

BICENTENNIAL WAGON TRAIN PILGRIMAGE to Pennsylvania

The chronicle of the wagon train is the story of infant America.

Early in the eighteenth century, settlers began moving inland. An endless procession of covered wagons loaded with household goods and supplies headed westward.

The wagons scaled the Allegheny Mountains. Made trails through the broad western plains. Followed primitive Indian paths through valleys and mountain gaps. Wherever possible they took advantage of natural waterways by floating on rafts and river boats. The wagons followed the trail to opportunity and opportunity made America great.

Outriders and scouts foraged from the wagon trains seeking fresh water, green pastures and fertile grounds. Occasionally, a wagoneer would leave the train to build a homestead for his family. These primitive log homes became way stations for other wagon trains. Soon they grew into outposts . . . villages. And finally full grown communities.

The settlers were drawn by a compelling belief in the unalienable rights of man, of liberty, of justice, and of freedom—the principles upon which our nation was founded.

As an appropriate tribute to the Nation's 200th anniversary, we will roll the wagons once more.

Once more we'll take to the wagon trails.
But this time we'll head *Eastward*.

Back to the Cradle of Liberty. A pilgrimage to the birthplace of the nation. To rededicate the faith of the nation's citizens to the same principles which inspired their forefathers.

Briefly, the Bicentennial Wagon Train Pilgrimage to Pennsylvania is a replay of history—in reverse. A train of covered wagons—one wagon for each State—will cross the country, west to east, adhering as closely as possible to historic trails and wagon routes.

With the cooperation of the ARBA, the Wagon Train Pilgrimage will be offered to all officially designated Bicentennial Communities as an element for their Bicentennial celebration.

The Pilgrimage will serve as the cohesive thread for the Bicentennial Communities.

Volunteers from the North American Trail Ride Conference and local riding groups will serve the wagon train as mounted escorts and outriders. These "Pony Express" riders will branch out from the State Wagons to reach communities not on the main trails.

The outriders will bring back scrolls from each Bicentennial Community signed by the citizens reaffirming their belief in the principles upon which this nation was founded.

The State covered wagon will tour its home state from the State Capital to a junction point with the National Wagon Train. It will stop in cities, towns, and hamlets to receive the signed scrolls . . . the rededication of faith in America.

While enroute, the State wagon will inspire historic ceremonies. Schedule permitting, it could join parades, visit State Parks, shrines, fairs and civic events.

Eventually the State wagon will join Bicentennial Wagons from other States in a massive Pilgrimage to our Nation's birthplace where the signed scrolls will be enshrined.

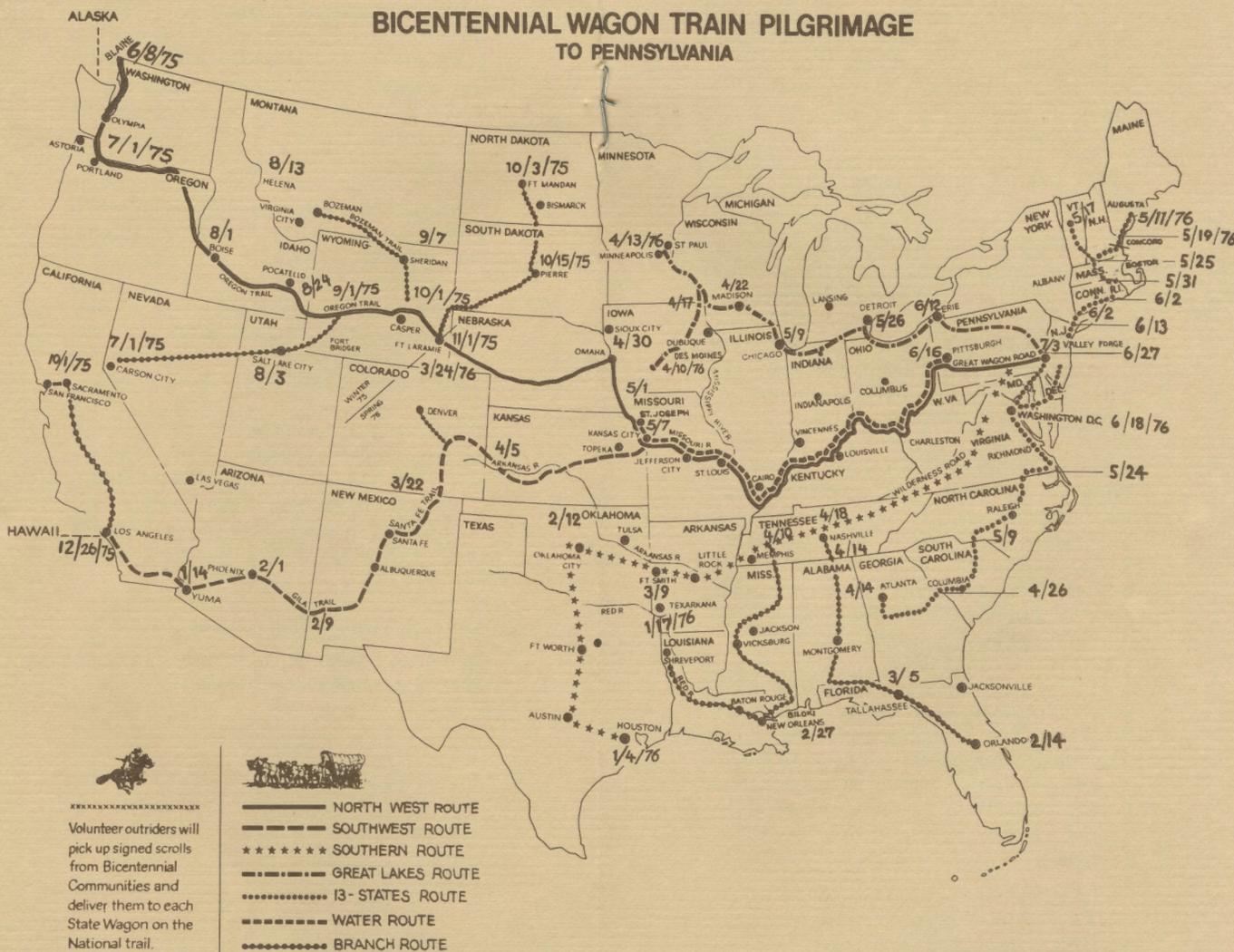
The Bicentennial Wagon Train Pilgrimage is a program that reaches out to all the people of the Nation. One that involves everyone in a dramatic display of democracy in action. It is an event which will be remembered as the people's celebration of the Nation's 200th birthday.

