laramie we reduced the rations of the camp with regard to flour. Instead of men & women & children over 6 years of

age receiving one pound of flour daily, in a public meeting, the camp agreed to submit to what the officers of the company considered for their preservation as our supplies were running out, & Capt. Willie had the assurance from Bro. F.D. Richards that supplies should be on hand at "Pacific Springs"; Our object in reducing the rations was to make them hold out till we should arrive at the point mentioned. Captain Willie drew up a scale, flour was issued accordingly—men were to have 14 ozs. per day, women 12 ozs. per day, children 9 ozs. per day, & infants 4 ozs. per day. This took place some few miles west of Laramie. The emigrants having to cross the North Fork of the Platte 3 times after we left Laramie, thro' cold water & having again to reduce our rations of flour at Independence Rock, men to receive 10½ ozs., women 9 ozs., children 6 ozs., & infants 3 ozs. of flour daily, & having to cross the Sweetwater River several times, also to sleep on the cold ground with very little bedding, as only 17 lbs. of luggage was allowed to each individual, many of the people failed in strength & many of the aged died exhausted. The diarrhea took hold of many which greatly weakened our camp, our wagons were crowded with sick which broke down our teams & we had to refuse many who were worthy to ride.

C.H. Wheelock & Joseph A. Young with two other brethren met us a short distance west of "Ice Springs" & brought us the cheering intelligence that assistance was near at hand; that several wagons loaded with flour, onions, & clothing, including bedding was within a day's drive of us. That same night we issued all provisions to the camp which was hard bread that was bought at Laramie (the last of our flour being issued the night before) left us about destitute of provisions for the camp. In the morning we found the ground covered with snow some 4 or 5 inches deep. Bro. Willie & Joseph Elder started in search of the "Relief Train" as we could not move our camp & they did not arrive back again till the following evening, when the "Relief Train" under the charge of George D. Grant came to our camp. Flour & onions were issued that same evening, clothing, bedding, &c. were give to the camp the next morning. Nine persons were buried at that camping ground. Snow was on the ground & looked dismal. W.H. Kimball and others with 6 wagons went with us to the Valley. G.D. Grant & others went on their way to meet the rear handcart companies. Crossing the Rocky ridge was a severe & disastrous day to health. The weather was cold & it snowed & blowed some of the time making it bad for the sick who rode in the wagons & for those who pulled the handcarts. The next day we buried 13 souls near Willow Creek on the banks of the Sweetwater. From that time till we entered the Valley many died. They were the old, the infirm, & the debilitated. Oftentimes the snow had to be cleared from the ground that the tents might be set & the people have a place to sleep. The provisions were given out every night & often it was from 10 to 12 p.m. before all the camp could retire to rest. Help, in the shape of wagons & provisions continued to reach us till we arrived in G.S.L. City. The number of persons that died belonging to the handcart Company was 67 souls & one child belonging to a wagon that joined our company above Florence making the total of deaths 68 souls.

William Woodward clerk of the camp from  
October 1st till our arrival in  
G.S.L. City.