

## THE BANNOCK STAKE OF ZION.

BY ANDREW JENSON.

In the spring of 1857, President Smith again visited Utah, but returned to Fort Limhi on the 8th of May, 1857, in company with President Brigham Young and a strong escort who came to pay a visit to the Saints in Oregon. The following interesting account of this visit to Fort Limhi, was written by a member of the party and published in the DESERET NEWS of June 10, 1857:

"His Excellency Governor Young, Presidents Heber C. Kimball and Daniel H. Wells and Elders Orson Hyde and Franklin D. Richards, with several others, left Salt Lake City, on Friday, the 24th of April, to visit the settlement on Salmon River, to rest their minds, to invigorate their bodies, and to examine the intermediate country. The company reached Brigham City on the afternoon of the 25th, attended meeting there in the forenoon of Sunday, the 26th, were joined by Elder Lorenzo Snow and others of that city and several from Ogden City, North Ogden and Willow Creek, and in the afternoon passed on to Bear River ferry, crossed over and camped on the right bank and organized by unanimously electing Presidents Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball and Daniel H. Wells, presidents of the company; Elders Orson Hyde, Franklin D. Richards and Lorenzo Snow, chaplains; Robert T. Burton, captain; Jesse C. Little, marshal; Warren S. Snow, sergeant of the guard; Albert Carrington, Jesse W. Fox, and T. D. Brown, engineers; James W. Cummings and T. D. Brown, clerks; with a captain to each of the five rens. The organized company comprised 115 men, 22 women and 5 boys, with 163 horses and mules, 54 wagons and carriages, and two light boats, with decking planks for ferrying.

"On the 27th and 28th the general course was a little west of north, up Bear River to the ford, then deflecting westerly into Malad Valley, which opens onto Bear River, and up that valley, crossing several small tributaries to the Malad, also its left hand fork, and camping on the 28th near the head spring of the right hand branch of the right fork of the Malad where the Hudspeth Cut-off on the California road crosses. The Malad Valley, from its southern extremity to the cross range of mountains between the main right and left forks, has a varying width of from four to ten miles, has a generally fertile soil, a surface peculiarly well adapted to irrigation, is well grassed, tolerably well watered, rather scantily supplied with fuel and timber, and is bounded on the east and west by ranges of low mountains, the points and peaks of the western range being smoothly rounded and covered with grass nearly to their summits. Taken altogether it is much the best locality for settlement of any observed on the route beyond Bear River.

"From the junction with the Hudspeth Cut-off the new track made by the settlers in going to Limhi leads northwesterly, and by a smooth, somewhat winding and gradual ascent, in about six miles reaches the summit of the northern rim of the Basin, 133 miles from Salt Lake City. From this point the descent is rather rapid down the crest of a narrow and rocky spur ridge into Bannock Valley, which has a general course north, ten degrees west, averages about four miles wide, is tolerably well grassed in some portions, very sparsely timbered, opens onto Shanghi Plain (the greatest desert region surrounding the Three Buttes), and is bounded on the east by the Basin rim and its spur ranges, and on the west by a rugged range which blends

with the Goose Creek Mountains. The Bannock is a small stream with a sluggish current until it is joined by its right-hand fork, which considerably increases the volume and speed, after which it soon enters the Plain and runs a more westerly course in a narrow, steep-banked channel to its outlet into the Snake River, some three miles below the mouth of the Portneuf. A few small willows, birch and alder fringe the Bannock.

"From the mouth of Bannock Valley the road enters upon the southern border of Shanghi Plain, and, keeping a general course a few degrees east of north, intersects the emigrant road from the States to Oregon some six miles south by east from Fort Hall, and follows that road across the bridges over the Portneuf and Ross Creek, when it leaves the old road to the right and strikes Snake River from one-fourth to one-half a mile below the mouth of Blackfoot Fork, and 193 miles from Salt Lake City. The Portneuf issues from the hills a few miles above the bridge, which is some six miles southeast of Fort Hall, and at the bridge runs with a rapid current five feet deep by forty feet wide, being swollen by the melting of the snow. The narrow strip of bottom land upon this stream is rendered nearly useless by alkaline patches, sloughs, and the numerous spring runs that burst forth along the base of the upland banks. There is a narrow margin of good land along Ross Creek, and the first low hills east of the road are well clothed with grass, but timber would have to be obtained from the rugged mountains some twenty or more miles further east.

