

## **Captain Mahlon M. Wambaugh Train**

compiled by Stephenie Flora

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**Wambaugh left April 28 from St. Joseph with 20 wagons. He was followed the 29<sup>th</sup> by Capt. Thomas Gates with about 40 wagons and the 30<sup>th</sup> by the train under Capt. Charles Miller with 23 wagons. Two weeks later, on May 15, he was joined by 15-20 wagons from a company traveling behind him which may have been members of the Gates Company. According to Rufus Burrows this made 51 wagons, about 200 people, 250 head of oxen, 200-300 head of stock cattle and about 50 saddle horses. On June 1, at Fort Laramie his company was joined by the James Clyman train with 10 wagons and 60 men and the P.B. Cornwall train with 4 wagons. Both the latter companies were heading to CA.**

### **Wambaugh Camp Rules**

1. A Camp Master shall be elected and it shall be his duty to select places of encampment and shall determine the order of traveling
2. All men over 14 years of age shall be placed on a guard list and details of guards shall be made up from this list by rotation.
3. Four Sergeants shall be selected whose duty it is to see that the guards are at their posts.
4. A list of families shall be made in alphabetical order. The family at the top shall take the lead on the first day followed by the others in alphabetical order. Each day thereafter, the lead shall change with the leader of that previous day falling to the rear. No wagon shall start until the Camp Master gives the order. The company shall keep as close together as possible.
5. Everyone shall exercise caution with their firearms.
6. If a majority of the Company is dissatisfied with the Camp Master, a meeting shall be called to consider his replacement.
7. Any question submitted at a meeting shall be decided by a majority vote.
8. The Camp Master shall be relieved from performing guard duty and for causes deemed sufficient he may excuse anyone else from standing guard.
9. The company may accept any emigrant who may arrive after this date.
10. was added later and stated that all dogs must be tied up securely every night to prevent alarms, etc.



[map compiled by Robert Anderson]

## Diaries, Journals, Reminiscences, Letters:

\*RR: Riley Root.

\*RGB: Rufus Gustavus Burrows “A Long Road to Stony Creek” [published by Lewis Osborne, Ashland, Oregon, 1971], member of James Clyman company

\*BBB: Benjamin Burden Branson [An Illustrated History of the State of Oregon by Hines p. 807-8 Biography of Benjamin Burden Branson]

\*TC: Thomas Corcoran Letters

\*RR: —April 3 set out from home in Knox County, Illinois, to Nauvoo, Quincy, south to St. Louis and on to St. Joseph. In his journal Root describes St. Joseph as a town consisting of “1,800 inhabitants, [which] contained 18 stores, 3 drug stores, 9 groceries, 6 tailor shops, 8 blacksmith shops, 2 tin shops, 3 taverns, 3 boarding houses, 1 steam and 1 water flouring mill and 2 steam sawmills” Its residents included “15 lawyers, 11 doctors, 2 silversmiths and 2 gunsmiths

crossed the Missouri River

\*RR: **April 25** “crossed the Missouri River with a party of emigrants bound for Oregon”

Wambaugh Train organized

\*RR: **April 27** “organized into a company of 15 or 20 wagons”

Iowa and Sach Mission Boarding School

**\*RR:** April 28, remained for 3 days

Nemachaw creek

**\*RR:** May 3

Blue Creek

**\*RR:** May 7

Wyatt fork of Blue Creek

**\*RR:** May 8

Walnut creek or Sandy

**\*RR:** May 9

Little fork of Little Sandy

**\*RR:** May 10

Blue Creek

**\*RR:** May 12

killed first buffalo on Blue River

**\*RR:** May 14

Wambaugh adds additional wagons

**\*RR:** May 15 "*joined by a party of a few wagons which had been traveling behind us*" [probably from Capt. Gates train] and which "*came up and joined our party, making in all about 30 wagons.*"

Platt River

**\*RR:** May 16 "*constant harassment by the Sioux made it necessary to have a pow-wow and bestow gifts in order to continue*"

