

Travel Guides and Descriptions of Traveling the Oregon Trail Frémont's Route

Excerpt from “Frémont's Route to California and Oregon.” In *The Emigrant's Guide to New Mexico, California, and Oregon; Giving the Different Overland and Sea Routes*. New York: John Disturnell, 1850. Newberry Library call number Graff 5306.

“The route via Independence, or *St. Joseph*, Mo., to Fort Laramie, South Pass, Fort Hall, – the Sink of Mary's River, &c. (thence to Suter's Fort,) the *old route*, – is the best. Let no emigrant, carrying his family with him, deviate from it, or imagine to himself that he can find a better road. This road is the best that has yet been discovered, (to Oregon and California,) leading to the bay of San Francisco and the Gold Region, and is much the shortest.

“The lightest wagon that can be constructed of sufficient strength to carry twenty-five hundred pounds weight, is the vehicle most desirable. This wagon can be hauled by three or four yokes of oxen, or six mules. Pack-mules can only be employed by parties of men.

“The provisions actually necessary for a man are as follows: – 150 lbs. flour, 150 lbs. bacon, 25 lbs. coffee, 30 lbs. sugar. Added to these, the main items, there should be a small quantity of rice, 50 or 75 lbs. crackers, dried peaches, &c., and a keg of lard, with salt, pepper, vinegar, &c. Every man should be provided with a good rifle, and, if convenient, with a pair of pistols, five pounds of powder, and ten pounds of lead. With the wagon, there should be carried such carpenter's tools as a handsaw, auger, gimblet, chisel, shaving-knife, &c., axe, hammer, and hatchet. Families, as well as parties going out, should carry with them good tents, to be used after their arrival as houses.

“Emigrants should be at Independence, Mo., or the point of starting by the 20th April, and start as soon thereafter as the grass on the prairies will permit. This is on the first of May, and sometimes ten days later, according to the season.