"We reached Snake River by noon of May 1st, when a wharf was built on the left bank and the boats at once prepared for ferrying, and by 10 p.m. the company and their vehicles were all safely crossed over, at an average of nine minutes to a wagon, including a rest of about half an hour. The animals were all safely swam on the morning of the 2nd. This river, though very low for the time of year, is at the ferry about 130 yards wide and eight feet deep in the center of the channel with a strong current has but little bottom land so far as we traveled upon its bank above the ferry, a distance of 56½ miles in a northeasterly direction, is plentifully supplied with islands, has the customary willow fringe with a few small, scattering cottonwoods, a few current bushes just blossoming, still fewer dwarf cedar, and is crossed by several belts of black volcanic rock.

"Among the pebbles and boulders thickly strewn on the banks of Snake River, sand stones and lime stones of various qualities are the characteristic kinds, interspersed with numerous specimens of granite and a few of porphyry.

"The ford on Snake River is 13½ miles above the ferry, at a point where three islands divide the river into four channels, but the water, though low for the season, was too high for crossing with wagons, as was also the Blackfoot Fork.

"Should travel ever warrant the alteration, the ferrying point should be near the ford and a bridge be made across Blackfoot, thus shortening and otherwise bettering the route.

"Meeting was held in the forenoon of Sunday, May 3rd, during which Elders Lorenzo Snow, Franklin D. Richards and Orson Hyde, and Presidents Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball made instructive and appropriate remarks upon union, conduct in traveling, etc.

"The general course from leaving Snake River to where the road strikes Spring Creek is west by south for 43½ miles, crossing a small sluggish stream called Kamas, and passing by a small pond named Muddy Lake, into which the Kamas empties.

"The circuitous route from near Fort Hall to Spring Creek is caused by the want of grass and water in the region of

the Three Buttes, there being no other apparent hindrance to traveling across that portion of Shanghi Plain, except breaking a track through the sage which almost everywhere densely clothes it.

"Spring Creek, where the road strikes it, was about ten feet wide by one and a half deep, with a gravelly bed and rapid current; is fringed with small willows, birch, and alders, interspersed with a few small cottonwoods, and either sinks or forms a pond a few miles below. The valley here opens into Shanghi Plain, has an average width of about five miles, a general course north, by 30 degrees west, is rather poorly grassed and is bounded on the east by a long, lime stone spur range from the Rocky Mountains and on the west by the high, rugged, east flanking range of the Salmon River Mountains.

"The ascent to the summit of Spring Creek Pass, a distance of 37 miles and 330 miles from Salt Lake City, is very smooth and gradual, as is also the descent, with the exception of a few smooth ascents and descent in the pass, caused by table land cross ranges connecting the Rocky and Salmon River Mountains.

"From this pass the course is northwesterly down the right hand fork of Salmon River, from near the source of its headwaters in the Rocky Mountains to Fort Limhi, a distance of 49 miles, and 379 from Salt Lake City. A few miles northeast from the mouth of the Little Muddy, a small affluent to the right bank of Deer Creek, which is the first branch of Salmon River intersected by the road, is a narrow gorge in the Rocky Mountains (which here are not very lofty and terminate abruptly on the bench land) through which it is said to be only three or four miles from the waters of the Salmon to the waters of the Missouri River. The right hand fork of Salmon River, from its source in the Rocky and Salmon River Mountains to its junction with the left hand fork, about twenty miles below Limhi, has but little bottom land and no valley, and may be said to run in merely an open canyon. It has the usual willow, birch and alder fringe, until within a few miles above Limhi, from which point small cottonwoods thickly cover the narrow bottoms. The left hand fork of Salmon River rises in Kamas Valley in the Salmon River Mountains, at an estimated distance of 120 miles west of Limhi, and pursuing a northeasterly course, joins the right hand fork, and both run in a still narrower canyon for about twenty miles, when the river enters the mountains. The left fork of Salmon River is stated to be nearly twice the size of the right, which at Fort Limhi was some twenty-five yards wide and two feet deep, with a rapid current and gravelly bed.

"The company reached Fort Limhi at 6 p.m. on Friday May 8th. This fort is a neat stockade inclosing a space sixteen rods square, and has a large and securely fenced yard for animals, and a small grist mill not yet finished, though sufficiently so to be used. \* \* There are two good sized fields mostly plowed and sown, in which the crops look promising, considering the coolness and consequent lateness of the season. The big and red sided salmon are said to be very plentiful here in their season, for which we were about a month too soon; but a few red-sided salmon were purchased from the Indians. They are a fine flavored fish, and average about two and a half feet in length. A few Bannock Indians had pitched their lodges adjacent to the fort, among whom Governor Young distributed many presents of blankets, etc., on the 11th of May, which were very gladly received.

"During the stay of four days and a half at Fort Limhi, the weather was generally cool and cloudy, affording but little opportunity for observations for latitude and longitude. \* \* \*