City du Chein at Plumb Creek

**\*RR:** May 18

Crossing of South fork of Platte

**\*RR:** May 24

Ash Hollow, North Platte

**\*RR:** May 27

Babel Tower

**\*RR:** May 30

June

Chimney Rock. Scotts Bluffs

**\*RR:** June 1

## Fort Laramie

Joined by [Pierre B. Cornwall](#) and [James Clyman](#) companies

**\*RR:** June 3 reached Fort Laramie where they laid by for 3 days to rest and recruit stock “*built of sun-dried bricks, with timbers to support the bricks and form the doors and windows, and done in the coarsest manner*”. Also at the fort at that time were members of the American Fur Company. Root was informed by the Principal at the Fort that “*the Company shipd from Fort Pier, the year 1847, more than 80,000 buffalo robes, between 11,000 and 12,000 of which were obtained at Fort Laramie, besides a great amount of other peltry.*”

**\*RGB: no date** “*After our arrival at Fort Laramie, our train was soon organized with the election of Wm Wambo (sic-M.M. Wambaugh) as the Captain of the train. Our train consisted of fifty-one wagons, about two hundred people all told, two hundred and fifty head of oxen to draw the wagons, and besides these, we had two or three hundred head of stock cattle and about fifty head of saddle horses.*”

“*Wambo made a fine captain, and was also a fine man. If he ever had one word of trouble with anyone in the train on our long trip, I fail to bring it to mind. I will state that we never had reason to regret our long arduous trip across the continent*”

## Black Hills Gap

**\*RR:** June 7

## Big Timber Creek

**\*RR:** June 10

## Mike's Head Creek

**\*RR:** June 11

## Deer Creek

**\*RR:** June 12

## Platte crossing

**\*RR:** June 15 “*the Mormons had arrived a few days previous, and preparad a raft for crossing.*”

## Platte River Indian Attack

**\*TC:** no date “*The second problem we had was on the Platte River (Nebraska). The Pawnee Indians were trying to steal from us. They kept shooting around us all day. We traveled all night to get to the Sioux Indians who were friendly with the whites. I slept in a wagon part of the night with my rifle and pistol by my side, ready for an attack. Other men rode on each side of the wagons. We came to a half-about at daybreak near a little bend in the Platte River. The sleeping men were awakened and rode guard while the others slept. Shortly after sunrise, I walked about a mile ahead of the wagon train and saw about six Indian warriors coming down on us. I hurried back to the camp and told them what I had seen. They corralled the wagons and made a line of defense with them. We had an interpreter with us by the name of Fallon. He went out to meet them. They told him that they had been fighting with the Sioux Indians that morning and about sixty of their tribe has been killed. They told us that we must give them provisions and clothing. We told them that we had nothing to give them. They had their bows strung and were all ready to fire on us. They were all around us and each of us had a pistol in one hand and a rifle*

*in the other, waiting to see which would fire first. They got around in front of the wagon in which I had slept and one of them took hold of my blankets. He was going to carry them off. I got up on the tongue of the wagon and pushed him away. They then made a break and stole all of Young's blankets. This was the Young that lived in Hayes Grove. Then we leveled our rifles at them and they took to their heels and ran. We then hitched our teams to the wagons and drove to the Sioux village and arrived that evening. The Sioux were glad to receive white travelers and they hoisted the American flag on a pole. They told us that we could go thru their Nation in peace but not to kill any more buffalo than we needed to eat."*

Willow Spring, Red Buttes, Sweetwater River

**\*RR:** June 17

Independence Rock

**\*RR:** June 19

Fork of Sweetwater

**\*RR:** June 26

South Pass, Table Rock, Pacific Springs

**\*RR:** June 27

Little Sandy Creek

**\*RR:** June 28

Great Sandy Creek, Greenwoods Cutoff, Cole pit rock

**\*RR:** June 29

Green River

**\*RR:** June 30

July

Salmon Trout branch

**\*RR:** July 2

Ham's fork

**\*RR:** July 4

Bear River at Smith Fork

**\*RR:** July 6



The photo was taken from about 8,000 ft on top of one of the buttes, looking due west. The furthest line of (snow covered) mountains is the Bear River Range west of Bear Lake. Next closer (somewhat browner) are the mountains on the east side of Bear Lake. Third down there are the greener butte tops. Bear River is in the valley between the browner & greener ridge lines, about 15 mi. distant from where I took the photo. [contributed by Robert Anderson]