An exceptional, exciting adventure.

The Bicentennial Wagon Train Pilgrimage will be one continuous exciting event.



BICENTENNIAL WAGON TRAIN PILGRIMAGE TO PENNSYLVANIA



Every day on the road and every night camping in local park sites and in National Parks, the wagoners will host the people of America. Local wagon and carriage groups, riding clubs, youth organizations will be invited to join the Wagon Train during the period of its approach to and departure from the outskirts of any community.

Spectators will be welcome to view the ritual of encamping, watering, feeding and grooming the teams of horses. Those who wish will share a meal with the wagoners.

The signed Pilgrimage scrolls will be accepted by the Wagon Master with appropriate ceremony.

The entertainment around the campfire will be reciprocal. School bands, local glee clubs will be invited to perform. Weather and scheduling permitting, the Wagoneers will put on a musical Wagon Train Show composed specially for the Pilgrimage. The evening will conclude with campfire sing-alongs and country hoedowns.

The Wagon Train Pilgrimage provides an opportunity to direct attention of local schools to the heritage of each Bicentennial Community. Awards will be presented to school children for outstanding essays on their local forefathers who pioneered the paths through the wilderness during the founding days of our country.

The Bicentennial Wagon Train Pilgrimage will terminate on July 4, 1976 at Valley Forge Park in Pennsylvania. It will encamp there for two months during the height of the Bicentennial celebration. Millions of people are expected to visit the park during the period. They will be invited to join the wagoneers for the daily and evening activities.

The North American Trail Ride Conference, whose volunteers serve as outriders for the Wagon Train, plan a coast to coast Pony Express relay timed to arrive at Valley Forge simultaneously with the arrival of the National Wagon Train.

Logistics

Each State will be supplied with: an authentic covered wagon—altered somewhat to withstand the rigors of modern road beds; two teams of horses and relief horses; harnesses, and all necessary hitching equipment; a station wagon and house trailer; and clothing for the State's wagoneers.

Each State will be asked only to supply the Wagoneers to represent the State during the six-month Pilgrimage. Preliminary research indicates that these crews will be readily available as volunteers from carriage, wagon, and horsemen associations or farm groups.

The national Wagon Train Pilgrimage will be conducted in five separate segments, each segment funneling into the main wagon train heading Eastward. They will follow as closely as possible such well-known historic routes as the Oregon and California Trails, Gila, Mormon, Santa Fe, Old Spanish, Natchez Trace, Wilderness, Old Post and, of course, the famous wagon road, Lancaster Pike. These routes will be cleared in advance with the necessary authorities.

Each segment leaves on a different schedule after June 8, 1975 to arrive in Valley Forge by July 4, 1976 (see attached map).

Cooperation and support of statewide horsemen, wagon and carriage groups will provide maintenance and care for the wagons and the horses while on the trail.

Each of the five Wagon Train segments will be operated by a Wagon Master and two assistants, a public relations professional, an activities director, and a show cast of six.

Financing and Budget

The Bicentennial Commission of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has provided the funding to establish viability of the program and to complete its initial stages. The balance of the funds will be secured through sponsorship of business and industry and marketing and merchandising income.

American Revolution Bicentennial Administration



The Bicentennial Wagon Train Pilgrimage program will be conducted with the complete support and cooperation of the American Revolution Bicentennial Administration, the Federal Bicentennial coordinating organization.

"The only truly national coverage program that we have exclusive of television media possibilities is the Bicentennial Wagon Train Pilgrimage to Pennsylvania."

Bicentennial Pilgrimage to Pennsylvania



So your children can tell
their children.

A Sponsored Project of the Bicentennial Commission of Pennsylvania

Lt. Governor Ernest P. Kline, Chairman

George H. Ebner, Executive Director