

taking two hour watches.(7) On May 14, Ferris saw his first buffalo and two days later a small herd. At night they dined on buffalo steak, a welcome change from boiled corn.(8)

The brigade proceeded west along the "Great Platte River Road" after crossing the North Platte in bull boats in June at the foot of the Laramie Range. They skirted the mountains, dropped down to the Sweetwater River, across the South Pass and into the Cache Valley.

The American Fur Company brigade leaders were experienced river traders, but knew not a thing about trapping. They hoped to locate the Rocky Mountain Fur Company trappers and follow them to the best beaver locations. This failed and there was a poor fall hunt for 1830.(9) They went into winter camp on the Salt River near present day Afton, Wyoming. Around Christmas 1830, Ferris and others explored the Great Salt Lake.(10)

In early April 1831, the party broke camp. The 1831 hunt ranged from the headwaters of the Columbia River on the western slope across the Divide to the headwaters of the Missouri through Lemhi Pass. It was during that summer that Ferris first met the Flathead Indians with whom he would spend much time during his career in the mountains.

Ferris attended the 1831 rendezvous in Cache Valley with the Rocky Mountain

(7) "Life in the Rocky Mountains" Page 96

(8) *ibid.*, pages 100-101

(9) "Land is the Cry" Page 23

(10) "Life in the Rocky Mountains" Page 42