#### Thomas' fork of Bear River

**\*RR:** July 7

#### Bear River

**\*RR:** July 9 *"laid by with fifteen sick, one of whom died during the day"*

**\*RGB:** no date *"on account of one sick man, Mr. Huntsucker, the train was delayed for a while."*

**\*BBB** no date *"At Bear river their journey was marked by two events, namely, a death and birth. Thomas Bateman, a young man without relatives in the company, died of mountain fever and was buried. The same day Mrs. Jeremiah Dickens gave birth to a child which is now a resident of Albany, Oregon."*

#### Soda Springs

**\*RR:** July 11

**\*TC:** no date *"Nothing of note happened until we came to Soda Springs. Fallen and Gunthrie said that they knew a cut-off that would shorten the distance 200 miles. They knew all the Rocky Mountain country as they had been trading and trapping in this country for the last 25 years. They were going to start next morning as they were tired of stopping and traveling so slow with the oxen drawn wagons. They coaxed me to go with them. The three of us were to start at 6 o'clock the next morning. I bought an*

*Indian pony to carry my clothes and other things. They came after me at the appointed time but I was asleep. Fallen asked Parks to wake me but Parks made some excuse and said that I would not be able to stand the trip. When I awoke, they had already started. I had never slept as long as I did that morning. We heard no more of Fallen or Gunthrie until we got to the Truckee River. There were some Snake Indians who came along with us. As they were out hunting on the river, they came across some wild Indians. They told them that there were two men who came ahead of us and that they had had a fight with the Indians for two days. The Indians had them corralled in a bunch of timber. Somehow, they escaped during the night and were never heard from again. It was supposed that they perished from wounds or starvation.”*

Portneuf head waters

**\*RR:** July 12

Fort Hall

**\*RR:** July 15 from where the company followed the Snake River on and off for 3 weeks

Portneuf Crossing

**\*RR:** July 16

Cascade Creek, American Falls

**\*RR:** July 18

Cassie Creek

**\*RR:** July 19

Swamp Creek marsh

**\*RR:** July 20

Goose Creek

**\*RR:** July 21

Rock Creek

**\*RR:** July 23

Warm Spring Creek

**\*RR:** July 25

Salmon Falls

**\*RR:** July 26

Salt Grass Creek

**\*RR:** 3 July 1

August

Grease Wood Creek

**\*RR:** August 1

Hot Springs

**\*RR:** August 4

Owyhe river, Fort Boise

**\*RR:** August 6 “*Fort Boyce, located in a pleasant place, on the bank of the Snake River.*” The stream here was “*near a quarter of a mile wide, and the only means of ferrying it, a canoe brought from the Payette, 250 miles*” away.

Malheur river

**\*RR:** August 8 Going through the scared regions north of Malheur Root stated it was “*fit only for a Hercules to use in leveling off the surface of some planet*” Reflecting on the journey he exclaimed: “*Oh when shall I view once more a verdant landscape! One thousand miles of naked rocks! Landscape without soil: River bottoms with scarcely grass enough to support emigrant teams. Who can but think of his native home and the `old oaken bucket`?*”

Birch Creek

**\*RR:** August 9

Sulphur Creek, Burnt River

**\*RR:** August 10

Burnt River north fork

**\*RR:** August 13

**\*BBB:** no date “When they reached the Burnt river. Mrs. Rebecca Dawson, a member of their company, a lady seventy-four years of age who was coming to Oregon with her children, died.”

Lone Pine stump, Powder River Valley

**\*RR:** August 14 described by Root as “*A delightful Eden—had it soil and were it covered with luxuriant grasses.*”

Powder River west branch

**\*RR:** August 15

Grande Ronde Valley

**\*RR:** August 16 Reaching the Grand Ronde Valley the company found that the Indians has set fires and a heavy haze hung over the route from Powder River to Grande Ronde. “*The air so smoky that we can see but a short distance.*”

Grande Ronde river

**\*RR:** August 17

Blue Mountains

**\*RR:** August 18



Lee's Encampment

**\*RR:** August 19

Umatilla River, Mount Prospect

**\*RR:** August 20

Alder Creek, Whitman's cutoff

**\*RR:** August 23

Well Spring

**\*RR:** August 24 "Following down the Umatilla, the company nooned *"on the battleground of the 24<sup>th</sup> of February, between Oregon soldiers and the Cayuse Indians."*

Quesnell's Creek

**\*RR:** August 25

John Day's River, Beaver fork of John Day's River

**\*RR:** August 28

Deschutes River

**\*RR:** August 31 *"two days were spent calking the wagons and ferrying the river."*

September

Barlow's Gate

**\*RR:** September 3

Deschutes Valley, Palmer's Cabin

**\*RR:** September 6

Laurel Hill

**\*RR:** September 8

Muddy fork of Sandy

**\*RR:** September 9

Devil's backbone

**\*RR:** September 10

Sandy Creek

**\*RR:** 1 September 1 reached *"first settlement at the west foot of the Cascades"*

Oregon City

**\*RR:** September 13

**Members of Wambaugh Train**

**Note: those designated as single were traveling without family in the train and it is not a reference to their marital status. Many are unmarked because no additional information has been found to indicate whether they were traveling with other family members.**

**An asterisk in front of a name indicates they cut off for Oregon  
Names that are underlined were original members of the Wambaugh train**

**\* Adams, Thomas Perry, 28**

wife: Susannah Broadhead, 15 (had child in October after arrival)

**Austin, Joseph C., 39**

wife: Katherine Adams, 22

son: Charles H., 4

son: Henry B., 1

**\*Avery, Richard Benjamin, 16 (stepson of John Stipp)**

**\*Avery, Thomas W., 15 (stepson of John Stipp)**

**\*Avery, Mary Priscilla, 13 (step daughter of John Stipp)**

**\*Avery, William Chaffey, 11 (stepson of John Stipp)**

**\*Avery, James Thomas, 5 (stepson of John Stipp)**

**\*Baker, Dr. Dorsey Syng, 25, single**

**Bateman, Thomas, single, died at Bear river of mountain fever, no relatives on train**

**\*Bauer, Andrew, 38 [seen listed as Bowers]**

wife: Theresa Smelzer, 38

**\*Branson, William, 57**

wife: Martha Cooper, 33

son: Benjamin Burden Branson, 18 (son of first wife, Sally M. Graves)

son: George Washington Branson, 16 (son of first wife, Sally M. Graves)

son: Thomas Clinton Branson, 12 (son of first wife, Sally M. Graves)

dau: Mary L. Branson, 7

dau: Sarah Catherine Branson, 5

dau: Alida L. Branson, 3

dau: Rebecca Branson, 1

**Brock, Elisha Estes, 46, brother of Robert and Tarlton**

**Brock, Robert, believed to be brother of Elisha and Tarlton**

**Brock, Tarlton Fleming, 39, brother of Elisha and Robert**

**Burrows: Chloe Ann: see Rufus Hitchcock (step daughter of Rufus Hitchcock)**

**Burrows, Rufus: see Rufus Hitchcock (step son of Rufus Hitchcock)**

**Burrows, Susan Ann: see Rufus Hitchcock (step daughter of Rufus Hitchcock)**

**\*Cline, Peter Davis, 49**

wife: Jemima Neal, 48

**Corcoran, Thomas** (original member of P. B. Cornwall party, boarding with Kellogg family. Agreement dissolved and he joined David Parks wagon)

**\*Cripe, Benjamin, 21**, returned to Indiana by 1850 census (believed to be cousin of Rhinehart Cripe)

**\*Cripe, Rhinehart, 28**, returned to Indiana by 1850 census and returned to California with his family after the Civil War (believed to be cousin of Benjamin Cripe)

**\*Crooks, John Turley, 41**, elected Capt. of party cutting off for Oregon at Ft. Hall

wife: Demercy Everman, 35

son: Barton William Crooks, 14

son: Aaron Harlan Crooks, 13

son: Richard Harrison Crooks, 11

son: John Thomas Crooks, 9

son: Joseph Henry Crooks, 7

son: Abraham Warford Crooks, 6

son: Samuel Thompson Crooks, 4

dau: Mary Jane Crooks, born in December after arrival

**Dawson, Rebecca Mrs.**, age 74, died at Burnt River, traveling with her children

**\*Dickens, Rev. Reuben, 51**

wife: Nancy Phillips, 43

son: Jeremiah Dickens, 25

wife: Leah Parmelia

dau: born at Bear River

son: John Dickens, 24

son: Jehu Dickens, 22

son: Joshua Dickens, 20

dau: Julia Ann "Annie" Dickens, 18

son: Jesse Dickens, 16

son: Jordan Dickens, 14

dau: J. Eleanor "Ella" Dickens, 11

**\*Emery, James, 25**, single

**\*Gates, Alonzo, 21**, single

**\*Gates, Thomas W., 28** (listed by many as also an emigrant of 1847 but have seen no documentation to substantiate the claim)

**Hardman, Levi**

**Harper, W. W.**

**\*Houston, Robert, 55** (2 wagons, 11 yoke of oxen, 3 cows, 2 horses)

wife: Mary Brown, 43

son: Newton Houston, 20

son: Milton L. Houston, 18

son: James Brown Houston, 15

dau: Melissa Houston, 10  
son: Thomas Benton Houston, 6  
son: Robert Houston, 4

**Hunsaker, Daniel. 44 (4 wagons, 16 yoke oxen, 125 head of cattle)**

wife: Charlotte N. King, 40  
son: Joseph Hunsaker, 18  
son: James Carroll Hunsaker, 14  
son: Harrison King Hunsaker, 10

**\*Jones, Samuel T., 22, single, went to California, returned east and emigrated again in 1851**

**\*King, William Myron, 48**

wife: Mary Hadley, 31  
dau: Marian W King., 10  
dau: Ellen D. King, 7  
dau: Caroline King, 5  
son: Grl J. W. King, 1

**\*Latourette, Lyman Dewitt Clinton, 23, single**

**Lefleur, Levi**

**McPherson, John, single (teacher, journalist, poet, historian in California)**

**\*Miller, John**

**Mullen, G. W.**

**Parks, David, 43**

wife: Catherine Schneleberger, 40  
son: John Parks, 18  
son: Absalom Parks, 17  
son: David Parks Jr, 16  
son: Charles Parks, 13  
son: Isaac Parks, 6  
son: William Parks, 4  
son: Daniel Parks, 1

**\*Patterson, Ira, 48**

wife: Martha Halstead, 41  
son: William Denman Patterson, 14  
dau: Zillah Halstead Patterson, 12  
dau: Susan K. Patterson, 9  
dau: Susan Rebecca Patterson, 4

**Patterson, Samuel**

**\*Patton, William Thomas. 20, single (driver for Reuben Dickens)**

**\*Pigg, Reuben, 49**

wife: Adeline Bett, 43  
[son, John, emigrated in 1847]  
son: William Frederick Pigg, 18  
dau: Nancy J. Pigg, 16  
dau: Ellen Pigg, 15  
dau: Lucretia Pigg, 11  
son: Reuben Pigg, 9  
son: Henry C. Pigg, 7  
dau: Mary A. Pigg, 4

Pringle, mentioned by Thos Corcoran as being on train

Richard, John (trader at Fort Laramie, traveled with Wambaugh company from St. Joseph to Fort Laramie)

\*Robinson, James

\*Root, Riley, 53, single

Sharp, Hamilton

Shields, Henry

Shields, James, died on Mary's River (the Humboldt in Nevada) when he pulled his rifle out of his wagon and accidentally shot himself

\*Stipp, John, 42

wife: Lucretia (Ellis) Avery, 42  
son: Daniel Stipp, 14 (son of first wife, Sarah)  
dau: Elizabeth Stipp, 7 (dau of first wife, Sarah)  
dau: Nancy Stipp, 6 (dau of first wife, Sarah)  
dau: Sarah Stipp, 3 (dau of first wife, Sarah)  
see: Avery for step children of John Stipp

\*Trullinger, Daniel, 47 (3 wagons with several cows, chickens, pigs, horses)

wife: Elizabeth Amanda Johnson, 43  
son: Gabriel Trullinger, 24  
son: Nathan H. Trullinger, 22  
    wife: Frances Grisham  
son: John C. Trullinger, 20  
dau: Amanda Trullinger, 18  
dau: Mary Jane Trullinger, 15  
dau: Elizabeth Trullinger, 12  
dau: Eliza Trullinger, 10  
dau: Evangeline Trullinger, 10  
son: Daniel Trullinger, 8  
dau: Sarah Trullinger, 5

\*Trullinger, David; probably refers to Daniel Trullinger, no David found

**\*Wilcox, Elias Dudley, 59 not known if they came to OR first and then to CA but Nathan was in CA for 1850 census and no sign of Elias Wilcox**

**son: Wilcox, Nathan C., 29, NY**

**wife: Harriet A. Holt., 19**

**son: Jasper Wilcox, 2,**

**Young, [ ], mentioned by Thos Corcoran as being “*the Young that lived in Hayes Grove.*”**